



# Grace Annual Meeting 2024



**GRACE**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH & SCHOOL



**January 21, 2024 | 11:30 AM**

**The Interim Rector's Welcome—The Rev. Wendy Wilkinson**

**Opening Prayer—The Rev. Leah Wise**

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Minutes of 2023 Annual Meeting**

**Elections**

**2023 Financial Report & 2024 Budget—Gail Keller, Treasurer**

**Membership and Worship Statistics—The Rev. Wendy Wilkinson**

**Interim Rector's Report—The Rev. Wendy Wilkinson**

**Curate's Report—The Rev. Leah Wise**

**Assisting Priest's Report—The Rev. Alejandro Montes**

**Senior Warden's Report—Colin Dunham**

**Junior Warden's Report—Phillip Kimbrough**

**Head Of School Report—Caitlin Powell**

**Ministry Reports (Submitted in Writing)**

**Closing Prayer—The Rev. Wendy Wilkinson**

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Dismissal**

## Annual Meeting 2023—Meeting Minutes

Rev Leah Wise opened with a prayer.

Chair is Colin Dunham.

No nominations from the floor.

Motion to vote by acclamation, by John Hannan, seconded by Robert Burlingame, all approved.

Annual meeting after church in the Parish Hall.

See handout for details in each topic.

Motion by Philip Montgomery, Seconded by Nick Johnson to accept last year's minutes, motion to approved by all.

### **Nominations for Vestry:**

Jan Buchanan, Brian Rockhold, Bertha Spadone

All the above were elected.

### **Nominations for Delegates to Diocesan Convention:**

Sara Bushell, Colin Dunham (1 year), Audra Farley, Sarah Scott (2 year)

All the above were elected.

### **Nominations for School Board:**

Christie Hudlow, Elise Koestner (3 year)

All the above were elected.

Closing prayer by Rev Scott Painter

*Attachment: Annual Parish Meeting (22 Jan 2023)*

Submitted 22 Jan 2023 by Robert Burlingame, Clerk of Grace Episcopal Church, Houston, TX

## **Elections Qualifications for Voting**

Grace's 2024 Annual Meeting will focus on expressing gratitude to God for faithfulness through the past year, and to those who have served in leadership whose terms of service are expiring.

The primary business of Annual Meeting is to elect leaders to serve the Church & School.

Our election for the Church will be a vote to elect one Vestry member to fulfill Brian Rockhold's unfinished term and 2 members of the Vestry to serve a three-year term through to Annual Meeting in 2027, 4 delegates to represent Grace at Diocesan Council, and 3 members of the School Board. Those elected will officially begin their terms upon election at Annual Meeting.

All those who call Grace home are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting.

Individuals at least 16 years of age, who are "enrolled confirmed communicants in good standing" of the Parish, are entitled to "vote for members of the Vestry and upon all questions requiring the action of the Congregation."

Please note that an "enrolled confirmed communicant in good standing" is defined in the Canons of The Episcopal Church. This person is confirmed or received by a Bishop of The Episcopal Church and has "for the previous year been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and has been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God" (From The Episcopal Church, 2018 Constitution and Canons, Title III.2.2).

# Elections

## Nominees for Election to Vestry

Vestry

### Natalia Maradiaga



Mi nombre es Natalia. Conocí la iglesia episcopal San Mateo en el año 1995 en la cual desempeñe diferentes ministerio Como ujier , lectora, preparación del altar, maestra de escuela dominical, en un grupo de discipulados. He recibido preparación para líder en Camp\_ Allen, como por 7 años. y estoy muy contenta de ver llegado a la iglesia Grace donde nos recibieron y nos dieron la oportunidad de servir al Señor y estoy muy contenta de que me haya invitado a participar en la junta parroquial, pediré dirección a Dios para dar un buen desempeño en este nuevo ministerio.

Vestry

### Kasia Hinkson



Kasia Hinkson, a lifelong Episcopalian, has been attending Grace for just over a year now. They're very happy to have found a welcoming, safe church space after several years without a church home. Kasia and their husband Austin have one son, Aiden, a 4th grader in the Dual Language Program at Herod Elementary. Kasia is a data engineer for The Movement Cooperative, working from home during the week and attending their son Aiden's many soccer games over the weekend. Kasia has a PhD in Political Science from the University of Houston and enjoys reading (particularly sci-fi/fantasy), watching women's basketball, and hiking/backpacking.

**Thomas Borowski II**

Thomas Borowski has been a member of Grace since June 2022. He was raised in Conroe, Texas. Thomas discovered Grace as he was finishing his chaplaincy residency with Memorial Hermann. He found Grace welcoming and accepting of the gifts he brings to the community. Thomas has a Master of Divinity with a concentration in pastoral care from Southern Methodist University. Thomas provides chaplaincy care to patients and families throughout the community. Thomas is in the process of becoming a board certified chaplain. In his free time, Thomas enjoys listening to audiobooks, video games, playing his tuba, and watching TV with his cat, Prim.

## Delegate to the Diocesan Council Nominee

Delegate to Diocesan Council, 2 Year

### Thomas Borowski II



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### Alternate Delegate to Diocesan Council

### Colin Dunham



My name is Colin Dunham and I have been proud to call Grace my home parish since December 2016 and where I was eventually confirmed in the Episcopal Church in April 2018. During my time at Grace I have served as an usher, counter, acolyte, lay eucharistic minister, bishop's committee/vestry member, and I have served as Jr. Warden several times. I have been involved with the Men's ministry and routinely attend parish activities. There's no place I'd rather be.

Pivotal to my faith is the belief that God calls us into community with each other. The world is full of different communities and oftentimes those groups don't mix. I feel blessed to be a part of a church that looks like the world as God would want it to be -- full of differences and even more full of love. The community I experience at Grace allows me to go out into the world and see folks who are different from me as part of my family in the body of Christ.

I would be proud to attend Diocesan Council as a delegate again. I would be interested in understanding what ministry and financial resources the diocese is offering for parishes of our size and kind and how we can partner in EDOT's mission and goals for 2023.

**Vyonne Carter-Johnson**



My family and I have been members of Grace Episcopal Church (formerly St. George's / St. George's & St. Patrick's) for 39 years. I have served on 9 Vestry's; served as Senior Warden twice and Clerk of the Vestry twice. I have been active in many ministries at Grace: Sunday School Teacher, Cursillo Coordinator, DOK Member & President, Evening Women's Group member, Small Group Team Lead, Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Verger and served on several Committees and represented Grace many times as a delegate to Diocesan Council. Completed Seabury Institute's 4-year course and completed EfM course.

I served on the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church Board of Directors as Chairperson of the Governance Committee and Board Liaison of the Chapter Development Committee. I serve as treasurer of the Diocese of Texas Vergers Guild. I am a fellow of the Verger Guild of the Episcopal Church. I am a Lifetime Member of the Vergers Guild, the Daughters of the King (a layperson's religious order) and the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE). I recently began a 3-year term on the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

The Diocese of Texas of the Episcopal Church has been my spiritual community and extended family for many decades.

After 44 years as a Human Resources professional, I carry experience in strategic planning and organizational leadership forward into this nomination.

I would be honored to serve God and our Parish as we look to the future.

*Our current delegates are Audra Farley and Sarah Scott. They will serve the second year of their term in 2024.*



## Nominees for Election to School Board

### Sarah Malcolm



Sarah Malcolm is the Associate VP for Finance, Strategy, Budgets, and Grants at The Leadership Academy, a nonprofit education organization that supports the development and training of school and district leaders across the country. Over the last 10 years she has worked as a facilitator, coach, and designer for districts in Iowa, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, California, Texas and many others. In her current role she is supporting the development of a new budgeting process and refining their pricing model, while leading all of the organizations grant writing efforts. Prior to

working for The Leadership Academy, Sarah was the Director of Education for Change for Kids in New York City, the director of a comprehensive arts afterschool program in Brooklyn, and Manager of Education at The Chamber Music Society for Lincoln Center. She holds a Masters in Nonprofit Management from Brooklyn College and a Bachelors in Music Education from the University of Texas. Sarah and her husband Tim have two girls, both of whom have attended Grace.

### Katie Degen



Katie Degen is the proud mother of Ford (2) and Katherine Grace (5). She brings 10 years of experience in the nutrition and non-profit world. Katie is a senior program manager for Brighter Bites, a non-profit that provides children and their families with the education and tools they need to live a vibrant and healthy life. She and her family have been a part of the Grace community since 2018 and she currently serves as the Purple Class room parent.

## Derek Zerber



Derek Zerber is a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at West University Elementary School. He has 20 years of classroom experience at both the primary and secondary levels. He holds a master's degree in educational leadership from Concordia University, and a bachelor's in education from Eastern Michigan University. Derek and his wife Shannon have two little girls, Mallory and Blair, who currently attend Grace. He is very excited to help the daycare and the church flourish.

## **2023 Financial Report & 2023 Budget—Gail Keller, Treasurer**

As we enter 2024, we can take a deep breath and realize that we have achieved so much during this transition time. Even with our pledge receipts not meeting our goal, we generously donated \$6217.00 to BIM along with regular food drives. We started Grace to Go 2.0 and have successfully funded and helped people “get by” until they could get to a food bank. We had a pumpkin patch and raised funds with little outlay of cash. We have continued our wonderful music that has become a solid part of our worship.

We did not meet our pledge goal for 2023. We received pledges in the amount of \$167,478.00 but had a pledge goal of \$176,200. However, in 2023, our non-pledge receipts were significantly higher than we budgeted. In 2023 we budgeted \$25,000.00 and received \$41,597.57 for non-pledge receipts.

For 2024, our income from the school is now based on a more equitable agreement and is in keeping with how other churches and schools address their combined ministry. The school will be paying a set fee for use of classrooms and parish hall during the week. We will now be paying 10% of utilities and insurance and Mario will be a full-time employee of the school, rather than our sexton. Maintenance and repairs will be addressed as they come up. We will be having an inspection of all our mechanical equipment so we will understand how everything stands and if we need to be aware of anything major that could happen that we will need to address.

As you all know, Salem Lutheran is no longer using our facility. With the loss of their rental income, we saw our 2023 rental income line come in way under our budgeted number. In 2024, we plan to get a farmer’s market organized for local vendors and plan to hold that in our West Bellfort parking lot on Saturdays. The vestry has also approved a rental agreement for our Parish Hall for outside events, which again, should generate additional income. Our spring and Christmas Teas also generate income; however, it is logistically beyond our ability to have a rummage sale right now.

To date, we have commitments of \$8,250.00 to help the cost of our music ministry since our Music Grant will be ending in June 2024.



Looking at the 2024 budget, you will see that we do not have a balanced budget. Since we are in transitional period, many of the numbers you see are an educated guess. We do not know how much longer Rev. Leah will be with us and when the Curate Grant will end. We do know that it will end in June 2024, but should she accept a position prior to that, the grant will, of course, only be paid through her last day. We do not know how long we will have Rev. Wendy with as our Interim Rector. We do not know exactly what we will be paying a Rector and what a salary, housing allowance, payroll taxes, etc., will be. We know we will have expenses related to the search, but we can only guess what these expenses will be.

We had \$176,000.00 in pledge commitments for 2024. This means we will need \$14,583.00 per month to meet our pledge goal. It is important for all of us, if possible, to meet the goal we have set to continue the ministries and mission of Grace.

We can be very proud of how far we have come financially as a Parish. We have been able to financially support our church and the ministries that make us who we are. And, we have done that during a major change in leadership.

Thank you. I often say, "onward and upward" and I believe that does describe who we are and where we are going.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Keller

Treasurer

# Grace Episcopal Church - 2023 Year-End Financial Report

Income	2023 YTD	2023 Budget	Over/Under
All Other	\$10,357.50	\$5,000.00	\$5,357.50
Discretionary Funds	\$1,171.00		\$1,171.00
Funeral Donations	\$1,100.00		\$1,100.00
Offerings			
In Kind Donations	\$1,270.90		\$1,270.90
Loose Offerings	\$6,264.86	\$5,000.00	\$1,264.86
Non-Pledge	\$41,597.57	\$25,000.00	\$16,597.57
Offset Online Giving	\$1,074.76	\$500.00	\$574.76
Other	\$719.21		\$719.21
Pledge Receipts	\$164,478.00	\$176,100.00	\$(11,622.00)
<b>Total Offerings</b>	<b>\$215,405.30</b>	<b>\$206,600.00</b>	<b>\$8,805.30</b>
Other Grants	\$30,000.00		\$30,000.00
EDOT Sabbatical	\$-	\$7,500.00	\$(7,500.00)
SMG Grant	\$22,500.00	\$25,000.00	\$(2,500.00)
Quinn Curate Grant	38,625.00	\$38,624.00	\$1.00
<b>Total Other Grants</b>	<b>\$91,125.00</b>	<b>\$71,124.00</b>	<b>\$20,001.00</b>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$319,158.80</b>	<b>\$282,724.00</b>	<b>\$36,434.80</b>
Rental Income	\$35,422.65	\$40,500.00	\$(5,077.35)
Restricted Funds			
Flowers Altar/	\$3,334.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,334.00
Grace-To-Go 2.0	\$855.00		\$855.00
Music Ministry Gifts	\$8,865.00		\$8,865.00
Property &	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$-
Hispanic Ministry	\$4,545.81	\$3,000.00	\$1,545.81
<b>Total Restricted</b>	<b>\$18,599.81</b>	<b>\$6,000.00</b>	<b>\$12,599.81</b>
<b>Revenue From</b>			
Shared Ministry	\$31,250.33	\$24,000.00	\$7,250.33
Shared Salary-	\$13,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$1,000.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$44,250.33</b>	<b>\$36,000.00</b>	<b>\$8,250.33</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$417,431.59</b>	<b>\$365,224.00</b>	<b>\$52,207.59</b>

<b>Expenses:</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>Over/Under</b>
<b>Outreach &amp;</b>			
Advertising	\$894.53	\$2,500.00	\$(1,605.47)
Music Outreach	\$5,550.00	\$13,000.00	\$(7,450.00)
Newcomer	\$925.03	\$1,500.00	\$(574.97)
Other Outreach	\$-	\$1,000.00	\$(1,000.00)
Parish Functions	\$3,344.09	\$1,500.00	\$1,844.09
Pumpkin	\$5,044.79	\$-	\$5,044.79
Total Parish	\$8,388.88		\$6,888.88
Youth Program	\$264.67	\$2,500.00	\$(2,235.33)
<b>Total Outreach &amp;</b>	<b>\$16,023.11</b>	<b>\$22,000.00</b>	<b>\$(5,976.89)</b>
<b>Secretarial Support &amp;</b>			
Audit Expense	\$2,180.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,180.00
Bank &	\$4,300.96	\$500.00	\$3,800.96
Bookkeeper	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$-
Computer	\$1,494.75	\$4,500.00	\$(3,005.25)
Copier Contract	\$3,303.76	\$3,750.00	\$(446.24)
Office Expense	\$6,963.50	\$7,500.00	\$(536.50)
Payroll Taxes	\$3,946.36	\$5,000.00	\$(1,053.64)
Postage	\$282.85	\$400.00	\$(117.15)
Secretary	\$22,836.39	\$23,000.00	\$(163.61)
Telephone	\$3,257.28	\$2,500.00	\$757.28
<b>Total Secretarial Support &amp;</b>	<b>\$54,565.85</b>	<b>\$54,150.00</b>	<b>\$415.85</b>
<b>To Participate in</b>			
Dio-Assessment	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00	\$-
<b>Total To Participate in the</b>	<b>\$13,500.00</b>	<b>\$13,500.00</b>	<b>\$-</b>
<b>To Provide a</b>			
Music Director	\$17,196.37	\$24,000.00	\$(6,803.63)
Music Donations & Outreach	\$22,650.00	\$-	\$22,650.00
Music Expenses	\$1,281.21	\$4,000.00	\$(2,718.79)
Musicians	\$3,550.00	\$20,000.00	\$(16,450.00)
<b>Total to Provide a</b>	<b>\$44,677.58</b>	<b>\$48,000.00</b>	<b>\$(3,322.42)</b>



**To Provide a Place**

Alter Supplies	\$2,051.85	\$2,000.00	\$51.85
Building	\$3,286.52	\$2,900.00	\$386.52
Dues, Permits,	\$220.45	\$250.00	\$(29.55)
Facilities & Tech	\$240.00	\$2,000.00	\$(1,760.00)
Flowers	\$1,244.10	\$2,500.00	\$(1,255.90)
Maintenance -	\$23,146.98	\$12,000.00	\$11,146.98
Maintenance -	\$7,249.93	\$7,000.00	\$249.93
Security	\$868.92	\$1,000.00	\$(131.08)
Supplies -	\$2,182.82	\$3,500.00	\$(1,317.18)
<b>Total to Provide a</b>	<b>\$40,491.57</b>	<b>\$33,150.00</b>	<b>\$7,341.57</b>

**To Provide Christian**

Adult Education	\$221.06	\$1,000.00	\$(778.94)
Childrn Ministry	\$4,500.00	\$4,300.00	\$200.00
Christian	\$471.47	\$1,000.00	\$(528.53)
Education	\$850.50	\$500.00	\$350.50
<b>Total To Provide Christian</b>	<b>\$6,043.03</b>	<b>\$6,800.00</b>	<b>\$(756.97)</b>

**To Provide Clergy**

Curate Continuing	\$300.00	\$500.00	\$(200.00)
Curate	\$100.00	\$600.00	\$(500.00)
Curate Housing	\$40,800.00	\$40,800.00	\$-
Curate Payroll	\$9,249.84	\$9,250.00	\$(0.16)
Curate Pension	\$10,801.89	\$11,784.00	\$(982.11)
Curate Salary	\$19,883.92	\$15,416.00	\$4,467.92
Curate Telephone	\$600.00	\$-	\$600.00

Curate Travel &	\$565.71	\$1,200.00	\$(634.29)
Deacon Continuing	\$-	\$500.00	\$(500.00)
Deacon	\$150.00	\$500.00	\$(350.00)
Deacon Salary	\$150.00	\$300.00	\$(150.00)
Discretionary Expenses Paid from 3003	\$3,448.17	\$-	\$3,448.17
Discretionary Fund (Church Budget Exp.)	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	\$-
Rector Continuing	\$977.81	\$1,500.00	\$(522.19)
Rector Housing	\$14,999.94	\$60,000.00	\$(45,000.06)
Rector Payroll	\$4,050.00	\$10,000.00	\$(5,950.00)
Rector Pension	\$15,195.89	\$15,000.00	\$195.89
Rector Salary	\$57,225.22	\$12,000.00	\$45,225.22
Rector Travel	\$1,001.09	\$1,500.00	\$(498.91)
Visiting and	\$300.00	\$600.00	\$(300.00)
<b>Total To Provide a Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$180,999.48</b>	<b>\$182,650.00</b>	<b>\$(1,650.52)</b>
<b>Funerals</b>			
Flowers	\$94.18		\$94.18
Funeral Expense	\$269.99		\$269.99
<b>Total Funerals</b>	<b>\$364.17</b>		<b>\$364.17</b>
Insurance-	\$361.00		\$361.00
Melio Credit Card	\$71.00		\$71.00
Men of Grace	\$200.00		\$200.00
<b>Total Men of</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>		<b>\$200.00</b>
Other Expenses			
Diocesan Council	\$3,760.00	\$3,000.00	\$750.00
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$3,760.00</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>	<b>\$750.00</b>
Payroll Expense			
Pensions	\$3,794.21		\$3,794.21
<b>Total Payroll</b>	<b>\$3,794.21</b>		<b>\$3,794.21</b>

<b>Restricted Funds</b>			
Flowers Expense	\$3,334.00		\$3,334.00
Grace 2 Go			
Property &	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
Hispanic Ministries	\$563.96		\$563.96
<b>Total Restricted</b>	<b>\$4,897.96</b>		<b>\$4,897.96</b>
Stop Payment	\$97.42		\$97.42
Uncategorized	\$51.85		\$51.85
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$369,898.23</b>	<b>\$363,250.00</b>	<b>\$6,648.23</b>
<b>Net Operating</b>	<b>\$47,533.36</b>	<b>\$1,974.00</b>	<b>\$45,559.36</b>



# 2024 Grace Episcopal Church Budget

<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>2023 BUDGET</b>	<b>2024 BUDGET</b>
ALL OTHER FUNDRAISING	5,000.00	15,000.00
DISCRETIONARY FUNDS INCOME	-	
FUNERAL DONATIONS	-	
OFFERINGS		
IN KIND DONATIONS	-	
LOOSE OFFERINGS	5,000.00	5,000.00
NON-PLEDGE RECEIPTS	25,000.00	25,000.00
OFFSET ONLINE GIVING FEES	500.00	900.00
OTHER	-	
PLEDGE RECEIPTS	176,100.00	175,000.00
TOTAL OFFERINGS	206,600.00	205,500.00
OTHER INCOME:		
EDOT SABBATICAL GRANT	7,500.00	-
QUINN CURATE GRANT	38,624.00	19,312.50
SMG MUSIC GRANT	25,000.00	8,000.00
MISCELLANEOUS SOURCES		1,100.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	71,124.00	28,412.50
TOTAL RECEIPTS	282,724.00	248,912.50
RENTAL INCOME	40,500.00	7,200.00
RESTRICTED FUNDS INCOME		
FLOWERS-ALTER/SEASONAL REVENUE	2,000.00	2,000.00
GRACE 2 GO 2.0 DONATIONS	-	1,000.00
MUSIC MINISTRY GIFTS	-	13,850.00
PROPERTY & LABYRINTH GIFTS	1,000.00	1,000.00
SPANISH SPEAKING MINISTRY	3,000.00	5,000.00
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS INCOME	6,000.00	22,850.00
REVENUE FROM SCHOOL	24,000.00	24,000.00
SHARED SALARY CHAPLIN	12,000.00	6,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE FROM SCHOOL	36,000.00	30,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE	365,224.00	308,952.50
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
OUTREACH & EVANGELISM		
ADVERTISING	2,500.00	2,500.00
MUSIC OUTREACH	13,000.00	13,000.00
NEWCOMER MINISTRY	1,500.00	1,500.00
OTHER OUTREACH	1,000.00	1,000.00

PARISH FUNCTIONS	1,500.00	3,000.00
YOUTH PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	2,500.00	1,000.00
TOTAL OUTREACH & EVANGELISM	22,000.00	22,000.00
SECRETARIAL SUPPORT & OFFICE EXPENSE		
AUDIT EXPENSE	1,000.00	1,000.00
BANK MERCHANT FEES	500.00	1,500.00
BOOKKEEPER	6,000.00	6,540.00
COMPUTER SYSTEM	4,500.00	-
COPIER CONTRACT	3,750.00	2,500.00
OFFICE EXPENSE	7,500.00	7,500.00
PAROLL TAXES	5,000.00	6,000.00
POSTAGE	400.00	400.00
SECRETARY	23,000.00	25,400.00
TELEPHONE	2,500.00	2,500.00
PROPERTY INSURANCE		7,425.00
UTILITIES		11,250.00
TOTAL SECRETARIAL SUPPORT & EXP.	54,150.00	72,015.00
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DIOCESE		
DIOESAN ASSESSMENT	13,500.00	14,850.00
TOTAL ASSESSMENT	13,500.00	14,850.00
TO PROVIDE A MUSIC PROGRAM		
MUSIC DIRECTOR	24,000.00	24,000.00
MUSIC EXPENSES	4,000.00	4,000.00
MUSICIANS	20,000.00	20,000.00
EQUIPMENT	500.00	
MARKETING	600.00	
MUSICIAN SUPPORT (PERFORMANCE STIPENDS)		4,000.00
TOTAL TO PROVIDE MUSIC PROGRAM	48,000.00	53,100.00
TO PROVIDE A PLACE OF WORSHIP		
ALTAR SUPPLIES	2,000.00	2,000.00
BUILDING INSURANCE	2,900.00	2,900.00
DUES, PERMITS, ALARM, OTHER	250.00	250.00
FACILITIES & TECH ASSISTANT	2,000.00	
FLOWERS	2,500.00	2,000.00
MAINTENANCE - CHURCH	12,000.00	12,000.00
MAINTENANCE - LAWN & GROUNDS	7,000.00	7,000.00
SECURITY	1,000.00	-
SUPPLIES - EXPENDIBLE	3,500.00	2,000.00
TOTAL-PROVIDE A PLACE OF WORSHIP	33,150.00	28,150.00
TO PROVIDE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION		
ADULT EDUCATION	1,000.00	1,000.00
CHILDREN MINISTRY SITTERS/TEACHERS	4,300.00	6,000.00
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	1,000.00	1,000.00

(Continued from page 19)

EDUCATION SUPPLIES	500.00	1,000.00
TOTAL TO PROVIDE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	6,800.00	9,000.00
TO PROVIDE CLERGY		
CURATE CONTINUING EDUCATION	500.00	250.00
CURATE DISCRETIONARY FUND	600.00	300.00
CURATE HOUSING ALLOWANCE	40,800.00	20,400.00
CURATE PAYROLL TAX	9,250.00	4,625.00
CURATE PENSION PREMIUM	11,784.00	5,592.00
CURATE SALARY	15,416.00	7,707.00
CURATE TELEPHONE REIMBURSEMENT		-
CURATE TRAVEL & EXPENSES	1,200.00	600.00
DEACON CONTINUING ED	500.00	500.00
DEACON EXPENSE	500.00	500.00
DEACON SALARY	300.00	300.00
DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES (PD FROM 3033		-
DISCRETIONARY FUND (CHURCH BUDGET EXP)	1,200.00	600.00
MEDICAL INSURANCE	-	
RECTOR CONTINUING EDUCATION	1,500.00	1,500.00
RECTOR HOUSING ALLOWANCE	60,000.00	
RECTOR PAYROLL TAXES	10,000.00	
RECTOR PENSION PREMIUM	15,000.00	
RECTOR SALARY	12,000.00	95,000.00
RECTOR TRAVEL & EXPENSES	1,500.00	1,500.00
VISITING & SUPPLY CLERGY	600.00	600.00
TOTAL TO PROVIDE CLERGY	182,650.00	139,974.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	360,250.00	339,089.00
RECTOR SEARCH EXPENSES		
TRAVEL FOR SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS		10,000.00
ENTERTAINMENT - PROSPECTIVE RECTOR		5,000.00
SUPPLIES		500.00
TRAVEL FOR PROSPECTIVE RECTOR		10,000.00
TOTAL FOR RECTOR SEARCH		25,500.00
OTHER EXPENSES		
DIOCESAN COUNCIL	3,000.00	3,000.00
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	3,000.00	3,000.00
RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENSES		
FLOWERS EXPENSE	-	1,000.00
GRACE 2 GO 2.0 EXPENSE	-	1,000.00
MUSIC MINISTRY GIFTS		13,850.00
HISPANIC MINISTRIES EXPENDITURES	-	700.00



(Continued from page 20)

PROPERTY & LABYRINTH EXPENSE	-	500.00	
TOTAL RESTRICTED EXPENSES	-	17,050.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363,250.00	345,639.00	
INTERIM RECTOR EXPENSE			
INTERIM RECTOR SALARY		6,890.00	
INTERIM RECTOR PENSION		1,240.25	
		8,130.25	PER MONTH

## Stewardship & Annual Pledge Campaign

This year's Fall Stewardship Campaign looking at Grace as "A Place of Bounty" was a coordinated effort between Nick Johnson, Stewardship Chair, and the Stewardship Committee of Colin Dunham, Araceli Jonsson, C.L. Johnson, Gail Keller, Rev Leah Wise and myself.

- **For 2024, the People of Grace made 41 gifts and pledges**
- **Committed \$176,000 to Grace**

We benefitted from the honest and passionate voices of Nick Johnson, C.L. Johnson, Araceli Jonsson, Gail Keller and Colin Dunham as they spoke about the generosity, trust, music and gratitude that they have experienced at Grace and how it has impacted their lives.

The work of Stewardship is a year-round and lifelong call. We are blessed to be a blessing, and we encourage those who experience unexpected abundance at any time to share with your church so that Grace will continue to prosper and grow in ministry.

This year is a challenge financially as the church takes on more of the building maintenance costs and the additional costs of a Rector search with all the unknown factors of travel costs for the candidates and the search committee as they visit prospective candidates possibly in other states. The church will also have to pay for the candidates to come to Grace for an in person final interview. This year we really need each member to contribute what they can financially to cover these additional one-time expenses.

In 2024, we hope to begin an effort to encourage "legacy gifts" by remembering Grace in our wills and as beneficiaries of trusts. This is an element of planning for the future where our parish is behind many congregations of a similar size and age. We are planning on holding a presentation on "legacy gifts" after a Sunday service during Lent, so stay tuned for further information in our e-news. For now, please contact Gail Keller, Treasurer, or myself if you would like to be connected with someone who can offer more information on remembering Grace in your will or as beneficiary of stock funds or trusts.

Faithfully Submitted,

Rev Wendy Wilkinson

## Membership and Worship Statistics - 2023

	2022	2023
Holy Eucharist Services Sundays	52	53
Average online Sunday participation	30	30
Weekdays Other Services	9	8
Marriages	2	1
Burials	12	1
Baptisms	8	13
Average Sunday Attendance for the Year	111	95
Easter	138	182
Christmas Eve	110	175
Current Membership	158	152
Members in Good Standing	139	120

Deaths & Burials: Dora Solis Jenkins, Laura Landry

Baptism 16 and Older: Javier Enrique Martinez, Alonzo Adan Martinez, ,Lorenzo Jesus Martinez, Ramiro Martinez, Stephanie Kay Antich

Baptism under 16 years of age: Camden Lee Farley, Mildred Lee Lamantia, Chloe Zongo, Alexander Fabian Coyote, Athena Aylin Palacios, Camila Guevara Graciano, Leah Escalante, Nigel Matias Padilla

Received/Confirmed

(No Bishop's Visit in 2023)

Transferred In	2	
Transferred Out	1	

## **Interim Rector's Report for Annual Meeting 2024**

This year has been one of change and transitions at Grace. The Rev Scott Painter left in March to serve a church in Portland, Oregon after helping Grace to grow into parish status in 2022. Moving from mission to parish status is a huge accomplishment! Grace is now learning how to continue to follow the Spirit's guidance and grow as a parish even in the midst of a Rector transition.

Rev Leah Wise is completing her second year as our curate, which means that she is actively interviewing for her next call as a priest in Christ's church. As a curate she cannot stay at Grace as much as we would like her to remain here with us. Rev Leah did an incredible job keeping everything going for two months after Rev Scott left for Oregon. That experience will help her in her future call. In the meantime, she continues to be a blessing to all of us at Grace with her administrative, pastoral, sacramental, music and teaching skills. She also serves as the School Chaplain and leads the children in worship and song each week. Thank you, Leah, for all that you do for Grace!

I arrived as Interim Rector in June and it has been a privilege and a joy to travel this transition time with all of you at Grace. As Colin Dunham, the Senior Warden will tell you the search committee is in place and we can now begin the active process of finding a Rector for Grace. This is an incredible church that truly is inclusive and welcoming. As we listened to new and old members tell their stories during our Stewardship Program this fall it is the love of Christ manifested through each of you that continues to help Grace to grow as One Body of Christ in our diversity. We have new families with young children as well as new members of more mature years, should I say? Grace now includes members from many different denominations, races and cultures, as well as being LBGT+ affirming. This diversity is an asset in seeking a new Rector. The Search Committee will keep the Vestry and congregation updated on the search process as we move through this winter and spring.

One example of our church's diversity is the Noon Hispanic Service. Under the guidance and spiritual leadership of Padre Montes, Grace is able to offer a Spanish Eucharist for our community. They have baptized several new members just since I've been at Grace. This is a much-needed service for our community. If you have not attended this service please do!

The music at Grace is exceptional! With the assistance of a music grant from the Diocese the music program has grown and provided a wonderful avenue for people outside the church to experience Grace's hospitality. Several new members are here because they first experienced Grace through the music of Paul English and our musicians. This is the third year of the music grant which will expire in June.

I asked John Graham to create Friends of Music at Grace to ensure that the music will continue to be financially supported after the grant expires. He has stepped forward and with the help of the committee is securing the financial support from all of you at Grace that is needed to grow and expand the music ministry at Grace into the foreseeable future.

I had not experienced a church with a school before coming to Grace, so being the Chair of the School has been a learning experience for me. The school under the leadership of Caitlin Powell has grown and is now out of room with our current facilities. This is an area that the new Rector and the Vestry will have to explore in the coming year. The entire building is in use everyday from 6:00am-6:00pm with the sounds of children learning and being cared for by teachers and staff passionate about their work. The School serves our neighborhood with infant care through age 4. We are one of the few places in this area that takes very young infants so there is a high demand for this type of care which only Grace is providing to our neighbors.

One issue that has arisen is that over the past few years the school was paying all of the maintenance and utility costs for both the church and the school. While it made the church's finances look better it was not a sustainable arrangement. With the termination of COVID funds to the school this year the financial situation had to be addressed. Talking with the Head of Episcopal Schools for Texas, Caitlin, Colin and myself with the approval of the vestry determined that the school and church will be having a 80/20 split to cover the maintenance of our facility. It was also determined that there should be a financial committee for the school that works with the school treasurer to oversee the school finances. This is a requirement for accreditation of the school. Accreditation of the school will need to happen once a new Rector is in place.

So moving forward in 2024 there will be a financial committee for the school which will meet with the church's financial committee several times during the year to discuss the finances together. This will help with future budgeting and transparency in the finances of both the school and the church. Caitlin Powell and I are updating the Shared Ministry Agreement to reflect the changes in the school and church agreement so that strong and healthy relationships will continue at Grace for the benefit of our community.

Grace is truly a blessing for this neighborhood. The joy that we experience each Sunday as we gather as Christ's church in this place is reflected by our engagement with our neighbors. The Spirit is calling Grace to grow in new and unimagined ways as we go through this time of transition. Please continue to pray for each other, our church and the world in this coming year as we live out the unconditional and reconciling love of God with generous hospitality, inspired worship and inclusive community.

Faithfully submitted,

Rev Wendy Wilkinson

## **Lo Estamos Haciendo – Curate’s Annual Report, January 2024**

Last year, my Annual Report was entitled *Estoy Tratando*: “I’m trying.” This year my report is entitled “We’re doing it.” The goal of a curacy is to engage new priests in a comprehensive training process. We are encouraged to try our hand at basically everything so in our future roles we have the experience, humility, and courage to do the work of the church without faltering.

In 2023, all the trying of the previous year was put to good use as Grace was faced with a Rector transition. I remember that first week after Rev. Scott left, right after Easter, when I wasn’t sure how we were going to hold it all together. There was so much work to do. So many things to plan, tasks to delegate, sermons to preach, lessons to learn. The only way through it was to do it. So, thanks to our Vestry, lay leaders, office staff, local clergy, and the whole congregation, we kept putting one foot in front of the other. After the year Grace has had, I have learned that I can try all I want, but actually doing it takes all of us.

Last year, we tried new things, welcomed visitors who became family, celebrated as over a dozen people were baptized, grew both our 10 am and 12 pm services, unloaded a gazillion pumpkins, shared in our trials, illnesses, and griefs, clapped, laughed, ate good food, and showed up even when we didn’t know exactly what to expect. We practiced being honest and optimistic at the same time.

In my role as your Curate, I rolled with the punches, made lots of spreadsheets, laughed and cried my way through workdays, practiced non-anxious presence, led a DOK retreat, sang with the musicians, baptized kids and adults in English and Spanish, facilitated at diocesan events, and attended the Hispanic Lay Leaders Conference.

In 2023, I reckoned with the reality that the work of following Jesus is primarily one of opening your hands to embrace whatever and whoever meets you on the road. Put another way, it’s the hardest and most wonderful thing any of us can do. And guess what? We’re doing it. Not always and not perfectly. But because we are trying, and because we are together, Christ is with us, too.

We’re doing it, with God’s help. *Lo estamos haciendo con la ayuda de Dios.*

Enduringly,

The Reverend Leah Wise +

January 21, 2024



## Reverend Alejandro Montes, Annual Report 2024

My wife and I thank God for the opportunity we have to be part of the ministry of Grace Episcopal Church. Also to the Clergy and the Vestry. Thank you for the new schedule for our Misa and the keys to use in emergencies.

In 2023 we have had baptisms and other activities such as Via Cruces and "Jesus my captain" with children from 5 to 12 years old. We celebrated Hispanic Heritage. We had quite a bit of participation. We also had our Misa de Gallo at noon with the participation of my daughter Sandra Montes and my grandson Ellis Montes. New families have also been added.

Our thanks to Italivi Mena who helps us when we need copies. Thanks to Natalia for helping us with the Cofradía del Altar and coordinating the reception. To Meleydi for helping every Sunday with the music. Thanks to Jorge, Erika and Emmanuel and the other volunteers like DJ Angel Pachuco and DJ Tony Mos for their help.

"Because the LORD is good, his loyal love lasts forever; his faithfulness lasts generation after generation."

- *Psalm 100:5*

Blessings.

Alejandro Montes +

## Senior Warden's Report

2023 was quite a year! As we reflect on the past year, it is with gratitude and joy that I share the Annual Parish Report as your Senior Warden. Our community has witnessed both farewells and new beginnings, navigated transitions, and embraced the spirit of resilience.

First and foremost, we bid a heartfelt farewell to our beloved Rector, Scott Painter. His guidance and leadership have left an indelible mark on our parish, and we extend our deepest gratitude for his years of service. However, even in goodbyes, we find blessings, and we were fortunate to welcome Rev. Wendy Wilkinson as our Interim Rector. Rev. Wendy has brought a sense of continuity and grace to our community, ensuring a smooth transition during this period.

In addition, I express my sincere appreciation for the unwavering dedication of Rev. Leah, our Curate, whose commitment to our spiritual well-being has been a source of strength for us all. Her leadership at the beginning of the parish's transition cannot be understated and I am grateful for her talents, her service, and her presence which has been a blessing to all of us.

I express my heartfelt thanks to all our clergy: Rev. Wendy, Rev. Leah, Padre Alejandro, and Deacon Dawn for their continued guidance and spiritual direction. Your calling at Grace continues to make this parish a home for each of us.

In 2023, our beloved school saw new leadership with the newly appointed Caitlin Powell, Head of Grace Episcopal School. Caitlin's passion and efforts have contributed significantly to furthering our school's mission. We applaud her commitment to providing a nurturing environment to the children who attend our school and we look forward to the continued growth of Grace Episcopal School under her leadership.

As we acknowledge the challenges of this long and transitional year, we are pleased to share the progress made in the search for a permanent Rector. The Vestry has diligently worked on finalizing the parish profile, a crucial step in identifying the qualities and characteristics we seek in our new spiritual leader. I am pleased to announce that the members of the search committee have been selected and will undergo training shortly. With the dedication and support of the entire parish, we are poised to continue the important work of calling a permanent rector in the coming months.

In 2023 our ministries continued in a variety of ways as documented in this annual report. I express my gratitude for each of our ministry leaders and parishioners who collaborated in ministry together this year. Each of you has brought the kingdom of God closer to our community through your acts, your prayers, and your worship.

Lastly, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my fellow members of the Vestry. Your commitment, wisdom, and tireless efforts have played a pivotal role in steering our parish through times of change. Together, we remain united in our mission to grow the spiritual well-being of our community.

Phillip Kimbrough (Junior Warden)

John Hannan

Jon Buchanan

Pat Mitchell

Bertha Spadone

Brian Rockhold (Moved)

Chantal Guadiano (Term Ending)

Vyonne Carter-Johnson (Term Ending)

Robert Burlingame (Clerk)

Gail Keller (Treasurer)

As we look forward to the future with optimism and faith, let us continue to support one another on our collective journey of growth and spiritual fulfillment.

Colin Dunham

Senior Warden | Grace Episcopal Church

## Junior Warden's Report

The Junior Warden represents the Laity as the third senior officer in the line of progression in the governance of a parish. They serve to assist the Priest and represent the Senior Warden in their absence.

We at Grace Episcopal Church enjoy a beautiful campus. It is the responsibility of the Junior Warden to coordinate the upkeep of the building and grounds of our site. We the vestry decided to adopt a slogan "IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING." Thanks all of you who came forward with all your input on things that I did not see or consider, i.e., city responsibilities abutted to our property (311 reporting to city), meditational and community gardens.

Our sexton, Mario, has been instrumental in completing some of the projects around our campus, particularly, the mold abatement, duct and register cleaning/replacement. His job description is now being redefined. We may have to schedule more workdays and/or contract more third parties to do work where necessary. We do not know exactly how this change will affect us overall.

The third parties that we brought in were for (1) rehangng front security gate, (2) repairing leak in sanctuary near sacristy, (3) remove and replace hot water heater (boiler), (4) repair leaks in women and men's rooms, (5) horticulturist for meditation garden, (6) locksmiths to replace lock cylinders, (7) underground leak detection units/repairs, (8) mold abatement services, (9) re-installing parking lot lighting, (10) window washers, (11) lawn mowing service, (12) HVAC services.

Third party services can be expensive. We must consider preventative maintenance as a method of keeping some of the high dollar items at a minimum. Just to reiterate, "IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING."

Our building has been around for a long time and is in decent shape, however the Diocese is sending a building inspector to help us. He will report back to the Diocese with suggested repairs and whether or not Grace Church is eligible for extra funding to make the suggested repairs.

I thank all of you for allowing me to serve you as Jr. Warden .

HUMBLY SUBMITTED,

Phillip G. Kimbrough Sr.

# Grace Episcopal School Annual Report, January 21, 2024

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	79	83	78	101	96	73	91	80
Feb	86	85	80	102	97	75	93.5	83
Mar	89	85	85	102	97	76	93.5	82
Apr	96	86	86	104	97	77	95.5	81
May	96	86	89	105	95	83	97.5	81
Jun	96	89	90	105	66	100	105	98
Jul	96	84	93	108	54	97	100	101
Aug	91	82	93	110	62	95	104	101
Sep	81	70	90	95	62	89	74	85
Oct	82	72	94	96	64	90	74	86
Nov	83	73	96	96	67	90	76	85
Dec	85	73	98	95	68	93	76	84

Happy New Year!

Grace had steady, strong enrollment all year and even added 7 new students this January. We have been working on 14 staff getting their CDA (child development associate), enhancing continuing education and professional development, and learning best practices in education. Our staff is more informed, organized, and collaborative after hard work in 2023! The school board and vestry have made plans to have a more cohesive relationship to ensure a well-run program.

We have created a more streamlined admissions and enrollment process, adding both Intent to Re-Enroll earlier in the school year and admission play dates. We've added an enrichment program that includes music, move and groove, art, and science to our student's daily schedule. We have done a budget overhaul to find ways to further financially assist the church and work towards paying our teachers a living wage. We have created a room parent program that will eventually become a full-fledged PTO.

We have worked hard and continue to improve our parent and staff communication and clarified and simplified policies and expectations across the board. We are also working to create a scope and sequence and school wide curriculum to further enhance our academic program.

It has been a wonderful first year as Grace Episcopal School's Head of School. I want to thank the wonderful teachers, my incredible administrative team, and the students and families for making this a fun, energetic, educational year. I'm excited for the year ahead and all the ways we can make Grace even stronger!

Warmly,

Caitlin Powell

Head of School, Grace Episcopal School

## Friends of Grace Church Music Committee

On Sunday, December 3, 2023, the Chair of Friends Grace Music Committee, John Graham, and members of the Committee met for the first time. Committee members are C.L. Johnson, Philip Montgomery, Gabriela "Gaby" Austgen, Araceli Johnson, Peter Keolling, and Lauren Johnson.

All agreed Grace Church's musicians and singers, under the leadership of Paul English, were a vital part of the ministry of Grace Episcopal Church and that we need the support of every member of Grace Church if we wanted to keep the music ministry. Peter Koelling said: "I believe our music ministry is a major reason our church has remained stable during this transition time as we search for a new rector." Everyone agreed.

The problem Grace Church faces is that a grant from the Diocese of Texas will end in June and the grant has decreased annually and will only be \$20K in 2024. An additional \$25K is needed to maintain our music ministry which has been a unique blessing to us all.

Among the musicians are Paul English, noted composer and Jazz performing artist, who has brought together a remarkable team of musicians and singers. Among them are Barrett Sills, first Chair Celloist for the Houston Ballet and Houston Grand Opera; Horace Alexander Young III, who is an incredible musician (Saxophone and Flute), and vocal soloist; Kate Moore, an outstanding violinist and former member of Houston Ballet and Grand Opera; and Rob Erickson, drummer. In addition, our singers include Brady Weldon, beloved baritone who recently received his master's degree in music; Lindsey Weissman, who currently studies opera at the Moore School of Music at the University of Houston, and Mitzi Coleman, a talented alto and longtime parishioner.

Notably, several of our musicians and singers serve voluntarily and receive no payment. And, all of our musicians and singers have expressed their love for serving at Grace Church week after week. They trust that members of the church have been blessed by their ministry and will want to support the Music Ministry at Grace in Houston.

On December 10, 2023, John Graham presented the challenge to the church -- every member of the church was invited to pledge to give to keep our musicians and singers at Grace church. The response was an enthusiastic demonstration of great appreciation for our musicians and singers.

In order to keep our musicians and singer team together, every member of the church will need to personally make a contribution to the Music Ministry Fund at Grace. As of January 14, 2024 a total of \$ 19,700 has been pledged. Another \$10,000 is needed to fully fund our music ministry.

This amount pledged so far is a major step by a small number of individuals to keeping our music ministry; however, every member of Grace Church needs to contribute to our Music Ministry Fund. The amount of each contribution is not as important as that all members of the parish participate and demonstrate they are truly a "friend" of the music ministry at Grace Church.

John Graham, Chair of Friends of Music Committee for Grace Church



## Healing Prayer Ministry

The Healing Prayer ministry offers individual prayer time for specific prayers. We are available each Sunday in the Columbarium Chapel for anointing with oil and individual prayer. We offer hands on intercessions with you for God's Will.

Your leaders this past year were Norma Burlingame, Alyson Rockhold, Bertha Spadone, and Cheryl Kimbrough. We are looking for more leaders. Contact Rev. Wendy or Rev. Leah if this ministry appeals to you.

## Worship Ministry

The Worship Ministry at Grace Episcopal Church includes Lectors, Intercessors, and Eucharistic Ministers (EMs).

**Acolytes:** Altar servers must be in the 5th grade or above to serve at our parish. These young people serve at weekend Masses, reconciliation services, and other liturgical celebrations, such as Stations of the Cross. Adults usually serve daily morning Mass. So, this is the one ministry that is open to persons of all ages!

**Eucharistic Ministers:** A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the chalice at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist.

**Intercessor:** An intercessor is one who prays an intercessory prayer. The term indicates one who leads the Prayers of the People, which are prayers of intercession.

**Lector:** The office of Reader, or Lector, is among the oldest, if not the oldest of liturgical lay ministries. Lectors proclaim the readings of the scripture during the celebration of the Mass and read the general intercessions.

**Ushers:** Ushers do much more than just seat people, take up the collection, and stand watch in case of emergency. They are the "open doors" to fellow worshipers; they welcome each new arrival and point them towards Christ.

As with each year at this time, I take this time to thank the laity (Ministers of the Word and Sacraments), those who dedicated themselves to the Worship Services at Grace. They serve Grace Episcopal Church congregation with humility and grace. Their service to us is valued, treasured, and appreciated.

If you are interested in any of these ministries, I extend an invitation to you to join us. If you have any regarding our liturgical ministries, please contact me ([verger@graceinhouston.org](mailto:verger@graceinhouston.org)) or The Rev Leah Wise ([curate@graceinhouston.org](mailto:curate@graceinhouston.org)) or The Rev. Wendy Wilkinson ([InterimRector@graceinhouston.org](mailto:InterimRector@graceinhouston.org)).

It is with my most heartfelt thanks I present our Liturgical Team and say, "Thank you all for your service to God and His people."

It is with my most heartfelt thanks I present our Liturgical Team and say, "Thank you all for your service to God and His people."

**2022 – Acolytes, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Intercessors, & Ushers:**

<b>Eucharistic Ministers:</b>	<b>Lectors &amp; Intercessors (Prayers of the</b>		<b>Acolytes:</b>	<b>Ushers:</b>
Thomas Borowski Robert Burlingame Colin Dunham Phillip Kimbrough Natalia Maradiaga Philip Montgomery	Norma Burlingame <b>Sara Bushell*</b> Colin Dunham <b>Melissa Duran*</b> Grace Farquhar Chantal Gaudiano John Hannan Nancy Hannan Aiden Hinkson Kasia Hinkson Cecelia Johnson Lauren Johnson	Nick Johnson Gail Keller Cheryl Kimbrough Phillip Kimbrough Maleydy Maradiaga <b>Tami Painter*</b> Phil Pilibosian Pat Powell <b>Brian Rockhold*</b> <b>Fred Scott*</b> Sarah Scott Chris Spadone <b>Charlie Spruell*</b>	Thomas Borowski Colin Dunham Aiden Hinkson Maleydy Maradiaga Sarah Scott	Stephanie Antich Colin Dunham Grace Farquhar Aiden Hinkson Nick Johnson Araceli Jonsson Gail Keller Philip Montgomery Astride Point du Jour Nnadi Chloe Porter <b>Brian Rockhold*</b> Suzy Woodard
<b>Backup:      Vyonne Carter-Johnson      The Rev Dawn Shepler</b>				

**\*Those who served in 2023 but no longer serve at Grace.**

Respectfully submitted,  
 Vyonne Carter-Johnson, FVGEC

## **Interfaith Committee**

Our Interfaith Music and Dance on the Labyrinth evening this fall was especially meaningful, given all the strife and disunity in the world at this time. After a welcome by Interim Rector Wendy Wilkerson to the 100 people gathered in the labyrinth garden, a Muslim imam called us to prayer, followed by a Whirling Dervish. Two cantors sang Jewish songs, followed by the mantra and dance of the Hare Krishnas. Paul English and his group offered several of their jazz pieces which we all love at Grace.

After a Buddhist monk chanted a sutra calling for unity of all peoples, attendees gathered on the labyrinth, holding hands and dancing in unity. Pam Lewis, a representative from Compassionate Houston, thanked people for being there and remarked our labyrinth event is her favorite among all the many events during Compassionate Houston Week. And thanks to Charlie Spruell for videoing the event so that we could post it on our Grace website. And thanks to Mitzi Coleman and Bertha Spadone for serving on the interfaith committee with me and pulling off the event so successfully, even with all the challenges of lighting the garden for the 6:30 event held on a dark evening!

Submitted by Helen Rose Ebaugh, Chair

## **Grace At Lunch**

Grace at Lunch, formally know as Senior Lunch before COVID hit, is now back and doing well. We meet at area restaurants on the second Thursday of each month at 11:30 A.M. Usually at least 8-12 people come for a good meal and fellowship.

Please sign up in the Parrish Hall if you wish to attend or give me a call.

Respectfully submitted,

Norma Burlingame

## **Men of Grace**

The Men of Grace have been meeting once a week by Zoom for several years. The link can be found on GraceLine.

Generally, 8-12 attend. We begin at 9:00 on Saturday morning and promptly end at 10:00. We have several frequent attenders who no longer attend Grace since they are now out of town. I send out a reminder every Friday, and you can request being added to the list by emailing me at [burlinRS@gmail.com](mailto:burlinRS@gmail.com). But you don't need an invitation.

In addition, we organize and staff the Pancake supper on Fat Tuesday.

Robert Burlingame

## Women's Zoom Meeting

A group of about six women come together on Tuesday evening at 7pm for one hour to share their lives. All women of Grace are welcome to join. The Graceline has the link to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Norma Burlingame

## St. Clare Chapter of the Daughters of the King

As Daughters, we are charged with following a Rule of Life. This encompasses a discipline of Christian ideals of daily prayer, study and action. Daughters are dedicated to strengthening the spiritual life of our church. We are always looking to add additional Daughters to our chapter.

Our organization meets the first Saturday of every month for fellowship and study at 10 a.m. in the Flex Room. We send out prayer requests via email for church members and the community at large on a regular basis.

Daughters also serve as coffee hosts for the congregation the first Sunday of every month and organize repasts for funerals, baptisms, visiting clergy, and other church related activities.

We were able to assist with baptismal receptions for Camden Farley, Mildred Lee La Mantia, Chloe Zongo and Stephanie Antich in 2023. We traditionally sponsor both spring and fall retreats which are open to all. They provide a time for reflection and renewal of our faith journey. We have continued to support the BIM ministry at Grace by giving a yearly donation. We also encourage our members to participate in the monthly food drives by giving food and financial donations. Along with Valerie Carter, we provide assistance for Grace's Chrismon Tree Decorating Service to begin the Advent season.

Are you interested in becoming a Daughter? Please contact Cecelia Johnson at [cecedok1@gmail.com](mailto:cecedok1@gmail.com) or ask any Daughter for additional information about our organization. Please join us at our monthly meeting, we will be happy to have you!

Submitted by

Cecelia G. Johnson

## Community Garden

The Community Garden is a labor of love that provides nutritious, in-season food to our direct neighbors. Community members are invited to harvest their own vegetables as needed. Collared greens, okra, and herbs like cilantro are favorites. In addition, newcomers and parishioners are offered produce whenever they inquire. Gardening day is the 2nd Saturday of the month from 9-12. Please contact Bertha Spadone: [berthaspadone6360@gmail.com](mailto:berthaspadone6360@gmail.com)

# **Sacramental Ministry**

## **Role for the Altar Guild**

The duty of the altar guild is to prepare all things necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist and any other sacraments and offices of the church. All of these services can be found in the Book of Common Prayer. Liturgy begins and ends with the Altar Guild Members care for the sacred vessels, the bread and the wine, the fair linens and hangings also candles and torches used during worship in the Sanctuary.

## **Members Assisting with Sacramental Duties**

I am extremely grateful to the following people for their dedication and for being on constant rotation for sacramental duties. Many thanks for your services: Traci Bennett, Lisa Carter, Chantal Gaudiano, Dorothy Hickman-Joseph, Dorothy provides greenery when needed for our services. Would also like to thank Mario Ruiz, our Sexton. Year after year Mario has been setting up the Chrismond Tree and even collecting flowers for us when necessary.

Men and women of Grace, love for you to come and join this ministry. It's not difficult or complex as it appears; we have cheat sheets. Also, artistic ability not necessary but welcome.

In Jesus' name,  
Valerie Carter

## **Outreach**

Outreach ministries and programs have been in flux due to transitions in lay leaders throughout 2023. Still, we had a fruitful year. Rev. Leah called a short-term Outreach Discernment Committee in the winter in order to assess the call and passions of Grace in this time and place. The Committee proposed several initiatives, including Service Navigation programs, ESL courses, community music events, and emergency food bags.

We immediately launched Grace2Go 2.0 to provide emergency food and provisions to our neighbors as a stop gap before they can get to BIM. Thank you to Sarah Scott for initiative in building out this program. Chuck Hooten, our occasional organist, was able to provide pro bono legal assistance to community members. And don't forget the Pumpkin Patch, which was tremendously successful at building first connections with Grace's neighbors.

In the fall, we prepared to launch ESL courses in partnership with Corpus Christi Catholic Church. Meanwhile, BIM worked to locate a suitable space to relocate their Braes Resale Shop. Clergy and staff were able to provide financial assistance to several neighbors in tandem with financial services at BIM. Thank you for your continued generosity. In 2024, we seek a new BIM board member and a ministry leader for Outreach.

Submitted by The Rev. Leah Wise

## **Adult Formation**

An Adult Formation Class meets every Sunday morning at 9:00 in the Parish Hall. It is an open group and all are welcome to join us to experience a wide variety of thoughtful classes and discussions. Please try it.

We started 2023 with a series of classes on Christian Service and Outreach by The Rev. Scott Painter. Other presenters followed: Pastor Marvin Havard from Salem Lutheran on the LGBTQ Community, Eloy Montez from Braes Interfaith Ministries and Amy Waltz-Reasonover from the Community for the Deaf.

The Lenten series was an extensive coverage of the Book of Common Prayer by The Rev Leah Wise. She helped us understand its history, divisions, contents and liturgical and personal use.

In May, Philip Montgomery facilitated many interesting discussions on: The Ferment of the Early Church. Through his knowledge of the book he assisted our understanding of how the early church grew and still remains today.

Summer found Daniel Coleman expounding on Philippians and as always, he presented an excellent Scripture study.

Fall arrived and Nick Johnson taught 4 lessons on Stewardship. He delivered very clear information about economics in general and cleverly put that in the context of the church, love and spiritual giving.

Dr. Fred Smith was planning a comprehensive study of The Beloved Community and expertly shifted somewhat to Violence in Religion at the last minute ... just PRIOR to the Hamas attack on Israel! He covered a wide field of information, delivered with care and wisdom, provoking a range of questions and deep thinking. The study was timely and enlightening.

In December, The Rev Leah Wise and The Rev Wendy Wilkinson started a class on People of the Way, Renewing Episcopal Identity by Dwight Zscheille and have artfully facilitated some vigorous conversation and engagement. It will continue into the new year.

Pat Graham and Helen Rose Ebaugh

## **Youngish Adults**

Grace Youngish Adults is a social group that meets on the last Thursday of every month at Watershed Pub on West Belfort for fun and fellowship. Members and friends in their 20s, 30s, and 40s are invited to attend.

Sarah Scott

## **Children's Ministry**

2023 saw significant growth in our children's formation and ministry programs. We designed a "Pray Ground" for use by young children and their families during services, and brought on the talented Liz Luna to facilitate Children's Chapel during the 10 am service. As a result, we are seeing many more children and their families regularly attend church. We hope to launch a youth group and provide more bilingual formation opportunities in the near future.

## Music by Paul English

I am thankful and honored to complete another year as music director at Grace Episcopal Church! I said this last year, but I can say it again: "Every week I am surrounded by some of the very finest musicians in our city in a house of worship that I have grown to love". It is such a joy for all of us to bring music into the halls of our small but mighty church!

Here is a little about the members of our ensemble:

### **Lindsey Weissman (singer):**

Lindsey Weissman is a mezzo-soprano from Latham, New York. She moved to Houston last summer to pursue a Master of Music in Opera Performance & Pedagogy at the Moore's Opera Center at the University of Houston on a graduate assistantship, for which she teaches undergraduate music theory and aural skills. After receiving her Bachelor's Degree in Voice Performance and Theatre and a minor in Jazz Studies from Ithaca College in 2020, Lindsey worked with Oswego Opera Theatre, Opera Ithaca, and the Opera Company of Middlebury. She then had the privilege to spend a year as the interim Head of Vocal Arts and Choir Director at South Seneca Middle and High School in upstate NY, where her musical aspirations were renewed and inspired by the joy and passion of her students. She continues to teach many of them remotely in her private voice studio, which has grown to include students from UH and the greater Houston community. This summer, Lindsey joined the voice faculty at Ithaca College for the prestigious Summer Music Academy for high schoolers. She also has an extensive background in dance and spends her free time finding yoga and ballet classes around Houston, fueling her newfound love of authentic Tex-Mex, reading British crime novels, and—one of her favorite parts of living in Houston—making music at Grace each week.

Upcoming performances include her second engagements with the Moore's Opera Center at UH in *The Merry Widow* (February 1-4) and as *Dorabella* in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (April 11-14), and she'd love to see you all there!

### **Brady Weldon (singer):**

Brady Weldon serves as assistant choir director at Bellaire High School. An active member of the Houston choral community, Brady has sung with the professional choir, Cantare Houston, since 2017. Working in church music since he was sixteen, Brady brings a depth of experience in all forms of worship music. Brady holds a BM in Music Education from Stephen F. Austin State University, and a M.M.E in Choral Music Education from Texas State University.

### **Rob Erickson (percussion):**

Rob Erickson is a jazz musician who joined Grace a year-and-a-half ago. He plays percussion in Grace's music ensemble.



### **Kate Moore (violin, viola, mandolin and percussion) :**

Like Schroeder in the Peanuts cartoons, Kate began picking out familiar songs at age 5 on a toy piano. At age 9, she began studies on piano and violin with Joy Plesner, of the Houston Symphony. Her other major teachers and mentors were Fredell Lack and Henry Rubin. After college, Kate played with Houston Ballet Orchestra, and with the opera under John DeMain. She then played under contract with the El Paso Symphony Orchestra, and the El Paso Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra for a number of years, enjoying the Southwest and its countryside and cuisine, and trips across the border after concerts. When family health concerns occurred, Kate returned to Houston and began free-lancing and teaching strings privately and also part-time at Stratford High School.

Other interests include cooking, reading, dance and fitness, hiking, community and church volunteer work, and spending time with family and friends. Kate has been married for 29 years to retired attorney and Yale Law School alumnus Roland Moore. They share a mutual love of people and places and hope to resume their travels and journeys sometime in the not-too-distant future.

### **Barry Sills (cello):**

Barry Sills, prizewinning cellist in competitions in Germany, France, and Brazil, is also a recognized artist on baroque cello and viola da gamba. As a scholarship student at Yale he was the first recipient of the prestigious Maxwell Belding Internship Award given by the Yale School of Music and while still an undergraduate was teaching assistant to Aldo Parisot. He performed with the Saarländisches Staatstheater in Germany and the Nouvel Orchestre Philharmonique of Radio France in Paris and also taught at the Conservatoire National de Boulogne-Billancourt. Performing widely in France and Germany, he also toured Japan for three summers with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. As a recitalist, he has performed on three continents, touring South America as an Artistic Ambassador, and he has been a touring artist for the Texas Commission on the Arts.

In Houston he performs regularly with Ars Lyrica Houston, Bach Society, and St. Cecilia Chamber Music. He was co-founder and artistic director of Camerata Ventapane which presented concerts in Houston and Mexico, and for six consecutive years he was artistic director of the Festival de Musica Barroca in San Miguel de Allende. He has been principal cellist of Houston Ballet and Houston Grand Opera since 2001.

### **Paul English (piano, music director):**

Paul is an internationally recognized composer, recording artist, producer and educator. He has performed and recorded with such jazz greats as Dizzy Gillespie, Arnett Cobb, Kirk Whalum and David Liebman and he has arranged and produced a number of jazz and classical recordings, including a 2013 collaboration with country legends Willie Nelson, Ray Price and Johnny Bush...

He has composed three works for symphony orchestra and numerous chamber works as well as music for film, radio and stage. His sacred works include "The Gospel According to John Coltrane" for jazz quartet and choir (2007) and "Wrestling with My God" for choir and chamber ensemble, text by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1997). He has arranged a number of traditional, jazz and gospel hymns and has composed several of his own original hymns and other works on sacred texts.

Mr. English has served on the faculties of Texas Tech University, Sam Houston State University, San Jacinto College and Houston Community College. He is an alumnus of The University of Miami and The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University (B.M, M.M.), where he studied music composition with his friend and mentor, Dr. Paul Cooper.

### **Horace Alexander Young (saxophone, flute, vocals):**

Horace Alexander Young III is a native Houstonian, international recording artist and renowned educator. He spent several years as a visiting professor at Washington State University and Santa Fe University of Art and Design before returning to Houston last year. As an accomplished jazz recording artist, he has performed with such greats as B B King, Bill Withers, Freddy Fender, McCoy Tyner, Norman Brown and Toots Thielemans. He holds a Master of Music degree from Washington State University after studies at Texas Southern University and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

Since joining our music ensemble, Mr. Young has blessed our worship services with the very moving sounds of his saxophone, flute and voice.

In 2023 we celebrated several special music presentations, a Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper with authentic live Latin jazz. Music in the Pumpkin Patch this fall brought our neighbors onto the pumpkin patch to stop and listen to the quarter. Our musicians provided Grace's participation in the Interfaith Labyrinth Service where people and musicians from several area faith communities gathered to pray for peace and unity in our world. All this and, of course, the very special music presentations at Easter and Christmas and special guest appearances by musicians from the community and from within our own congregation. What a wonderful year!

As Grace grows, so does our music program. And I feel and hope that the music program is and can be a continuing part of that growth. 2024 promises many great things for our church. Glad to be here! Thank you!

Paul English