



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated May 11, 2022)

Grace Church, Nyack, New York

130 First Avenue, Nyack, NY 10960, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 06/08/22.

TransitionGrace@gmail.com

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
85	3		
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
			We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Full family	Yes	Yes	
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)		2 (standard)	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
\$1001-\$2000/year	Yes	No	No

We are calling a Rector, compensation & benefits according to diocesan guidelines.

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

The pandemic has obviously been a struggle for every worshipping community. In May of 2021, the pandemic was waning, and people were starting to return in person to church. We all craved fellowship and togetherness. Our parish organized a parish picnic on a beautiful May Sunday to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. We had an outdoor service at Hook Mountain, a gorgeous setting, followed by a barbeque. The weather was beautiful and the event was well attended. It was wonderful to see people feeling relaxed and happy to be together, celebrating our shared commitment to serving God and our neighbors. It was a wonderful opportunity to bring together parishioners from all three services.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

Grace is a very dynamic church where tradition is honored but new ideas are also welcomed. We understand the importance of children and families to the future of our church and have a service that was designed with them in mind as well as a church school that serves preschoolers right through high school. We also see the changing demographics in our community and nation and value the richness that a diverse congregation provides for us all. During Covid we needed to quickly adapt to a virtual environment for the liturgy and many of our programs, and now recognize that this format will most likely continue to be integrated into our services since it works for many people.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

Radical Hospitality. Kid Accessible. Empowers Leadership. Embraces Diversity.

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

Liturgical worship and music are central to the life of Grace Church, and a source of enrichment in parishioners' lives. It is a reflection of our commitment to our neighbors and manifested in all of our ministries. Grace extends its welcome to all. We offer three quite different services to meet the varying needs of our parishioners. 8 a.m. Sunday A spoken Eucharist with scripture readings, sermon and prayers according to Rite I from the Book of Common Prayer. 9:30 a.m. Sunday A lively and informal Eucharist adapted from Rite II, which includes scripture, a short sermon and music. Young parishioners serve as crucifer, subdeacons, and lectors. Parents often serve as subdeacons with their young children as acolytes. Church school follows this service. 11 a.m. Sunday A full complement of choir, organ, and church music, a Rite II Eucharist with scripture, sermon, congregational hymn singing, and choral offerings. Since the pandemic, this service has been streamed on Facebook, YouTube and our website. The church school and choir take a hiatus during the summer, and we offer two services: 8 a.m. Rite I and 10 a.m. Rite II, with music.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Acolytes, Eucharistic ministers, element bearers, lectors, ushers, and choir members are integral parts of our services. In their specialized roles these lay people are trained to assist the priest at Sunday celebrations of Holy Eucharist as well as at weddings, baptisms, confirmations, and funerals. In addition, we have a strong adult spiritual education program which is run by the lay people of the congregation and offers many opportunities for ministry throughout the year. There are various other groups made up of volunteers which provide opportunities for ministry, such as Fellowship Commission, Social Ministries, New Members, Garden Committee, Youth Ministries, Grace's Thrift Shop, Midnight Run, and Grace's Kitchen. The annual Ministry Fair, held in the fall, exposes parishioners to volunteer and service opportunities.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

The Adult Spiritual Formation Commission (ASF) is our adult education group which is run by lay members of our congregation. Throughout the year the commission plans a variety of events such as special speakers, poetry and scripture readings accompanied by music; a temporary labyrinth for parishioners; forums with artists in the congregation; dramatic performances (Roberta Nobleman as Julian of Norwich); and architectural tours of the church. Weekly recurring events include Sunday book discussions, Bible study, Men's Prayer Breakfast, Women's Spirituality Group, and Centering Prayer Group (meditation). Many of these programs took place via Zoom or live stream during the pandemic. Additionally, fellowship is a strong aspect of our community. Coming together after services weekly, and periodically through the year for activities such as Advent parties, fundraising events, parish picnics, and parish hikes strengthens our personal relationships with fellow parishioners. During the pandemic, parishioners could volunteer to provide assistance for those who were homebound with Covid. This included grocery shopping, picking up prescriptions and other needed errands.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Social outreach is an important part of Grace Church. We not only believe in the tenet “love thy neighbor,” we practice it every day. Grace’s Thrift Shop, run entirely by volunteers, offers low cost merchandise for the needy in our community and a listening ear to their customers’ needs. In addition, all of the profits are donated to various charities. Midnight Run is an organization which serves food and clothing to the homeless population of New York City. Our church makes meals for this program, and the Senior Youth Group makes “runs” a few times a year to meet and serve this population. Grace’s Kitchen is a free breakfast program that operates out of our church once a week to serve the food insecure of our community. Throughout the pandemic, we have modified the program and have continued to serve take away meals. Grace Church provides space for 12 Step groups; as many as 10 different groups use our facility. The Senior Youth Group does a service trip once a year; locations have included Appalachia, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. Participants in these trips have said they are life-changing.

Describe your worshipping community’s involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

The members of our church community are acutely aware of current social issues. We support equality for all of God’s children. Whether it be feeding the homeless on the streets of New York City, marching against gun violence, supporting Black Lives Matter, having a table at the Rockland Pride celebration, or countless other ways, Grace Church is involved with social justice issues within our community and beyond. Our church participates annually in Martin Luther King Jr Day services and the Interfaith service involving local houses of worship. Most recently, there was a prayer vigil organized spontaneously when Russia invaded Ukraine. The opportunity to come together to pray and support each other during this time of angst and grief was reassuring and comforting.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

Grace’s Kitchen began in 2016 as a free breakfast program every Thursday morning run by teams of volunteers. To date we have served over 6,500 meals. Although our numbers dropped off with COVID and indoor dining was temporarily suspended, we continued to serve take away meals each week. We have now returned to in-person dining; guests are seated at tables and served by volunteers, as they would be in a restaurant. Fellowship is an important aspect of this program; many of our guests are “regulars” and we know them by name. Please contact Kim Cross for more information: kimcross@nyackcenter.org

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

A Stewardship Committee, made up of vestry members and parishioners, is convened each Fall to develop and implement the annual Stewardship Campaign in partnership with the Rector. It often includes the following three components: ● A letter from the Rector that goes out to the congregation outlining our fiscal status, pledge goal for the year and the spiritual basis for giving. ● Pledging members speak at the three services throughout the time of the campaign to share their reasons for pledging and what it means to them. ● Vestry members make personal calls to church members who have pledged in the past but haven't in the current campaign to find out if they have any concerns that need to be addressed. In almost all cases, it's usually because they forgot or the family has moved away. We try to make it easy to pledge by providing both online and paper pledge forms. Our pledge drives tend to be very successful. Even during Covid when services were only being held virtually, our pledge goal was met reflecting how important Grace is in the lives of our parishioners. Additionally, ten percent of any bequest larger than \$5000 is designated for the Social Ministries Commission.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Addressing conflict is never easy. Conflict will not disappear by ignoring it, however. Forums conducted by Grace Church's Adult Spiritual Formation Commission (ASF) have often addressed controversial issues and allowed for the airing of multiple viewpoints, even when they differ. Thoughtful discussion, being present, and keeping an open mind and heart can assist in building understanding. Within our diverse group, we have engaged in profound and meaningful conversations over provocative books such as Richard Rohr's *The Universal Christ*, Ibram X. Kendi's *How To Be An Antiracist*, or Stephanie Speller's *The Church Cracked Open*. We invite participants to share their reflections and experiences, and try to demonstrate how a respectful environment can strengthen the community and encourage positive change.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Our church, like all others, was forced to evolve during this pandemic in order to survive. Fortunately, we were quickly able to begin broadcasts of our 11:00 am service via Facebook, Youtube and on our website. A few brave members came together to provide readings and music for those services. When the weather allowed, we held services outside. Our dedicated church school leader even arranged an outdoor Christmas pageant. What we could have done better was the fellowship aspect of the service. We were delayed in bringing people together socially (in a virtual form), and this is perhaps what was missed the most during the homebound months. Few of us have been immune to Zoom meetings over the past two years; virtual meetings and gatherings have become a new way of life. In some ways it makes life easier: it is nice to watch a church service in one's pajamas. In other ways it detracts from our overall experience: even though the pandemic has waned, we have not seen the numbers in our pews significantly increase. Our challenge will be encouraging in person attendance while maintaining the virtual life to which we have become accustomed.

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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Tyler Jones	Interim	2021-10	

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Owen Thomson	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2013-09	2021-09

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Richard Gressle	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1994-01	2011-12

Our church school suffered loss of attendance due to the pandemic. Prior to 2020, we had approximately 40 children enrolled in K-8 with 6 teachers, and 26 in our high school Senior Youth Group. During the shut down, we had virtual church school, and our rector posted children's sermon videos, complete with puppets. Our Church School held the annual Christmas Pageant in an outdoor setting this past year and has held classes both outside and now indoors. The Senior Youth Group continues to meet.

Church School YES	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School 1	Number of Students for Children School 21
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Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School 2	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School 11	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School 3	Number of Students for Adults School 55
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Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
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(last updated May 11, 2022)

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Contact:
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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://www.gracechurchnyack.org/>

Media Links:

Instagram: @gracechurchnyack

Online References:

Youtube: Grace Episcopal Church, Nyack
Facebook: Grace Episcopal Church, Nyack, NY

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

English

References

Bishop:

**The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML
Dietsche**

212-316-7413, bpdietsche@dioceseny.org

Diocesan Transition Minister

**The Rev. Canon Lenore
(Nora) Smith**

212-316-7421, nsmith@dioceseny.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Jeffrey McDowell

845-521-9795, jffmcdwill@hotmail.com

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Katherine Fulmor

845-358-1460, lexow2@yahoo.com

Search Chair

Beth Paskowski

914-522-9560, TransitionGrace@gmail.com

Parish/Institution

The Rev. Tyler Jones

845-705-9822, pastortyler@gmail.com

Local Community Leader

Mayor Donald Hammond

dhammond@Nyack-ny.gov