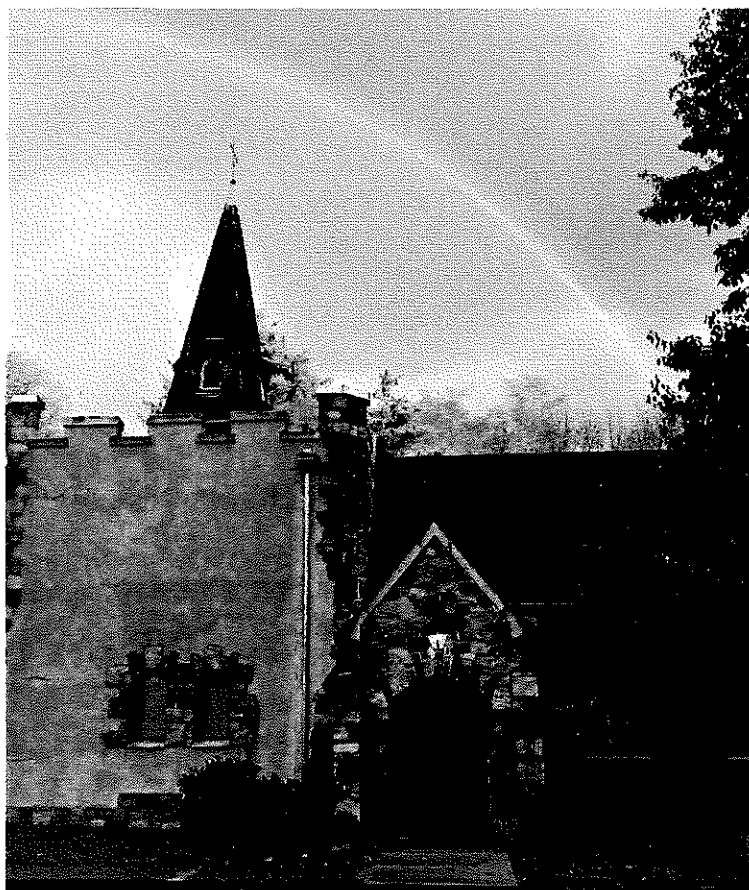




Grace Church

THE REV. DR. MATTHEW CALKINS, RECTOR



ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 21, 2024

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AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

OPENING PRAYER AND WELCOMING REMARKS

RECOGNITION OF QUORUM

ELECTION OF VESTRY MEMBERS AND WARDEN

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

RECEPTION OF MINISTRY REPORTS

BUDGET AND STEWARDSHIP PRESENTATION

CHRISTIAN FORMATION PRESENTATION

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

DISCUSSION: DIOCESAN LISTENING PROJECT

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Nominating Committee Report

2023 Vestry

Wardens:

Evelyn Garzetta (elected 2022, eligible for re-election to second term this year)

Ron Mustello (re-elected to second term 2023)

Vestry:

William Cox (elected 2023)

Molly Hurley (elected 2022)

Lisa Lacey (re-elected second term 2023)

Valerie LaRobardier (elected 2021, serving as clerk, eligible for re-election to second term this year)

William Taylor (elected 2021, eligible for re-election to second term this year)

Marian Thompson (elected 2021, eligible for re-election to second term this year)

Amanda Williams (re-elected to second term 2023)

Rotating off (none this year)

2024 Nominations:

For Warden:

Evelyn Garzetta

For Vestry:

Valerie LaRobardier (2nd term)

William Taylor (2nd term)

Marian Thompson (2nd term)

Rector's Report

In 2023 the Grace Church community continued to emerge from the radical upheaval of the 2020-2022 COVID pandemic. Church attendance climbed back—we went from an average Sunday attendance (ASA) of 49 in 2022 to 63 in 2023—but with distinct changes in patterns of attendance.

One change is part of a trend that long predates COVID: for decades and for many reasons, traditional patterns of multi-generational family attendance have diminished across almost all churches and other institutions in America (as happened earlier in Europe). This is also true at Grace: fewer children and youth attended regularly in 2023 than in pre-COVID years. Decreased attendance by families with children was not due to lack of programming—in addition to our family oriented service offered on the first Sunday of each month, on other Sundays in the academic year the Rev. Alison Quin offered a prepared children's chapel for the first part of our service—but sometimes there were no children in church, at other times only one or a few (but they enjoyed the story telling format nevertheless). On the positive side, we had a good number of baptisms, and a strong group of young readers (kindergarten through second grade) attended a three week Holy Communion class and joined me behind the altar one Sunday. We had two teenagers attend confirmation class; they joined two young adults from Grace Year and an older member for confirmation or reception at the Cathedral of St John the Divine. Our young adult service program, Grace Year, had a wonderful cohort for the 2022-2023 year, but, unfortunately, we did not receive enough applications to fill the program minimum in 2023-2024. So we are taking a "sabbath" break on GY. Nevertheless, the Vestry and I feel that it is imperative to continue to offer services and instruction for children on Sundays. And Alison and Ben York started a new youth group that meets every other week—a small but mighty group—and Alison and others are making plans for a regional non-residential young adult program. If you would like to help out with children, youth or young adult ministries, please let us know!

A positive change has been the growth of our Spanish language ministry. With the help of Padre Rigoberto Avila, who very graciously makes the trip from his home in New Paltz, we offered a full Eucharist service, with music and fellowship meal on the first Wednesday of every month except December. In December we hosted a regional celebration of the Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe. The Wednesday services averaged around 18 on a regular basis but roughly 100 attended the Guadalupe service, which included Bishop Heyd as celebrant and a procession of our statue of the Virgin of Guadalupe and a mariachi band. A first for Grace Church.

Bishop Heyd was also on hand to help rededicate the Resurrection window on the feast day of Mary Magdalene, July 22. The window had been removed, carefully cleansed and restored, and then set back in the frame, now turned outward toward Franklin Avenue and lit by a screen draped behind the organ. This beautiful and historic Maitland Armstrong masterpiece now shines out at night and is seen and admired widely—after fifty years being hidden behind the organ. It was truly a joyous occasion. Many contributed to the effort and a plaque recognizing significant contributions will be dedicated this year. Our consultant Brienne van Vorst is herself a treasure; she is working on a scholarly article that will spread the word; we may become a must see site for Mary Magdalene pilgrims and stained glass connoisseurs.

There were many other notable occasions worth recalling: the Rev. Elliott Lindsley receiving the Bishop's Cross—to his surprise—at a clergy luncheon with Bishop Dietsche hosted by Grace; Molly O'Neil Frank, who has been assisting us a seminarian since 2022 was ordained at the Cathedral of St John the Divine—twice (once as deacon, once as priest)—she now serves and preaches each month as part of our clergy rotation. In addition to the special services already mentioned, we had well attended Holy Week and Christmas services and a beautiful day for our annual interfaith Blessing Our Sacred Earth service at Innisfree with clergy from many faith traditions, including this year Bahai as well as Hindu, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Native American and Christian. We had successful fellowship and fundraising events, including pancake and pasta dinners, both a spring rummage sale and a Christmas bazaar—and a summer party and fundraiser hosted by the Richards family at their Shady Knolls orchard and Distillery. Thanks to everyone who helped in all of these. Missing this year—and breaking a long tradition—was our annual golf and dinner benefit. We shall see what happens next.

I would also like to give a shout out to our music program. Suzanne McDonald has done great work with our small but mighty women's choir, as well as playing both organ and piano superlatively. The choir sang more beautifully each week as the year came to a close, culminating in a concert, Music for the Meditative Soul and a very special later service of Christmas Eve. They are assisted by the gifted Rachel Bazaz, as soloist, who is able to be with us thanks to a generous and anonymous donor. Whoever you are thank you! I would also like to thank Heather Holihan Guarnieri, who provides contemporary music on the first and fifth Sundays—we are truly blessed to have you with us.

Our outreach programs continue to develop, especially NEDIS (Northeast Dutchess Immigrant Services), formerly Grace Immigrant Outreach, under the leadership of Evelyn Garzetta. They are maturing as an organization and providing much needed services to our neighbors in need. Our Preschool under Maureen Sarma had a good year—and is adjusting to the new availability of preschool in the public schools for 4 to 5 year olds. I have written above about Grace Year—and Alison's report is below—but I would like to take this opportunity to thank this past year's assistant director Ben York for his work with the program and also for helping with our worship services, especially the Spanish language services, and helping lead the youth group. This in addition to his work with NEDIS.

If I were to thank everyone who makes this church special this report would run several more pages, but special thanks goes to Jean Hayes and the altar guild, Lynda Boice and Pam Freeman for all they do, for Alex Freeman on video (with assists from Tim Sharpe and Kurt Pragman), and for all of our worship team members—ushers, lay readers, chalice bearers and acolytes—with again thanks to Ben York for his work in helping train, coordinate and schedule. The Vestry has worked long and hard to make sure our buildings and grounds are maintained and improved, to carefully watch our expenses and help raise the income necessary to fund our staff, programs and operating costs. Special thanks to Cathy Shanks, our treasurer, and Megan Conte, a member and accountant, who helped her and David Swift update our bookkeeping system. Cindy Schmoke, as always, was an indispensable part of getting all things done. Evelyn Garzetta and Ron Mustello did a great job as wardens—I thank them for their wise counsel and readiness to dig in. Finally, we were so blessed to have the Rev. Alison Quin with us in 2023—and through

June in 2024. She is a great colleague and friend and I cannot thank her enough for being here with us. Amazing Grace indeed.

Worship Report 2023

108 Sunday Eucharist services, total attendance 3342, average Sunday attendance (not including online), 63, up from 2554 total and ASA 49 in 2022.

12 Spanish language Eucharists, including special regional celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, total attendance 311, avg. 26. First full year with Padre Rigoberto Avila

3 Quinceaneras, average attendance 48, led by Padre Avila.

13 weeks (65 services) of 7:30 AM Morning Prayer lead by Will Cox beginning in October

56 Wednesday midday Eucharists, including 12 at the Fountains

11 baptisms: Blake Kozlowski, Lucas Pelosi, Jessica Davis, Jacob Holihan Tucker, Evelyn O'Brien, Sybil Richards, Quin Wilson, Haley Frederick, Ryleigh O'Dowd, Savannah Darling, Luisa Treu

5 Confirmations/receptions: Lucas Pelosi, Jessica Davis, Nicholas Dyson, Will Cox, Ben York

1 marriage: Kevin Burr & Wendy McCarthy

7 burials: Patricia Reilly, James Quigley, Vernilla Cunningham, Eleanor Sloan, Ruth Hitsman Westkaemper, Richard Kastel, Debra Hartwick

Active clergy: Matthew Calkins, Alison Quin and Molly Frank (ordained to the diaconate 3/4 and to the priesthood 9/16, Cathedral of St John the Divine); monthly Spanish services led by Padre Rigoberto Avila of Buen pastor, Newburgh; priest associates: Elliott Lindsley, Michael Shafer.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Dr. Matthew Calkins, Rector

WARDEN'S REPORT

The Grace Church community has had a great deal of activity this year, here are some of the highlights-

Budgeting and Financial Status:

Each year, the Vestry spends countless hours thinking about and planning for the coming fiscal year. Every year this task becomes more difficult, as income remains static (or decreases), while expenses continue to rise. We commend each and every Vestry member for their insight and thoughtfulness in preparing and adhering to a realistic budget. We were very fortunate this year, in that we had some Christmas season support in the form of pledges and donations that helped us to finish strong. That said, we count on every member of the Congregation to continue to support our Church financially and spiritually- and tell others of the wonderful work we are doing and the community we have created.

Grace Year:

As you probably know, Grace Year wrapped up this past summer and there will be a pause in restarting the program in 2024. Candidates for the program were simply not available.

However, we can all be very pleased with the success of the program, and how we have positively impacted these young adult's lives, and how those young people have impacted the people of Grace. What a pleasure it has been to watch these folks grow and find their paths in

life and see some of them continue to give back to Grace. We are fortunate to have the likes of young people like Ben York in our community, thanks to the Grace Year program. A very special thank you to Alison Quin for her patience and unwavering dedication to Grace....

Bazaar and Cookie sale:

Another amazing and record setting event in the books! The Parish Hall was transformed into a seasonal showcase of baked goods and sale products that offered something for everyone. Many, many hours of work and planning went into the sale, with many volunteers and bakers (too numerous) to thank. We'd like to especially thank Pam Freeman and Lynda Boisse for their time and effort for another great fundraiser. If you didn't attend, you missed out- put it on your calendar for next year!

Shrove Tuesday Supper and the Pasta Dinner:

The many "Men of Grace" turned out in full force to whip up some pancakes and the fixin's for our annual Shrove Tuesday supper. The event has been a longstanding tradition at Grace, and the MOG did not disappoint- pancakes with chocolate chips and blueberries were a hit, and attendance was great!

Additionally, the Men of Grace, in collaboration with Invite, Welcome, Connect also tried their hand at the first Pasta Dinner. Amanda Wilson and her team transformed the Parish Hall into an Italian Bistro, and a great meal and fellowship was enjoyed by many.

The end result was some great food, but most importantly, we built on our community- many long standing relationships are reinforced when people who don't get to see each other too often can get together, and also, many new relationships are formed as we experienced in each of these events. That's the magic of fellowship at Grace.

First Night:

For the first time in several years, Millbrook Rotary brought back "First Night", a New Year's Eve community gathering. The event featured live music, a puppet show, and an eclectic animal petting zoo. There were even balloon and facepainting activities for young and old. Grace Church was asked to host the zoo, puppet show and some live music, and the Vestry was happy to oblige. We look forward to an even bigger event next year.

Sunday school and new faces:

Our Sunday school program has been rekindled again, thanks to a new, younger generation of Grace Church congregants. Reverend Alison, Pam Freeman and others teach and volunteer to introduce our youngest parishioners to their journey to God. It's absolutely wonderful to see, and we look forward to many years to come.

So, you can see we've been very busy! It is our privilege to be your Wardens and we look forward to continuing to serve. If you have any questions, concerns or ideas, please reach out to us:

Ron Mustello c: 845.656.95959 blckdog9@optonline.net
Evelyn Garzetta c: 917.705.9600 evelynelizabethgarzetta@gmail.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

As you will see in this Annual Report, the financial information is presented as of yearend 2023 as well as the Vestry Approved proposed operating budget for 2024. The reports are broken down by Operating Income and Expenses, Non-Operating Restricted Funds, and Outreach Ministries. In addition, you will see beginning and ending balances for Preschool, Grace Year and NEDIS. Balances of our investment funds are also included.

2023 proved to be a challenging year for finances, but I am happy to report, that we ended up with a positive bottom line. Income is broken down by Plate, Pledges, Prepaid Pledges and Regular support. Due to the fact we were unable to hold our golf outing this year, which is our major fund raiser, we came up a little bit short of budget for fundraising income. However, we became creative and with a lot of hard work managed to raise over \$23,000. Program income was ahead of budget as this year we were able to get our full payment from the Preschool and our regular payment from NEDIS. Grace Church was blessed to have received very unexpected generous donations and you will see that number in Other Income.

On the expense side, we did our best to keep expenses in check. Property total was up, but that is due to increases in utilities and some repairs and maintenance we had to do. Our buildings are in good shape, but they do require tender loving care at times. We did have to take a draw from investment portfolio, but it is the intention to replenish the fund. As you all know, we finished the Stain Glass window project and while it took some time, it was worth the wait. Not only do we here at Grace get to appreciate the beauty and meaning of the window, but the Millbrook community also came out to support the project as well as the unveiling.

Our Grace year program ended its fifth year in June, taking a "sabbath" due to a drop in applications. Over its five-year history it has developed a small deficit in its account balance, but income from Fr. Suero's residence there beginning in July will be eliminating that. Current rental of the Vicarage will be self-supporting and any excess of income over expenses will be deferred for maintenance.

As mentioned, the Vestry approved 2024 budget is included. It is a very conservative budget but does project a shortfall. This will be monitored through the year and changes will be made if necessary.

I want to thank Cindy and David who help keep me straight to keep the Church running smoothly. I could not do this without them. To Fr. Matt and Rev. Alison thank you for your guidance. To all my fellow parishioners, who love this little Church at the top of Franklin Avenue as much as I do, I wish you a blessed 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Shanks

Grace Episcopal Church - Millbrook NY
List Chart of Accounts as of December 2023

Monday, January 15, 2024

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Account #	Account Name	Fund	Period Activity	YTD Balance
<i>Assets</i>				
101.000	Grace Church Cash-Checking		36,262.79	60,644.49
111.100	<i>Restricted Accounts</i>			
111.101	Cash - Altar Guild		357.00	1,204.23
111.102	Cash - The Abby Fund		0.00	2,450.00
111.103	Cash - Food Table		50.00	3,047.30
111.104	Cash - Grace Year (Old)		0.00	(4,473.66)
111.106	Cash - Kneelers		0.00	1,150.00
111.108	Cash - Lunch Box		266.26	660.89
111.109	Cash - Memorials		0.00	1,144.10
111.110	Cash - Memorial Garden		0.00	2,550.20
111.111	Cash - Men@Grace		0.00	1,367.38
111.113	Cash - Pre-School		(3,263.13)	27,234.36
111.116	Cash - Vicarage		0.00	38.84
111.117	Cash - Window/Stained Glass		0.00	12,701.00
111.118	Cash - Youth		299.00	999.00
111.119	Cash - Charitable Passthroughs		82.00	82.00
111.122	Cash - Mutual Aid		0.00	585.00
111.124	Cash - Franklin Ave Window		0.00	17,141.30
111.127	Climate Change Conference		0.00	100.00
111.145	NEDIS money held by Grace Church		(239.00)	476.67
111.161	Cash - Hidden Angels Grief Support		0.00	1,000.00
111.164	Cash - Green Energy		0.00	1,400.00
111.165	Cash - Music and Arts		(600.00)	1,595.00
111.215	Cash - set aside for audit in 2020		0.00	4,500.00
	<i>Total Restricted Accounts</i>		<i>(\$3,047.87)</i>	<i>\$76,953.61</i>
112.000	Cash - Capital Improvement		0.00	24,962.46
113.000	Rector's Discretionary Fund		(3,700.00)	2,588.26

Grace Episcopal Church - Millbrook NY
Treasurer's Report as of December 2023 for Unrestricted General Fund

Thursday, January 4, 2024

Account Name	2023 End Of Year	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	Change from Previous Budget
Income				
Plate	9,400	5,000	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Pledge	133,644	150,000	\$ 150,000.00	\$ -
Prepaid Pledges	10,700	0	\$ -	\$ -
Regular Support Donations	14,178	10,000	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
3. PLEDGE, PLATE, SUPPORT	\$167,923	\$165,000	\$ 167,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Dyson Grant	75,000	75,000	\$ 75,000.00	\$ -
Tribute Garden Donation	15,000	15,000	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -
Grant Income	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$ 90,000.00	\$ -
Fundraising - Holiday Sale Inc.	4,612	3,500	\$ 3,500.00	\$ -
Fundraising - Jewelry Sales	307			
Fundraising - Rummage Sale	6,379	5,000	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Fundraising - Shady Knoll	10,114	20,500	\$ 10,000.00	\$ (10,500.00)
Fundraising Other	1,895		\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Fundraising Income	\$23,308	\$29,000	\$ 24,500.00	\$ (4,500.00)
(R) Altar Guild Income	2,420	3,000	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -
(R) Youth Income	850			
(Wo)Men@grace income	178			
Income From Programs	10,041	5,500	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 4,500.00
Parish Hall Income	2,560	4,000	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (1,000.00)
Program Income	\$16,049	\$12,500	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 3,500.00
Memorials - Unrestricted	20,000			
Other Income	27,446	15,000	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Other Income	\$47,446	\$15,000	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
5. OTHER OPERATING INCOME	\$176,804	\$146,500		
Invest. - Distributions	27,838	28,064	\$ 28,000.00	\$ (64.00)
4. MONEY FROM INVESTMENTS	\$27,838	\$28,064	\$ 28,000.00	\$ (64.00)
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$372,566	\$339,564	\$ 356,000.00	\$ 16,436.00
Expenses				
Diocesan Assessment	41,144	41,142	\$ 40,000.00	\$ (1,142.00)
12. ASSESSMENT	\$41,144	\$41,142	\$ 40,000.00	\$ (1,142.00)
Cleaning Expense	6,400	6,000	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 600.00
Electricity	5,714	6,000	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -
Fuel Oil	22,745	19,000	\$ 17,000.00	\$ (2,000.00)
Grounds Expense	4,070	3,000	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Housekeeping Supplies	639	300	\$ 600.00	\$ 300.00
Repairs & Maint. - Ordinary	4,692	4,000	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 500.00
Sanitation	1,575	1,300	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 200.00
Security Service	1,725	1,500	\$ 1,725.00	\$ 225.00
Snow Removal	2,400	3,000	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -
Vehicles (van and car)	294		\$ -	\$ -
Water/Sewer	1,690	1,100	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 600.00
Property Total	\$51,949	\$45,200	\$ 47,125.00	\$ 1,925.00
Rector	\$145,002	139,328	\$ 144,200.00	\$ 4,872.00
Music Director	\$27,647	26,985	\$ 27,810.00	\$ 825.00
Secretary	\$28,642	28,488	\$ 29,870.00	\$ 1,382.00
Bookkeeper	\$12,039	12,040	\$ 12,875.00	\$ 835.00
Clergy Associate	6,138	6,144	\$ 6,695.00	\$ 551.00
Communications	171		\$ -	\$ -
Program Development	\$6,309	\$6,144	\$ 6,695.00	\$ 551.00

	Personnel Total	\$219,641	\$212,985	\$	221,450.00	\$	8,465.00
(R) Altar Guild		1,785	3,000	\$	3,000.00	\$	-
(R) Music Expenses		3,275		\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
Altar - Other Supplies		1,581	400	\$	400.00	\$	-
Music Expenses		5,038	4,000	\$	3,000.00	\$	(1,000.00)
Organ Tuning & Maint		1,839	2,800	\$	2,800.00	\$	-
Special Services / Spanish, etc.		3,685	2,500	\$	4,000.00	\$	1,500.00
Supply Clergy		675		\$	700.00	\$	700.00
Technical Support		375	1,500	\$	400.00	\$	(1,100.00)
	Worship/Music	\$18,255	\$14,200	\$	15,300.00	\$	1,100.00
Advertising		634		\$	534.00	\$	534.00
Hospitality/Fellowship		94	1,000	\$	500.00	\$	(500.00)
Stewardship		353	250	\$	250.00	\$	-
	Parish Life	\$1,082	\$1,250	\$	1,284.00	\$	34.00
Sunday School		357	500	\$	500.00	\$	-
	Children/Family	\$357	\$500	\$	500.00	\$	-
(R) Youth Group / Connect		38				\$	-
Confirmation Class		227	200	\$	200.00	\$	-
	Youth Group	\$266	\$200	\$	200.00	\$	-
Adult Programs		218	400	\$	400.00	\$	-
Convention/Retreats/Leadership		730	1,000	\$	1,000.00	\$	-
	Adult Programs	\$948	\$1,400	\$	1,400.00	\$	-
	Program Total	\$20,909	\$17,550	\$	18,684.00	\$	1,134.00
Bulletins & Printing & newsletter		223	375	\$	375.00	\$	-
Computer and website Expense		1,613	1,250	\$	1,500.00	\$	250.00
Elevator		1,150	1,100	\$	1,150.00	\$	50.00
Equipment Leases		2,924	3,100	\$	3,100.00	\$	-
General Insurance		14,492	16,000	\$	18,000.00	\$	2,000.00
Kindred, bank, Paypal fees + loan interest		1,203	250	\$	600.00	\$	350.00
Miscellaneous		71	200	\$	200.00	\$	-
Periodicals/Subscriptions		425	500	\$	350.00	\$	(150.00)
Postage & Delivery		686	1,000	\$	1,000.00	\$	-
Supplies - Paper, Misc.		1,301	2,000	\$	2,000.00	\$	-
Telephone & Internet		2,627	2,500	\$	2,500.00	\$	-
Worker's Comp/Disability/Unemp. Insurance		1,474	1,500	\$	1,500.00	\$	-
	Administration Total	\$28,194	\$29,775	\$	32,275.00	\$	2,500.00
Fundraising - Holiday Sale Exp.		404					
Fundraising Shady Knoll		176					
Fundraising/Rummage Sale		95					
	Fundraising Total	\$675					
14. OPERATING EXPENSES		\$321,371	\$305,510	\$	319,534.00	\$	14,024.00
Outreach Program Support		5,509		\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00
13. OUTREACH		\$5,509		\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00
Mortgage Payments and Vicarage Expenses		271					
Vicarage Expenses		\$271					
15. MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS		\$271					
Total Expenses		\$368,296	\$346,652	\$	361,534.00	\$	14,882.00
Difference		\$4,270	(\$7,088)	\$	(5,534.00)	\$	1,554.00

2023 - 24 Preschool Cash Flow Statement (September - August)

Starting Balance	\$	7,062.04	
OPERATING INCOME			
Regular Preschool	\$	22,825.00	
Grants	\$	30,000.00	(\$20,000 from EGCMN- 5th of 5 in 23-24) (\$10,000 from Dyson - year 3 of 3 grant)
Donations/Gifts	\$	-	
Support from Church	\$	-	
	\$	52,825.00	
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Teachers (Diocese Salary)	\$	13,157.69	
Teachers (Diocese Hourly)	\$	-	
Unemployment	\$	-	
Teachers (Non-Payroll)	\$	15,845.71	
Cleaning	\$	429.22	
Enrichment	\$	-	
Church Overhead	\$	2,500.00	
To Reserves	\$	-	
Misc. Operating Costs	\$	2,683.39	
	\$	34,616.01	
Net Income/Loss	\$	18,208.99	
Balance	\$	25,271.03	

Investment Fund Balances

PEMS	\$	44,890.00	10/31/2023
DFMS	\$	473,912.00	9/30/2023
Meeker (Organ)	\$	11,120.00	10/31/2023
DFMS (Preschool)	\$	5,945.00	9/30/2023

	Historical DFMS Fund					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Beginning Balance	\$ 555,202	\$ 487,706	\$ 567,496	\$ 636,996	\$ 659,336	\$ 465,387
Dividends	\$ 24,004	\$ 25,136	\$ 24,968	\$ 24,604	\$ 25,985	\$ 25,483
Addition/(Withdrawal)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (13,000)	\$ (10,000)	\$ (40,000)	\$ (20,000)
Ending Balance	\$ 487,706	\$ 567,496	\$ 636,996	\$ 659,336	\$ 465,387	\$ 473,912
						(9/30/23)

Stewardship Report 2023

Stewardship at Grace Church Millbrook is the work of all of its members and friends. And thanks be to God, people give generously of their time, talent and treasure, because Grace's mission and ministry make a positive difference in their lives and in this community. We were blessed this year with unexpected donations and memorial gifts that helped make up a deficit in pledge income and the lack of our annual golf fund-raiser. Together with support from the Dyson and Tribute Garden foundations, investment dividends and other fund-raising efforts we managed to exceed our income expectations and end with a surplus. To all who support Grace in whatever way, a heartfelt thanks.

But the shortfall in formal pledge income is concerning. Total pledge income in 2023 was \$133,644, short of our goal of \$150,000. On the plus side, both plate and regular support donations exceeded budget expectations, and together with prepaid pledges for 2024, met our total pledge, plate and support goal. We hope to do this again in 2024—but as with last year we are finding fewer people filling out pledge cards. So far we are only about two thirds toward reaching this year's goal. To some extent, this reflects changing patterns of giving—some people give regularly or occasionally through online platforms (such as PayPal or Venmo) instead of sending in a pledge card. But it does make budget planning challenging. So please consider filling out a pledge card or sending an email to the office indicating your commitment to supporting Grace Church—after all, this is your church, and it depends on all of us to fund its important work.

the Stewardship Committee

Grace Church Buildings and Grounds Committee

Once again, our Grace Church campus has been very busy this past year.

With the Grace Year program on sabbatical, we took advantage of a vacant Vicarage and entered into a short term lease with Rev. Richard Suero. He and his wife took occupancy this summer. It's a convenient location for them to live while they shop for a permanent home. The lease fee will allow us to offset the expense of the building, while adding a little extra income to our bottom line.

We're also very involved in investigating the upgrade to electric heat pumps to comply with a mandate from the Diocese. We've solicited estimates for the Vicarage, Rectory, Parish Hall and the Church. Grants have been applied for to offset the installation costs and NYS rebates will also help to reduce overall costs. We'll see if we're successful in receiving the grants and proceed accordingly. The most interesting component of this upgrade is the possibility of air conditioning in the buildings!

Perhaps the most exciting project this year was the completion of the refurbishment and installation of our stained glass window. A beautiful dedication ceremony was held in April, and the finished product was unveiled. The Maitland Armstrong window was meticulously handled from start to finish, and our congregation, and our community will enjoy its presence for

generations to come. If you haven't seen our window gently glowing from our Church in the evening, please stop by after dusk- it's worth the trip.

I would like to thank our current committee members of Bill Hogan, Cathy Shanks, Molly Hurley, and Joe Garzetta for their contributions to the committee- your work is much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted-
Ron Mustello
Buildings and Grounds Chair

FUNDRAISING

Saturday, April 1, 2023 - Artist and local resident, Anita Kiewra lead a workshop in the Eastern European tradition of making **Ukrainian Pysanky** dyed egg making. The event raised \$320.00.

Friday, April 21, - Sunday, April 23, 2023 - **Great Whale of a Rummage Sale**. Once again our rummage sale broke our previous record by raising \$6284.00.

Sunday, September 17, 2023 - **Shady Knoll Orchards & Distillery hosted a Festive Fall Party**. We celebrated the season at their beautiful location on Brush Hill Road in Millbrook, NY, USA. The event was filled with fun, food, and festivities for the whole family. There were children's games and music by Eric Marshall. The event raised \$9938.00.

Friday, November 17, 2023 - **Pasta Night**. Our first pasta night featured a three-seating dinner in the parish hall, decorated in the style of an Italian restaurant. The event raised \$900.

Saturday, December 9, 2023 - **St. Nicholas Bazaar and Cookie Sale**. The event has grown in popularity each year; this year we showcased crafts throughout both the first and second floors of the parish hall.

Twenty-eight craft vendors from the community and the parish family offered one-of-a-kind gifts featuring everything from hand-thrown pottery, to crocheted clothing, jewelry, and designer hand towels. In addition to the craft vendors we offered food from Van Roy's Food Truck which also made a generous donation. We have continued to receive inquiries about the craft vendors after the event by folks interested in making additional purchases. Of course, the highlight of our event is the holiday cookie sale. This year we sold approximately 140 pounds of cookies made by the Grace parishioners. The event raised \$4,208.

Ongoing sale of **Grace Crosses**. We raised \$300. **Hyde Park Jewelers** is now handling the sale of the crosses for Grace Church, as Joyce Heaton has retired.

Thank you all for your participation and helping to raise funds for Grace Church. The funds are vital to continue our many outreach efforts and being a good host to our community is of utmost importance.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Freeman

Music Program

ADULT CHOIR

It has been a pleasure to be the part-time director of the adult choir. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with Katherine Mustello, Thea Scotti, Rachel Bazaz, Dawn Galente, Marion Thompson, and Lynda Boisey three weeks a month. The choir and I are committed to providing the best music we can to enhance the worship service. Personally, leading congregational singing from the fine Von Beckerath is also a pleasure and honor. It was a special treat to work with Nancy Vanderlee the director of music at St. Peter's Church, Lithgow in presenting Meditation for the Meditative Soul. This program included choirs, solos, duets, organ solos, and hymns. I look forward to providing appropriate, beautiful liturgical music for the coming year.

Suzanne McDonald

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is responsible for ordering the candles, wine, and wafers and for dressing the Altar for our services.

The colors on the Altar change according to the church calendars which indicates when each season begins. Advent blue, Christmas white, Lent purple, Easter white and Red for the First Sunday of Pentecost and green for the rest of the season of Pentecost. The Guild makes these changes.

Decorating the Church for Advent, Christmas and Easter is also done by us the help from the Laceys, Mustello, Grace Fellows and other members of the congregation. Polishing the brass vases and candle holders are done by us.

The flowers used by the church are ordered from Diedre at Millbrook Florist. Donations for flowers help support our budget with support from the general fund. Restricted donations to the Altar Guild for flowers, etc. in the amount of \$2,420 helped to offset Altar expenses of \$3,366.

We are in need of new members, who can help before and after each service and at Weddings and Funerals.

Members are: Susan Quigley - Maintains the washing and ironing of all linens used and for submitting names of those who donated flowers to be named in the bulletin.

Lynda Boissey - Takes care of hand and machine repairs to any of the linens needing repairs.

Marli Higa, Karen Whitton, Jimmy Pearson, all of us set up and clean the Altar used after each service.

Respectfully Submitted
Jean Hayes
Director

EPISCOPAL COLLEGE OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fr. Matt, Will Cox, and Val LaRobardier attended the New York Episcopal College of Congregational Development this past summer. Part of our preparatory work was to interview another parish member. At the college each team came up with a project designed to assist in congregational development, using tools we had learned that week. Our team modified the interview questions we had used prior to attending to be used as an ongoing project to learn what our community values in their interaction with each other at Grace Church, and what additional opportunities could be helpful.

We began with a round of interviews among the three of us, interviewing each other for practice. Next, we interviewed fellow vestry members, and enlisted them to interview others. Both interviewers and interviewees so far report positively that the process has been rewarding. It is a great way to get to know each other better. Data trends will be reported later, without identifying individual respondents. We hope to use this project to pinpoint priorities for our strategic plan. We'd love to hear from all of you. To that end we will continue interviewing and widening the circle throughout the year.

Submitted by Val Larobardier

Adult Formation at Grace

There were a number of classes and opportunities for formation at Grace during 2023. In February, I led a book study of the classic C.S. Lewis book, *The Screwtape Letters*. During Lent, Matt and I led a six-week adult inquirer's class attended by former Grace Year fellow Jessica Davis, then current fellow Ben York and Rachel Bazaz. Matt led a concurrent confirmation class for young folks. Jess was baptized at the Easter Vigil. Ben, Jess, Will Cox, Nicholas Dyson and Lucas Pelosi were confirmed at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in May. Ben York and I also led evening prayer on Monday evenings during Lent. By popular demand, we repeated the invitation to take home a canvas and create a station of the cross. The artwork was very creative and helped reflection on Christ's crucifixion and the connection with people's suffering today.

Thanks to Pam Freeman for once again organizing the Ukrainian Easter Egg workshop.

In the fall, we offered a community read of *Laudato Si*, the powerful statement on the need to care for the environment by Pope Francis. We had some good discussions on this, as we focused on the care of creation in September and October.

At the end of October, our annual parish retreat continued the care of creation theme. I led a small group went to Holy Cross Monastery to participate in "Kinship with Creation."

During Advent, we set up a labyrinth for four evenings in the parish hall. About 20 people participated in this ancient form of prayer. Walking and following the path is quiet and meditative and can be a powerful way to pray. If there is interest in setting it up during Lent, please let me know.

Children's Formation at Grace

I am happy to report that after having almost no children during the fall and winter of last year, we had a sudden burst of interest in a first communion class. We had about 6 children who attended a class for 3 weeks and then received their first communion. Thus encouraged, we prepared for the fall, once again offering a lesson three Sundays a month, and a family service with a children's homily on the first Sunday of the month. I recruited some wonderful people to help with classes: Cindy Guardiola, Pam Freeman, Marilyn Donahue Schiller, Susan Nestle and Kirsten Muth. We often have a small group, we sometimes have no children and every so often more children show up. I believe it is important to be prepared with a lesson each Sunday as a way of welcoming young children and offering an age-appropriate formation experience. Before I leave in June, I would like to help set up the program for next year, with a calendar of lessons, a curriculum that is easy to use etc. Please let me know if you are interested in helping with this.

One highlight of the year for me were the Advent Lessons and Carols led by children. As readers read the lessons, children acted them out, giving form to the prophecies of a future time of peace—the desert shall bloom, the wolf and the lamb shall lie down together, God will make a highway through the desert etc.

Another was the early Christmas Eve service where 8 children came up to help tell the Christmas story.

I am planning to offer a special children's program on Palm Saturday, with story telling and activities. Let me know if you are interested in helping with this.

Youth group

Ben York and I put out the word that we would be hosting youth gatherings every other Sunday with pizza and compline. We have had a small but faithful crew and we have had a lot of fun as well as discussion and prayer. The youth group decided they would like to attend Nightwatch on March 5th, so they made candles, bath bombs and room spray to sell at the St. Nicholas Fair.

They had a table, sold their goods as well as hot cocoa. Kind hearted supporters Cathy Shanks and Lisa Lacey and Lynda Boisse (possibly others?) donated homemade cookies to sell as well. We made around \$148. And we were given a donation of \$100. That brings the cost of Nightwatch down from \$150 per person to \$100 per person. We are hoping to do another fundraiser to make it more affordable. I am excited to see a youth group re-emerge at Grace—many thanks to the members, the parents and Ben for your commitment.

Submitted by Rev. Alison Quin

MILLBROOK COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL AT GRACE

Overview

Every weekday morning, you'll find the grounds of Grace Church humming with the chatter and laughter of the delightful young children who attend its preschool program. They are busy doing everything that children their age should do - enjoying the playground, exploring the outdoors, running, playing in the kitchen, painting, creating worlds with blocks, experimenting with sand, clay and water, gathering for circle time to share books, games, songs and stories. Since opening its doors nearly 18 years ago, Millbrook Community Preschool at Grace Church has represented a high-quality and affordable option for families seeking a great first-school experience for their children. Increasingly, the program has come to be seen as a model of best practice in our area, pushing back on the top-down pressures for measurable academic "results" that have crept into many early learning classrooms. Instead, we fully embraced the philosophy that young children learn best through play. At the time of writing, 16 children are enrolled in the program.

Families come to Millbrook Community Preschool both on the strength of word-of-mouth recommendations from alumni families, and through exposure to the school's website, which showcases the program with a combination of professional photography, video content, and testimonials. The support of the church community and funding partners has allowed the program to evolve and blossom. Tuition assistance through a grant from the Dyson Foundation as well as general program support from the EGCMN Foundation have ensured the school's continuity, and supports access for struggling families. Approximately one third of those currently enrolled receive some sort of tuition relief, either in the form of full or partial scholarships.

Additionally, the preschool serves as a starting point for families who are struggling with emergent learning needs. Teachers are ever observant, and in regular contact with families. One of the responsibilities of the preschool is to help identify areas where a child is in need of support, and ensure that services are expedited when necessary. We are there for the first, sometimes emotional conversations with parents when learning issues become apparent. Parents know they have our respect, and they reward us with their trust. We are open to hosting evaluations from special education professionals, and invested in helping parents advocate for their children when necessary. We also provide space on the premises during school time for special support services to be facilitated. These early therapeutic interventions give children a huge advantage when making the transition to kindergarten, and life beyond.

Currently, we have children in receipt of speech and language, occupational, and physical therapy during schooltime.

Program Strengths

The beautiful physical spaces and play equipment make a consistently strong first impression on prospective families. These include the studio art room, library, cubby and cloakroom, dramatic play and sensory areas, construction playroom, and outdoor playground. All are truly state-of-the-art. These intentionally planned spaces underpin the philosophical approach of the program and align with the latest research on how young children learn best. The school's mission is to provide spaces where exploration is valued, and the environment is the first teacher. The approach allows for freedom of movement for young children, enticing choices, and long periods of intuitive and uninterrupted play alongside gentle and compassionate adults. In this environment, children learn and thrive.

Roughly half of the children's day is still spent outdoors, distinguishing it from many other early learning programs. There is huge interest and value in this approach. Class projects often take place under the shelter of the outdoor classroom as the rain beats down, even the morning circle can happen as the snow falls. Father Matt recently conducted Chapel while the children were delightedly perched on mountains of snow. This approach has facilitated many thrilling connections between literacy and the natural world. Children arrive dressed for full and active engagement, in whatever clothing the weather demands. They are joined by their teachers in every aspect of play. The program at Grace is unique in that the teachers, like the children, are ready for whatever the day brings. When it snows, we too are in our snowsuits. The children are encouraged to fully immerse in play, to run freely, pick flowers, jump in puddles, dig in wet earth, and gently catch frogs and worms for observation. There are many clothing changes during the course of the day! The physical and psychological benefits of being outdoors are clear in the strength, confidence and emotional resilience we see growth in the children with each passing week.

Another strength of the program lies in its openness to family connection and engagement. We began the year with a celebration of Chinese New Year. One of our students was joined by his mother and Chinese born grandmother to share a day of fun and cultural learning last winter. We had stories, dumpling-making, and a parade through the school of children in traditional clothing. The spring saw the arrival of many baby animal visitors from our own families' farms. The children were thrilled when piglets chicks make an appearance at the preschool. This was topped only by "Goat Day", when an alumni family brought a small herd of baby goats to play on the playground with the children. This was truly a day to remember, with both varieties of "kid" climbing onto the pirate ship and descending the slide together. Before wrapping up for the summer, our school community gathered in the Tribute Gardens for a Community Picnic which included all generations. This fall, families gathered for a wonderful Halloween Block Party, with dancing, games and trunk-or-treating. Thanksgiving was celebrated across our whole school community with a beautiful Feast that included 50 guests - families, teaching staff old and new, as well as alumni students from Alden Place, Millbrook Middle and High School who came to volunteer as servers. Christmas was marked with a

brunch hosted upstairs in the Parish House by families, who cooked and served a pancake breakfast for children and teachers. The openness of the school to a true partnership with families, and the celebration of the talents, traditions, and cultures from home in the classroom, makes the preschool very unique indeed.

The heart of our program lies in the talented, compassionate and endlessly energetic teaching staff. Each day, we have 3 session teachers present. This seemingly over generous staffing allowance is necessary in ensuring the safety of both children and teachers. One must consider that unlike most programs, which may have other teachers or administrators down the hall in the event of an emergency, we are effectively on our own in the Parish House during school time. Parents obviously love the teacher:child ratios. With the exception of myself, who returned this year as Program Director, and is scheduled each day, our teachers share classroom hours, working 2 or 3 days per week. We are fortunate to have on our sub list teachers that have long been connected with our school. The benefit of having a diverse number of teachers on hand has resulted in a rich experience for the children, as well as a creative and ever evolving curriculum. We are never short of ideas! The positive culture of support and respect among the teaching staff is an aspect of our program that we acknowledge and treasure. It is evident to the families whose children are in our care. Each day, we model for the children what love and respect look like. Our teachers have had long connections to our school, as staff, parents, or both. Even those who have had to move on, like our beloved former director Deborah Coconis, return for special celebrations at the school. I have been here for 10 years, and three of our current staff have been here since the school opened 18 years ago. The sticking power of our teachers contributes to the sense of shared history, family connection, and personal investment in our program. It is a huge strength. Another enriching member of our teaching staff is of course our own Father Matt. His weekly Chapel sessions take as their starting point a simple Bible story, then move to a song, and a conversation that frequently ends in giggles all around. The lessons of love, kindness and respect that he reinforces each week are another dimension of our program which demonstrate our strong, unique brand of teaching.

Reflection - Looking Forward

The program at Grace continues to surprise me. When reflecting on the future of the preschool last winter, I identified the availability of free, universal preschool programming for 4 year olds as a challenge to our program. At that time, the program at Grace had 14 students enrolled in the program, all in the 3 year old group. For the first time in the history of the school we did not have a 4 year old class. I'm delighted to report that at the time of writing, we have 16 children enrolled in the program, 9 of whom are eligible for universal preschool, but have elected to either return to or enroll as 4 year olds! Of our current student body, 7 children have already committed to return next year.

I believe this trend represents the need for choice in the early learning landscape. In spite of the availability of free, full time early education for the youngest learners, some families see the inherent value in what our program represents. For some, it is the outdoor leaning, play based program which maximizes connection to nature and lots of active learning. For others, it is the gentle start with an emotional environment where the stakes and stress on

young children are kept intentionally low, with the importance of the child always trumping the importance of the activity. For others, it is the openness to family involvement, and the opportunities for an extended shared experience of childhood that are afforded to parents and grandparents that wish to keep their children entwined in their life for a little longer. It is the beautiful spaces, the quality of the play equipment, the reputation of the experienced and compassionate staff. It is the non intrusive nature of the scholarship program, and the ease of support to those who need it. Within the non denominational approach, it is the comfort of the weekly Chapel Program, where Father Matt joyfully instills the values of love, kindness and respect each week. These are the qualities that make Millbrook Community Preschool so unique, and as long as we value the idea of choice, are able to ensure program sustainability, and remain adaptable to the changing needs of the community, I believe this program will remain necessary and relevant.

The preschool has required approximately \$30,000 in grant aid to remain operational over the past 4 years. The program wrapped up the year 2023 in budget, and current grant funding will sustain the program for the continuation of the 2024 academic year, again ending within budget. However, it is imperative that we secure continuity funding for the future in order to remain operational in September 2024. I have reached out to our funding partners to begin a conversation around sustainability, and will rely on the support of the Grace Church community to ensure that this valuable program continues. I sign off with much hope for what the future brings!

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Sarma, Program Director

Grace Year Program

Submitted by Rev. Alison Quin

2022-2023 Grace Year Fellows:

We had another wonderful group of young adults participating in Grace Year last year: Kara-Lyn Moran, Rachael Brooker Langston, Ben York and Coco deMarneffe. Kristin Perkins (a Grace Year alum) did a tremendous job as mentor. Living in the rectory enabled her to be on hand to support the fellows in various ways.

The fellows worked at Northeast Dutchess Immigrant Services (Ben and Rachael), the Cary Institute and the Jean Krulis Community Garden at St. Thomas Amenia (Coco), and Dutchess Land Conservancy (Kara).

Kara and Coco were invited to be on the Presiding Bishop's delegation to the UN climate talks in Egypt last year, and they were asked to participate a second time this year. They will be presenting their reflections on COP 28 on a diocesan webinar on January 24th at 6:30pm. The link is https://dioceseny.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9dt0e9RrSR-M7iVckAD8Ug
Tune in if you can!

Where They Are Now:

Kara is studying for a master's at the School for the Environment at Yale; Coco is working in development at Columbia, Rachael is in Philadelphia working with the Poor People's Campaign and Ben is at Grace, working for NEDIS and helping with worship, youth group and more. Kristin has begun her PhD in Theater Studies at Columbia and is engaged to Ted Bushman, who often attended Grace last year.

The Alumni Reunion:

One of the highlights of the year was the first Grace Year Reunion, organized by some of the alumni and graciously hosted by the fellows and Kristin. About 15 past and present fellows attended and it was great to connect with them. They shared their experiences at the Grace Year fundraiser. It was inspiring to hear what Grace Year meant to them and also to hear about their lives now. It was a joyful celebration. Many thanks to the fellows, the volunteers, and all who made it possible. In attendance were many folks from the community, from work sites and from St. Peter's and Grace Church. Thank you to all who offered their time, talent and treasure to make Grace Year happen!

Grace Year Now:

We did not have many applicants this year—which was true across the Episcopal Service Corps network. It could have been because employment was high, or because people felt more financial pressure to begin their working life. We did not have enough to fill out a cohort, and so, with Matt and the Grace Year Advisory Board, we made the decision to take a sabbatical and see how we could strengthen the program.

Ben York and I spent several months looking into other programs in order to learn from them. I attended the annual ESC program directors' meeting in Michigan in October. What we learned was that the programs that have been able to operate consistently are those with some level of diocesan support. In addition, most of them have access to free housing for corps members.

I will be stepping down in June from my position as Grace Year program director and associate priest for Christian Formation.

For Grace Year to reopen, a new director would need to be hired, which would increase costs (as a semi-retired priest receiving pension, I was able to keep the costs down for the program). In addition, the program would have to rent or buy a car. The diocese is currently not in a position to offer assistance, and the vicarage that housed the fellows still has about two years remaining until the mortgage is fully paid.

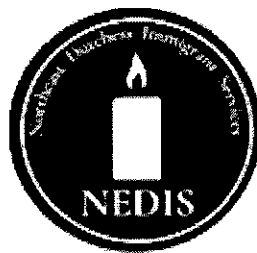
For all these reasons, Grace Year is on hiatus. If circumstances allow Grace Year to reopen, I think we have a good reputation in the community and we have a number of worksites that would gladly hire a Grace Year fellow should the program start up again. In any case, the parish can be proud of the past five years, the young adults whose lives have been touched and the lives that will be touched by them in turn as they continue in their lives and ministries.

I want to offer heartfelt thanks to Matt, the Vestry, the Grace Year Advisory Committee (Cathy Shanks, Lisa Lacey, Ron Mustello, Evelyn Garzetta, Molly Hurley, Pam Freeman) and the entire parish for all they have done to make this ministry possible. And for my part, it has been profound blessing to be part of this ministry and get to know the fellows as well as the wonderful folks at Grace Church.

New possibilities:

The Episcopal Service Corps network, as well as our diocese, has been encouraging folks to consider starting non-residential young adult programs with some of the elements of the residential programs. The idea is that a broader range of young adults, who might be in school or working or have family obligations, might be able to participate. To that end, Ben York and I have reached out to local clergy and floated the idea of a young adult community that would meet twice a month at a local monastery or convent and eat, pray and learn together. Linwood Spiritual Center is interested in hosting such a group and so is Holy Cross monastery. We submitted a grant for \$8000 to cover costs, but we are hoping to keep costs low so that the program will be sustainable and perhaps replicable in other areas. We are calling it Beloved Community in the Hudson Valley and we hope to begin recruitment in the near future. So, Grace Year might have a spin off! Stay tuned...

Northeast Dutchess Immigrant Services (NEDIS)



Northeast Dutchess Immigrant Services continues to grow and succeed. We have always taken into consideration the needs of the Immigrant population. The programs we have started is usually at the request of the Immigrant population.

English as a New Language (ENL) continues to expand We have classes in Millbrook, Millerton, Dover Plains, and Pawling. We are in search of a volunteer to restart the class in Pine Plains.

The Academic Mentoring Program (AMP) continues to tutor and assist school-aged children. The program assists high school students to apply for colleges and universities.

Food distribution at MESA in Dover Plains continues to flourish. We collaborate with Stonewood Farm, Food of Life, Pawling Resource Center, and House of God Doors to Heaven.

For 2024 the NEDIS Board of Directors has convened. They are looking forward to working hard to ensure that the NEDIS programs are well sustained. Their expertise and dedication will ensure NEDIS will be in existence for a long time to come.

Respectfully with gratitude and regards,

Evelyn

Evelyn E. Garzetta ~ Executive Director
Northeast Dutchess Immigrant Services (NEDIS) LLC
(Founded in 2005 as Grace Latino/Immigrant Outreach by Grace Episcopal Church Millbrook, NY)

P.O. Box 884 Millbrook, New York 12545
[www/https://www.nedimmigrant.org](https://www.nedimmigrant.org)
Cell: 917-705-9600 - Email: egarzetta@nedimmigrant.org

WOMEN OF GRACE

Woman of Grace's monthly potlucks have been a popular form of fellowship, beginning with Connie's prayer, sharing a meal, along with our joys, sorrows, moments of grace, a great deal of laughter, and ending with Complaine. As much as we enjoyed this fellowship, it has been difficult to get it "restarted" after the pandemic lockdown prevented us from gathering in person. This has been complicated as well by some of our steadiest regulars moving away. During the isolating days of the pandemic, we gathered via Zoom, but enthusiasm for meeting virtually, although it allowed those who moved away to join from a distance, admittedly waned after it no longer was our only means of socializing.

This past February we conducted an online survey to collect ideas for moving forward. Many excellent activity suggestions were submitted. Several ideas changed the timing and format of the meeting, giving the group a different focus. Those who attended regularly wanted to retain the spirit of informal fellowship. The simplicity of our traditional format seems to be what has held the group together over the years, and in the end, we concluded that it would be risky to discard it. That said, we have not given up on the idea of adding special events a few times a year, making use of the suggestions we received, in addition to continuing our regular potluck dinners.

We don't meet in November, that Wednesday often being Thanksgiving Eve. We do meet in December, but on a different day and time, earlier in the month, to bake cookies for the Holiday Bazaar. Instead of bringing a dish, we each bring a batch of sugar cookie dough along with rolling pins, cookie cutters and assorted decorating accessories. We roll, bake, decorate, and box dozens of cookies for sale, and end sharing a pizza delivery.

We gather on the fourth Wednesdays, January – October, at 6:30 in the Parish Hall. The group that gathers varies due to many of us having other obligations. We do not plan who brings what, so the menu is always a delightful surprise—more often than not being very balanced in spite of the lack of planning. Those who slide in from work need not worry about bringing a dish; we always have more than enough to share. We bring our own table settings to ease setup and cleanup, but that too is optional if you have no time to prepare, as there are plenty of dishes in the kitchen. Truly, the only required item to bring is yourself—in whatever state you are in—relaxed, hurried, worried, happy, or sad.

Come and join our fellowship. All are welcome! Come when you can. Don't worry if you are late. Bring something to share, or bring nothing if you have no time. Just bring yourself!

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie LaRobardier

Prayer Shawl Ministry Report

Prayer shawls are always available at Grace, thanks to the many hands that volunteer for this mission. This year, the prayer shawl ministry gave out pillows with the Grace Year Logo to the Grace Fellows, as well as a warm sweater or vest to every child that was christened. The items are always labeled "Grace Church Prayer Shawl Ministry" and each is blessed before it is presented. There may only be a few people who regularly create items for this ministry but many hand-crafted items are given out every year thanks to their hard work. I would especially like to thank Lynda Boissey for taking an inventory, and Pat Creswell for their help this year. If you would like to start making items for this ministry please reach out to Katherine Mustello kmustello@optonline.net

Invite Welcome Connect

Invite, Welcome, Connect is a great program at Grace Church focused on inviting people in the community to the parish, helping new members to feel welcome and connecting existing parishioners in fun and meaningful ways. This past year was a busy, fun and rewarding one for the Invite, Welcome, Connect committee.

We started off the year planning a fun and successful Cabin Fever Night in February. The night was filled with tons of boardgames, a half-dozen delicious chilis to taste, a lumberjack costume contest and a warm winter ambiance complete with a small cardboard cabin. We had approximately 20 attendees of all ages and charged a nominal fee to put IWC in a good place to execute future events in 2023.

In June, we held our annual New Members Gathering after the 10 am service. Similar to the year prior, we celebrated with a special potluck style coffee hour and everyone had a great time. This year, the entire congregation was invited to attend, which led to many great conversations, smiles, laughs and both new and strengthened connections among attendees. New members also received their welcome bags before heading out.

In October, we were lucky to run two separate booths at the Millbrook Community Day. At the outdoor tent, we passed out information about Grace as well as over 30 hospitality bags filled with goodies to the kids. The second booth, located inside the Village Hall, was the face painting station. Working together with some volunteers from Millbrook High School, we painted a variety of unicorns, superheroes, rainbows and even a skunk on the kids' faces!

In November, we co-hosted a Pasta Night with Men of Grace. We took reservations and served 52 meals across 3 seatings before the night was over. In addition, there was a bake sale and 50/50 raffle to boost fundraising. The event saw many parishioners and welcomed a good number of community members. The food was delicious and the attendee feedback was very positive. It was truly an enjoyable social event with an authentic Italian atmosphere as well as a successful fundraiser.

Invite, Welcome, Connect members also help with annual parish-wide events such as the Rummage Sale and the St. Nicholas Bazaar. We compose and pass out literature about Grace Church as well as information regarding ongoing parish programs and upcoming special events. Participating in these events give us additional opportunities to make connections with members of the community and support the endeavors of Grace.

None of these events would have been possible without teamwork and the dedicated efforts of our members. This year, we welcomed Cindy Guardiola to our team! Longstanding members include Val Larobardier, Cathy Shanks, Marian Thompson, Beth Willis and Amanda Williams. We are excited for the events in store for 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Williams

Grace Church Lunchbox Mission

Grace continues to serve meals at Dutchess Outreach on the last Sunday of the month. When the program started, many decades ago, there were typically around 60 patrons. Now, we serve well over 120 meals on Sunday, with a peak attendance of 185, indicating the extreme need for this vital mission. Patrons very often express their thanks and gratitude for the Grace Church volunteers serving the meals.

Our meals are prepared fresh, and typically consist of pasta with meat sauce, mixed vegetables, buttered bread, a dessert, milk, water, fruit and a breakfast bar for the next morning. The monthly cost of the food purchased by Grace has exceeded \$350. We'd welcome your monetary contributions to support this much needed mission.

I'd especially like to thank John and Lisa Lacey and family (they hold the record for volunteering!!), the Hackbarths, Thea Scotti, Susan Nestle, Linda Kolts, Jonathan Boice, and Will, Aidan and Evan Cox for all their help this past year- they all have become our "go to" team!

If you have any questions about contributions or volunteering, please reach out to me or the Lacey's.

Thank you,
Ron Mustello

For the Parish

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.*

For the Church

Let us pray.

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 tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were being 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.*

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