

FALL 2021

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# GRACE NOTES

NEWS IN AND AROUND THE GRACE CHURCH COMMUNITY

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## WELCOME BACK TO CHURCH!

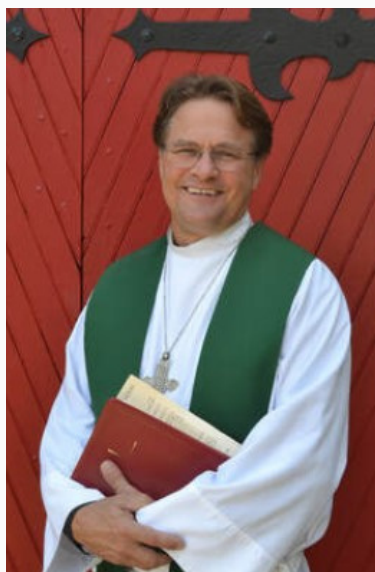
To quote W.H. Auden: "But once in a while the odd thing happens, Once in a while the dream comes true, And the whole pattern of life is altered, Once in a while the moon turns blue." I'm not sure about blue moons but I do know the dream has come true. We are back at church. Yes, wearing masks and not belting out hymns (hopefully soon) but we are back. Grace Church is back. God is back. (Actually, God never left.) The beautiful season of fall is upon us, signaling a revving up, a back to business. For us, that's the business of God's love. Alleluia Amen! -ML Ball

GRACE NOTES



## LET US PRAY

BY THE DR. REV. MATTHEW CALKINS



As the Preacher wrote and The Byrds sang, “To everything (turn, turn, turn) there is a season (turn, turn, turn), and a time to every purpose, under heaven.” The seasons turn and so do we. Back to school and, for many, I hope, back to church. Our rhythm is off, of course, due to continuing concerns with Covid. In light of a high transmission rate we are back to wearing masks during the service. But hopefully this too will pass. Beginning Sunday September 12th, we will resume our schedule of two services on Sunday, choir, children’s programming (introducing Godly Play), Wednesday healing prayer and Bible study. This year’s cohort of Grace Year Fellows has moved in. Ana Reyes is leading a new year of EPIC meetings. Evelyn Garzetta, and Grace Immigrant Outreach, busy all year, are steaming ahead, looking for a new caseworker. It would seem we are ready for a season of healing and growth. Let us pray God will bless us so.

But before we simply turn the page and move on, let us also reflect on this past year and a half. Defined by the pandemic, it has also witnessed the mass protests following the George Floyd murder. An election that continues to be disputed amid severe political polarization. Currently we are watching the sudden takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban. Floods and wildfires in different parts of the country. Another earthquake in Haiti. An alarming report from the UN panel on climate change. The earth continues to revolve around the sun, but it seems little else is stable. Life in our part of the world may seem to be, at least somewhat, “back to normal.” But I think we all share a heightened realization of the fragility of both human and natural orders.

What then should we do, as individuals, as church? Well, it will come as no surprise that I will once again say, let us pray. Let each of us in our own individual way and together as a community of faith turn and return to the rock on which to stand in the midst of the rapids of this turbulent time. The Rock of Ages. Trust in God. And then, firm in faith, act in love, with hope. Hope that is not unfounded, love that is never finally overcome. It was not overcome on the cross, love will not be overcome now. We are an Easter people after all. Can I hear an Amen? Alleluia.

See you on Sunday, Matt+

## PARISH RETREAT

OCTOBER 15-17, HOLY CROSS MONASTERY  
WEST PARK, NY

Have you been feeling isolated by Covid? Join the Rev, Gwyneth Murphy, Fr. Matt and your friends from the parish on a 2-night retreat at Holy Cross Monastery as Gwyneth leads us in meditations and conversations around the theme of rebuilding community. Holy Cross monks will refresh our bodies and souls with their ancient rhythm of sung worship and healthy delicious food, all in a magnificent setting along the Hudson in beautiful mid-October. We have a limited number of single rooms, so please sign up early. The cost per person will be \$150 for the two nights. There will be a Saturday-only option. Contact the office for more details: 845-677-3064 .



## MEET PARISHIONER AND VESTRY MEMBER BILL TAYLOR



*"I think the church is at its best when it can be bold." – Bill Taylor*

Raised in the church whether they like it or not, preachers' kids (PKs) when given the chance often run the other way, vowing never to go into the family business. And so it was with Bill Taylor, Grace Church vestry member and son of an Episcopal priest. Growing up in Ohio and then Darien, CT, Bill said there was a lot of doubt, cynicism and conversations with his dad about the relevance and purpose of the Church. He was going to be lawyer, after all, not a minister.

And then, as so often happens, Bill's life took a different turn.

After graduating from Kenyon College with a degree in history, Bill was headed to law school when one of his parents' friends asked him if he had a passion for the law. "No, I don't," he replied, and that was the end of that plan. With a college degree but no job prospects, his father suggested he go to seminary, emphasizing that he didn't have to become a minister.

Bill agreed, and after marrying his wife Jennifer, he entered Berkeley Divinity School, the Episcopal affiliate of Yale Divinity School. While there, he took a course on adolescents and the church and realized that teaching young people might appeal to him. He knew that he wanted to teach at an Episcopal school, and it just so happened that the chaplain at Trinity-Pawling School was a Berkeley graduate. After completing his two-year seminary degree, Bill was hired to teach history and coach soccer, basketball and tennis at the Episcopal school.

For nine years, Bill was Associate Headmaster at Trinity-Pawling, leaving in 2001 to start St. George's Independent School, another Episcopal school in Memphis, TN. Then in 2015, he was contacted by Trinity-Pawling's search committee. They were looking for someone who could make significant changes to the school's curriculum and move it forward, which is what Bill had been doing in Memphis. Bucking the adage that you can't go home again, Bill returned to Trinity-Pawling, this time as Headmaster, which he still is today.

When asked what brought him and Jennifer to Grace Church, Bill replied that in 2017 his father died, and he felt the need to be in Episcopal worship, "which was ironic because I challenged him for years about the Episcopal liturgy," he said. "Then this past year, Matt reached out to me about the evangelism course, which I joined and really enjoyed. That got me reconnected." The couple joined Grace and Bill joined the vestry.

Bill's vision for Grace: "I am intrigued by what the larger church can do by working collectively across larger regions, in our case, the Hudson Valley, establishing partnerships to create a network of support. In isolation, small churches can only do so much but if you connect different resources together, in time you can make a major imprint. If I can be part of building out Grace so it can have more of an impact, I would love that."

Bold, indeed.



# ALPACA DAY WAS A HIT, RAISING \$8000 FOR GRACE CHURCH PROGRAMS!

Thanks to the Herculean efforts of Molly Dyson-Schwery, event organizer, and Diana Bellissimo, owner of Lilymoore Farm in Pleasant Valley, the July 8th Alpaca Day was a resounding success.

Although the evening tapas had to be cancelled and morning activities shortened due to a day-long downpour, those who attended enjoyed an alpaca trek where they got to interact with a number of Diana's wonderful, friendly alpacas (she has 27) or a walking farm tour.

Despite many challenges, Molly, Diana and Father Matt were very pleased with how everything turned out. Molly said she was particularly impressed by the generosity of the local business community which came forward with sponsorships and raffle items. These included major sponsors The Reading Barn and Amendola Landscapes Inc, and raffle donors Babette's Kitchen, Dyson Racing Team, Inc., Forza Fitness, Gracious Gourmet, Locust Hill Market, Main Course, Marona's Market, J. McLaughlin, Millbrook Vineyards & Winery, Peace, Love and Cupcakes, Salt Point Market, Smoothie King and Surprise Photography.

Heartfelt thanks also go to Cindy Schmoke, Evelyn Garzetta and Pam Freeman for all their amazing help. It was truly a special day!!





# SAVE THE DATE! GOLF TOURNAMENT, DINNER AND AUCTION: SEPT. 27TH



## IT'S BACK!

The 15th Annual Grace Church Benefit Golf Tournament and Dinner will be held Monday Sept. 27th at McCann Golf Course in Poughkeepsie. The benefit gala, perfectly timed for the welcoming of autumn, consists of two events in one day. Golfers enjoy 18 holes of spectacular golf including breakfast, lunch, cocktail hour, dinner and silent auction (\$175). Non-golfers join in for cocktail hour, dinner and silent auction (\$125). Our guest speaker is the dynamic and inspirational Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool from the Episcopal Diocese of New York. Heather Holohan-Guarnieri and friends will provide lively musical entertainment.

Proceeds help fund Grace Church's vital community outreach programs: Grace Immigrant Outreach, EPIC, Grace Year, Millbrook Community Preschool, Food For Life Pantry and the Lunchbox.

Full details and registration are on the church website: [www.gracemillbrook.org](http://www.gracemillbrook.org).

Please plan on attending. Let's make the 15th year the best yet!





# WELCOME GRACE YEAR FELLOWS 2021-2022

*How could the world change if the leaders of tomorrow were given the gift of a year?*



*Left to right: Ris Houde, Kristin Perkins, John Gehman, Adelle Dennis and Thomas Gould*

Adelle Dennis graduated from Sewanee: the University of the South with a major in history and a minor in dance. She is a lifelong Episcopalian and served as a sacristan at All Saints' Chapel while at Sewanee. Driven by her faith to pursue justice and equity, she seeks to reinvent policies and practices that disempower due to racism, sexism and gender bias based on sexual orientation. Her service work is with Grace Immigrant Outreach.

Born in San Luis Potosí, México, John Gehman (he/they) was adopted and raised in Lancaster County, PA. He recently earned an AB in Philosophy with double minors in Theology and International Studies from Boston College. As a GY fellow, John plans to explore his religious and spiritual being through pluralistic, hands-on engagement. He will be working with EPIC and the ESL program at Church of the Messiah in Rhinebeck.

Thomas Gould is a Hudson Valley native, earning his BA in Humanities from Yale University and graduating during the pandemic. His interests include the arts, architecture, mathematics, philosophy and politics. Thomas is grateful for the chance to search for spiritual clarity and mindfulness during Grace Year. His service work is with Hudson River Housing.

Christina Houde, known as Ris, grew up in Wayland, MA and has a BA in Sociology and a correlate in Women, Gender, and Feminist Studies from Vassar College. While there, she spent a transformative semester in Samoa studying social and environmental change with the School for International Training. Christina is passionate about climate justice, abolition and queer liberation. Her service work is with Cardinal Hayes Home.

Kristin Perkins grew up in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and has a BA degree in Theatre Arts Studies with a minor in Women's Studies from Brigham Young University and an MA degree in Performance as Public Practice from the University of Texas at Austin. During Grace Year, Kristin hopes to discern a vocation centered on community. She will be working with Curry & Miller and the Millbrook Library.

## GODLY PLAY RETURNS!



Dear Grace Church Family,

Some years ago, Grace Church used a curriculum called Godly Play for our youngest children's Sunday School. Last year, Lynda Boissey wondered whether the church still owned the wooden figures and objects used in Godly Play, and after some digging, the materials were found! Beginning this September, Godly Play will once again be offered for children ages 3-6.

Godly Play is an approach to children's spiritual formation in which stories of faith are presented and the group wonders about them together. The goal is to teach children how to use the language of the Christian tradition to encounter God.

We will use the enclosed porch adjacent to the parish hall as our Godly Play classroom. It will be known as Betty Rae's Room in honor of Betty Rae Nittiskie, who loved and taught the children of Grace for many years. All we need now are some teachers and assistants! I will do some of the teaching but I need a few others to help. Experience is not necessary; we will provide training. If you choose to become a teacher or an assistant, you will find your own faith growing in ways that will surprise you!

Please consider helping us restart Godly Play. It's a powerful and fulfilling way to engage young children and their families and introduce them to God's love. If you are interested or would like to know more, contact Father Matt ([calkins@gracemillbrook.org](mailto:calkins@gracemillbrook.org)) or myself ([revalisonquin@gmail.com](mailto:revalisonquin@gmail.com)).

Blessings,

*Alison*

*The Rev. Alison Quin*

## THE CHOIR IS RESUMING! 😊😊

Choir rehearsals will resume in mid-October. We will start out by doing vocal exercises and warming up on service music and hymns. It's been a LONG time. Due to the pending Delta virus, we will rehearse and worship wearing masks and hope that in not too long a time we will be maskless. It takes a little bit to get used to breathing and singing but gradually you will get used to it. If you have a friend who likes to sing, invite them to come see what rehearsals are like. I am looking forward to "making a joyful noise" with you again. Any questions? Email me at [1750Suzanne@gmail.com](mailto:1750Suzanne@gmail.com) or call me at 978-968-5122.

Note'bly,

*Suzanne McDonald*

## NEWCOMERS RECEPTION

Please join us at the Grace Fall Festival, Saturday October 9th from 1pm-6pm! Enjoy food, games, crafts and friends...and it's FREE. Want to help? Contact Amanda Williams at (845) 863-4852.



# LAST WORDS

- In light of the increased transmission rate of the Delta variant of the coronavirus, we will be reinstating mask requirements for BOTH the vaccinated and unvaccinated during indoor worship at the Sunday 8am and 10am services.
- Ice Cream Social after the 10:00 service on September 12th. All are invited!
- Haiti Relief: If you would like to contribute direct support to Haitian Relief, please send us a check with the memo Haiti. We will direct the money to the Episcopal congregations in the affected areas.



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