

Grace Episcopal Church, Ossining, New York Search Profile 2022



To love God is a call to action. Strengthened by prayer, worship and study, Grace Church embraces and serves all people, the earth, and every living thing.

- **Our Vision**

Maintain our two-campus model which offers a complementary variety of spaces and places to serve the greater community. Nurture, strengthen and grow relationships within Grace by increasing involvement in ministry and mission and integrating Grace more robustly into the community through service.

- **Our Strengths**

Grace Church is a marriage of realists, who have spent the last ten years discerning, reflecting and affirming that we are truly better and stronger together. The challenges of Covid and the opportunity to find new ways to worship together solidified our bond as a unified parish.

- **Our Ability to Adapt**

During these last 2 years, our lives at home, work, and in our community, are very different. Traditions like going to church, celebrating high holy days, vestry meetings, and social events became mostly remote. We are grateful for those happier times as we pivoted to learn new skills, embrace technology, and develop solutions regarding our worship. Everyone from our Priest, Deacon, Verger, Minister of Music, Choir members, musicians,



lay leaders, ushers, greeters, and vestry, all had to adjust and wear several hats as they assumed new roles to ensure that our worship on Sundays, Compline, and Morning Prayer would safely continue either via a pre-recorded video or live stream; (Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube). Behind the scenes, much time, and energy was focused on the logistics related to our merger which was officially completed in November 2021, when Grace Episcopal Church, Ossining was formally recognized at the 245th Diocesan Convention of New York. We are boldly going forward to face the future as one new church (189 years of history) with our new relationships, our updated skill sets and a new vision of what we can become!

- **Our Challenges**

Our newly minted parish has a myriad of moving parts, and the integration of these parts is delicate. Our historic congregations, landmark properties and financial assets await the direction of a strong, nimble and visionary leader who can make effective decisions in a respectful, compassionate manner so we can thrive and survive. While we are blessed with Diocesan support we are still very much in uncharted territory.

Grace Episcopal Church, a History

Grace Episcopal Church in Ossining is a newly formed congregation created by the merger, in 2021, of St. Paul's on the Hill and Trinity Episcopal Churches, both in Ossining. These two parishes shared a common founding, split in dissension after the Civil War, but have long since collaborated as sister parishes, sharing clergy since 2012. By formally joining again as one parish, we have come full circle. We seek to further the common purpose shared by the two former congregations, and we have pledged to strengthen the ministry of the Episcopal Church to the people of Ossining and the surrounding area.

Grace Church is now one Episcopal church on two campuses: St. Paul's on Ganung Drive overlooking the village and Trinity on South Highland Avenue in downtown Ossining. Back together again, we are learning from each other and sharing our gifts in a growing, wonderful, and loving relationship.

The Episcopal Church in Ossining

The first Episcopal church in Ossining was founded in 1833, as St. Paul's Episcopal Church on St. Paul's Place, in the village of Sing Sing (later renamed Ossining). The village itself is built on the ancestral lands of the Sint Sinck people, members of the Mohegan nation.

The original St. Paul's church building (now Calvary Baptist Church) was constructed on the Potter Farm, land that, in the 17th century, had been part of the landholdings of Dutch colonist Frederick Philipse, who acquired land from the Native Americans beginning in 1672. Philipse farmed his land using African slave labor.

St. Paul's Church was divided into two parishes during the aftermath of the Civil War. That war, fought over the enslavement of Africans brought forcibly to this country, represented a peak of division in the United States. These divisions were reflected at St. Paul's, where emotions ran high, especially because the priest at that time was a Southern sympathizer. Matters came to a head in a dispute about whether to vest the church for Easter or to decorate with funeral bunting in memory of Abraham Lincoln, whose funeral train was to travel through the village.

A breakaway group of St. Paul's parishioners, led by returning Civil War veterans, founded Trinity Church in 1868. First a tenant in the original, wooden First Presbyterian Church, the new congregation constructed the present Trinity Church gothic-revival style building at 7 South Highland Avenue in 1891.



Trinity Campus - Downtown Ossining

Despite the original, rancorous division, by the end of the nineteenth century, the two parishes had developed an amicable relationship, jointly celebrating various ceremonies.

Rapid growth in Ossining's population after World War II led to the building of a housing development on the old Donald estate on Torbank Hill in Ossining. St. Paul's congregation converted the old Donald barn and outbuildings at 40 Ganung Drive into new church buildings in 1961, taking the name of St. Paul's on the Hill.



St. Paul's on the Hill Campus, east of the village.

Both churches have a history of community service. As early as 1895, what is now the Ossining Children's Center was founded by the women's association of St. Paul's as the Christ Child Day Nursery and Bethany Home, to care for children whose fathers had been killed working on the railroad or building the Croton Aqueduct. In recent decades, St. Paul's and Trinity have fed the poor through support of the Ossining Food Pantry and Loaves and Fish, both housed at Trinity; provided a Youth Music Program for children who could not afford private music instruction at St. Paul's; and were among the founders of the Ossining Emergency Shelter for the homeless, among other things. Both were heavily involved in creating Rivertowns Episcopal Parishes Action on Inclusion and Race (REPAIR), an organization founded in Lent 2015 devoted to bringing healing and justice to a society divided by unconscious bias, willful blindness, deeply ingrained systems of oppression, and the burdens of history.

We Recognize Our History

As the new Grace Church, we have re-dedicated ourselves to service to the community. We recognize that our shared history is tainted by aspects that are inconsistent with Jesus' teachings of love and respect for all people. We recognize that our buildings and the town in which they were built are on the ancestral land of Native Americans, taken forcibly by European colonizers.

We acknowledge that our prior history is stained by the practice of slavery, which resulted in enslaved people working as laborers on farms in the area. We pledge ourselves to the amelioration of the individual and systemic wrongs that those actions created and sustain up to the present time. We are not our forebears; but we must recognize their faults, as well as their strengths. We realize that we are not our past, and we acknowledge our past so we can move forward.



Grace at a Glance

Who is Grace?

Grace is a newly formed community, created from two parishes within the same town, reunited after 150 years apart. Having healed the schism of the past, we desire to move forward as one.

Where is Grace?

In time, we are at a historic crossroads. Before us is a vision of renewed spirit and energy: a synergy of faith and action to serve the greater good. In place, we reside in a small and diverse community set along the eastern shore of the Hudson River about 30 miles north of New York City. We inhabit two distinct neighborhoods: one in the center of the village and the other set in the highlands on the outskirts of town.

What is Grace?

Grace is a seedling, newly planted into the fertile soil of two churches steeped in the Episcopal tradition of serving others. Grace has boundless potential to grow given the right conditions.

What Grace offers

The opportunity to innovate a new style of worship, serving our community, and our world going forward in the new millennium. The chance to affect direct change within a diverse population that is in need. To be a place for those not directly part of our congregation to sit with us and grow together. To hear and join the call to action to serve others and protect our Mother Earth.

Our Expectations

To solidify and deepen the relationships among our parishioners and with the community at large with the guidance of a strong, efficient and effective leader.

To thrive, not simply survive. To serve, not simply exist. To act, not simply be.

Grace's Hope for the Future

To continue to grow as a vibrant energized and active community of the faithful that will make a difference in the lives of others and in the health of our earthly home.



Grace Highlights

Grace Episcopal is home to people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. We are single, engaged, married, widowed, LGBTQIA+, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Grace is a mature congregation, which is ethnically & socio-economically diverse, resulting in a friendly, open, and welcoming community.

The Town of Ossining, which includes all of the Village of Ossining, some of the Village of Briarcliff Manor, and the unincorporated town of Ossining, has 37,000 people residing in 15.6 square miles. Located on the Hudson River about 25 miles from the New York City border and only an hour by train into Grand Central Station and midtown Manhattan, Ossining is a culturally diverse, affordable place to live, rich in both history and natural beauty. Visit: [Ossining, NY - Community Video Tour \(elocallink.tv\)](http://elocallink.tv)

Our Demographics

- Almost 60% are between the ages of 25-64 and 14% are over 65 years.
- Racially, 50% of residents report as White, 50% as varied including Black/African American, Asian, Indigenous, Other, and Mixed
- 49.96% of Ossining residents speak only English, while 50.04% speak other languages. The non-English language spoken by the largest group is Spanish, which is spoken by 40.78% of the population.
- 79% have at least high school diploma/GED; 35% at BA/BS or higher.
- Click here: [Ossining. A Brief History | Ossining NY \(villageofossining.org\)](http://villageofossining.org)
- And Here: [New to Ossining | Ossining NY \(villageofossining.org\)](http://villageofossining.org)

[To come: Web Link to visual letter]



Our Buildings and Grounds

Grace Episcopal Church has two distinct campuses resulting from the merger of the historic parishes. Trinity Campus is located in downtown Ossining. St. Paul's Campus is set in the highlands of Ossining about two miles east.

The St. Paul's Campus, located in the creatively repurposed farm buildings of the former Donald Estate, lies in a residential neighborhood. The campus includes four buildings (Church, Parish Office/Lantern Shop, Storage Shed, and Rectory) on four acres, including a large parking lot with three access points to the local road, Ganung Drive. Joseph's Garden/Columbarium lies on the southeast border of the property. The recently renovated four-bedroom, two-bath rectory (~1700 sq. ft.) is on a quiet cul-de-sac in a family friendly neighborhood.

Trinity Campus, noted for the beauty of its architecture, is in the heart of the village of Ossining. The church, built of limestone, was designed in the traditional cruciform shape with a High Altar at the east end and includes stained glass windows by Tiffany and Gorham. The campus includes a large Parish Hall which serves as the center of operations for both the Ossining Food Pantry and the local Loaves and Fish dinner program.

[\[To come: Link to Grace Church in Photos\]](#)

Our Stewardship

Grace Church's approach to stewardship has moved away from the traditional economic ask for money to pay for church expenses. Instead, we focus on the importance of our relationships with each other and God and then ask members to make pledges so that they can maintain these relationships. To assist with this process, we developed exercises to facilitate a conscious understanding of how and why we appreciate each other so members are better able to formulate a mental image when they are when considering their support with their pledge. As a result of this initiative, we have been able to maintain or surpass total pledged amounts. Additionally, parishioners enjoy the various group activities used to help make them more appreciative and aware of their feelings for each other.

Our Missions & Ministry

Grace Church is committed to community outreach. We have partnered with Ossining Food Pantry, providing a staging, supply, and distribution center for those in need. Our Emergency Shelter Program is non-denominational and runs in coordination with the Briarcliff Ossining Ministerial Association, whose members are other local churches and synagogues. We have an ongoing relationship with Hope's Door shelter to collect needed essentials, toys, and gifts for the holidays. Our Social Justice Mission Committee has provided a variety of help for the community, such as strengthening our ties to Hope's Door, operating a community garden and donating the produce, and developing innovative means of outreach. Our 2021 Afghan Ministry provided hundreds of coats and boots to Afghan migrants fleeing political violence and persecution. REPAIR



(Rivertowns Episcopal Parishes Action on Inclusion and Race), created in conjunction with neighboring Episcopal churches, has been instrumental in addressing issues of racial justice within our church, our communities and our world.

List of current active groups:

- Afghan Ministry
- Altar Guild
- Bible Study
- Book Club
- Buildings and Grounds Committee
- Christmas Wreath Annual Fundraiser
- Emergency Shelter Program
- Finance and Investment Committee
- Hope's Door - support for women and children escaping domestic violence
- Hudson Link - reentry support and educational program for incarcerated and the formerly incarcerated
- Kitchen Angels - lunches, teas, Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras dinner, and Thanksgiving Potluck
- Lantern Shop - gifts, treasures, and seasonal sales
- Loaves & Fish - provides cooked meals to homeless and low-income families
- Music Ministry
- Ossining Food Pantry
- Passages and Transitions
- Readers, Ushers, and Greeters
- REPAIR - dedicated to improving the quality of life by healing and justice
- Social Justice Mission Committee
- Stewardship

Our Staff

CLERGY

The Rev. Dr. Charles D. Mayer, Acting Priest-in-Charge
The Rev. Dorothee R. Caulfield, Deacon
Lainie Murrell, Deacon-in-Formation

ST. PAUL CAMPUS OFFICE

Carolyn R. Black, Music Director Emeritus
Tina Farrell, Church Administrator
Beth Pollack, Treasurer
Anthony Sena, Sexton

TRINITY CAMPUS OFFICE

Christopher Fasulo, Minister of Music
Tam Hernández, Parish Administrator
Katherine Pendzuk, Treasurer & Verger
Pablo Montoya, Sexton



Our Vestry

Tam Hernández, Warden

Sue Monroe, Warden

Charles Baker
Margery Barnes
Alexis Cullen

Kellie Ishmael
Milton Kerr
Darryl Moy

Kate Pendzuk
Cecilia Quintero
Roger Rowe

Our Worship

Our new church family brings together diverse styles of worship: Anglo-Catholic and Broad Church, Rite I and Rite II. We are enjoying alternating between the two styles, and between our two worship spaces. We are also experimenting with inclusive language, “Enriching our Worship” services. Our worship is a dynamic work in progress as we grow in our new life together.

Our Finances

By combining the financial resources of two parishes we have created a financial environment which is not only stable but sustainable. With prudent oversight of our investments and spending Grace Episcopal Church will be able to employ a full time Priest in Charge, meet the needs of our parishioners through our ministries and serve the greater community through our missions. That, financially, was our goal for the “Great Commingling”...Becoming Grace.

[\[To come: link to Deeper Financial Narrative\]](#)

The Priest we seek:

Requirements

- Strong leadership skills
- Activism - model behavior to inspire and move others to action
- Inspiring, thought-provoking preacher
- Able to serve multi-racial and multi-ethnic communities
- Empathetic
- Strong pastoral skills
- Organizational skills
- Ability to delegate
- Basic understanding of financials

Preferences

- Bilingual
- Children and youth ministry experience
- Strong understanding of financials
- Basic music appreciation



Meet The Search Committee

In an era marked by national division, this merger of our two churches represents an important act of reconciliation. We have joined one another, by grace, to be Grace for a world that needs constant reminders that the abundance of God's love is eternal, unconditional, and more enduring than the forces which seek to disrespect others, divide us, instill fear, and doubt in our world. We are eager to start this exciting new chapter to meet the candidate who is called to become Grace Episcopal Church's next full time Priest to lead us into a future which holds promise, hope and love for all people, the Earth and every living thing. We look forward to meeting you!

[To come: [Link to team bios](#)]

Thank you for learning more about Grace Episcopal Church. If you feel called to apply, please send your Letter of Interest, Resume, and OTM Portfolio to our Co-Chairs, Richard Shaw and Jo Ann McGrath at: search@graceossining.org and copy Canon Nora Smith at: nsmith@dioceseny.org