



# GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Annual Meeting March 1, 2026

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**Meeting ID:** 876 6095 5513

**Passcode:** 893470



## ERIC MASON

Dear Grace,

I recently went on retreat to pray and think. I looked back at 2025, and then I imagined where I might focus my energies in 2026. There was a good deal of continuity and congruence between the two. Much of my time and energy is focused on collaborating with Jeff Bassette, Kim Cockroft, and others on the Growing Grace initiative. We've been working diligently the past two years to build and refine practices and systems in our culture that would help Grace grow numerically and spiritually. Jeff will talk more about these efforts later in this report. The joy of our labor together has been getting to know the new people that have either become members of Grace or who are in the process of doing so.

My work in 2025/2026 has been and will be guided by a focus on spiritual formation. There is a journey that happens in moving from the paradigm of simply being a member of a church to being a disciple of Jesus. It is a process of discovering the joy and vitality of being citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, even as we exist as citizens of Empire. I have focused on this spiritual formation and discipleship through my homilies, the conversation at the Wednesday Gathering, my Foundations Class, and through my collaboration with Kim on the adult education classes. It plays out in my work in shaping the leadership retreats for PMC and Vestry and the Parish retreat in October. I also do it through one-on-one conversation and prayer.

Looking ahead, I will be collaborating with our Deacon, Scott Deasy, on re-imagining our Outreach Ministry. Cindy Logan and Kathleen Abell have faithfully stewarded that ministry for many years now, and they have decided to step back and give space for someone else to lead. They have given us the opportunity to build upon and broaden the scope of what they've done. We are in a moment where several outreach initiatives have sprung up organically. This year Melissa Meyers has organized our participation with the Suquamish Community Kitchen. John Kydd prompted us to bring our faith to bear on our politics. Scott and Kathy Deasy invited us to partner with World Relief in helping to provide support for those released from the ICE detention facility in Tacoma. Julie Shryock and Valerie Reinke are initiating a conversation with the congregation inviting us to discern how we might use our property to support affordable housing on Bainbridge. (The text for their proposed resolution is in the Looking Forward section at the back.) Members of Grace regularly volunteer at Super Suppers, Helpline House, Fishline, KIAC, and the Faith Shower Project. My vision would be to gather all those who are interested in Outreach for conversation, brainstorming, and strategic planning as we build upon what's happening and create an even stronger foundation for Outreach Ministry here at Grace.

These three areas, Growing Grace, Discipleship, and Outreach form the basis of the Mutual Ministry Agreement that I have with Grace's leadership and with the congregation. I invite you to consider your role in our mutual ministry. You can find that document at the back of this report.

One of the best aspects of my role is getting to collaborate with an amazing group of people. Grace is fortunate to have a phenomenal staff. I am encouraged and inspired by them each day. We also have exceptional volunteers. I would like to thank those stepping off PMC: Cindy Logan and Kathleen Abell from Outreach, Rachel Brandt and Rachel Yobs from Parish Life, and Shannon Moore from Pastoral Care. Those stepping off Vestry are Krista Webb, Dan Rohan, and Tom Ringo. Each of them has given extensively of their time and talent, and Grace is a better place because of their efforts. Thank you, thank you!

What follows is the story of who we are and what we are up to. I commend it to you.

Peace,



March 2026

**During 2025, the following members of Grace affirmed their faith and baptismal vows through Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation.**



**Confirmed**

- Martin Cockroft
- Jeff Bassette
- Melissa Meyers
- Frances Rohan
- Rhonda Peacock
- Mike Gillogley
- David Haley
- Kate Killigrew
- Jacqueline Killigrew
- Karen Barmmer

**Received**

- Dave Schultz
- Margaret Schultz
- Nancy Beck
- Karen Gerstenberger
- Linda Baker
- Terry Jones

**Reaffirmed**

- Kathy Gillogley
- Ruth Blaney
- Eric Matthews
- Jane Crane
- Russ Barmmer
- Judy Cozine
- Ted Cozine

## TOM RINGO & ANN NEW

One of our very favorite movies is "It's a Wonderful Life." Many of you probably know it, a black-and-white classic film from 1946 that stars Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey. The movie is set around Christmas time and is a holiday favorite for many. For both of us, it has become an annual tradition to watch the film around Christmas as an integral part of seasonal festivities.

This movie is the story of George learning just how much his life means to the community of Bedford Falls, his lifelong home. George is having an existential crisis and his guardian angel, Clarence, conjures up for George an out-of-body opportunity to see a world that never had a George Bailey. It becomes plain over the course of the movie that the impact of a single life can be profound on a community. The film reminds us that our individual lives are stitched into the fabric of a community such that any of us pulled out of that fabric would mess up (and make worse) the stitching. In George's case, the impact of his life has been richly positive. It's such a great thing to reflect on, and in doing so, be reminded that our lives make a difference.

Even though Grace does not face the existential threat that George did in the film, we offer this movie's storyline as a jumping off point for considering Grace and our "communal wonderful life." A wonderful life, whether it's individual or communal, is not built quickly. Rather, it is formed as a byproduct of countless acts of kindness, love, and respect for others.

What is the difference we make to our version of Bedford Falls? If Grace were not here, what would be lost? What sort of hole in the fabric of our Bainbridge/Kitsap community would be noticed if this church was not alive and well? Over three decades, Grace has molded a wonderful life. But lest we become self-congratulatory, we have room to grow and be even better as a blessing to our community. There's no question for us that Grace would leave a hole in our community if for some reason we were gone from the scene. But the real question, the real OPPORTUNITY, is what we are being called into next.

That's a variant of the question Rev. Eric has been prodding us with this past year: How then shall we live? It's the question that challenges us to live into the life of discipleship that is the hallmark of being/becoming a Christian. We are called to making more of a difference — to focus on the qualities that make our individual and communal lives impactful in a wonderful way through kindness, compassion, humility, service, caring for those less fortunate, sharing our abundance, and loving our neighbor despite not liking everything about them. This is the soul-school that is the heart of this Grace enterprise. This is the centerpiece of disciple-making we are and should continue to be about. This is a worthy question for parish leadership and all of us as members to ponder as it helps to focus our mission and discipleship efforts.

We encourage you to read this report beginning to end and be in awe of all that is happening at Grace. When you finish reading it, we hope you experience profound gratitude for the outpouring of generous service given by so many in our parish. Together, we are equipping people to be the light in the dark, to live their faith into daily life, and to be a home for seekers of spiritual truth where all are welcome.

Paraphrasing Mary Oliver: "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild, wonderful and precious life?"

Your wardens,



*P.S. from Tom*

I am about to rotate out of Grace Vestry leadership and give this opportunity to serve to someone else. I am immensely grateful for the privilege of serving Grace as a warden these past three years and I'm very optimistic about the future for this faith community. The presence of Rev. Eric in our midst with an outstanding staff, along with a cadre of capable lay leaders and amazingly service-oriented people of the parish, have us poised to be a blessing to Bainbridge and North Kitsap. The world feels so uncertain and confusing, but Grace is a place of healing and light. May it continue to be so.

## FINANCE DEBORAH SCHENK

2025 was another year of increasing stability for Grace. Although we continued to face financial challenges, the trajectory is promising. The good news is that, although we budgeted a significant operating deficit for 2025, our year-end deficit was not as large as expected, due to a tremendous parish response and careful monitoring of expenses. But caution is advised. The 2026 budget continues to show a deficit despite various ways to keep it reasonable. Grace is still not able to sustain itself from its operating income. We need a balanced budget.

### 2025 RESULTS

#### Operating Results

There is good news about the 2025 year-end results. The Vestry originally passed a budget with a deficit of \$11,478. In the spring, however, the Vestry made the wise decision to hire Melissa Meyers as youth coordinator and revisited the budget. The amended budget showed a deficit of \$36,478. Nevertheless, we ended 2025 with a reduced deficit of \$17,495. How did that happen?

The first is that we received significantly more income than budgeted. We came very close to hitting our budget target for pledge payments at the end of 2025. We usually budget \$15,000 in unpaid pledges but by the end of January we had received the entire budgeted 2025 amount! While there are still a few parishioners who did not complete their pledge, several generous parishioners paid more than their pledge. That's \$15,000 we did not expect to collect. In addition, we received \$4,500 more in Plate than budgeted (amounts received as contributions that were not previously pledged). Note that increased revenue causes our Diocesan assessment (at 14.5%) to increase as well. On the other hand, our rental income was less than budgeted. Nevertheless, overall, it was a positive revenue picture.

Second, our expenses were almost exactly what the amended budget called for. We monitor expenses very carefully. For example, I approve every expenditure Grace makes and prepare quarterly reports for all ministries so that we do not overspend. Where possible we paid for improvements or additions to the building and grounds from our capital reserve funds, and the new sound system was funded by the Webster Capital Reserve Fund. We managed our expenditures well in 2025.

Nevertheless, we still had a deficit of \$17,495. We paid for that deficit by using operating reserves that have accumulated in past years when we had a surplus.

In sum, we have made progress in 2025 in stabilizing Grace's finances, but we are not out of the woods yet.

#### Investment Results

Grace maintains a checking account at Wells Fargo through which we run our income and expenses. We also keep several restricted funds there that are used regularly to cover expenses. At the direction of the Investment Committee, I try to keep only \$75,000-\$100,000 in our checking account. When we accrue more than that, I move the funds to Vanguard in order to capture some interest income.

Grace also maintains an account at Vanguard, which we use to produce earnings on our investments. At year end, there was \$1,536,944 at Vanguard. This account is monitored by our Investment Committee to keep our portfolio balanced.

As the chart below shows, we have two tranches in our portfolio. (1) Certain funds are invested in a money market fund. These are funds that we either draw on regularly or we do not want to subject to market swings. At year end there was \$386,829 invested in the money market fund. (2) Other funds are invested in various bond and equity funds. At year end these funds equaled \$1,150,112. These are funds that we do not expect to draw on regularly. And of course, donors would expect us to invest their gifts for future projects wisely. Overall, our investment portfolio increased by \$41,765 in 2025.

Although there are significant investment funds at Vanguard, many of those investments are donor-restricted funds—we cannot spend them on the operating budget or any purpose other than what the donor provided. Others are Vestry-restricted funds, such as the Legacy Fund, which is intended only for the long-term sustainability of Grace.

INVESTMENT AND FUND BALANCES YEAR END 2025	
<b>Cash at Wells Fargo</b>	
Restricted Donor and Vestry Restricted Funds	\$57,202
Unrestricted Funds	\$199,222
<b>Total cash at Wells Fargo</b>	<b>\$249,424</b>
<b>Investments at Vanguard</b>	
<i>Invested in Money Market Fund</i>	
Gallery and Arts Fund**	\$6,632
Music and Arts Fund*	\$12,587
Outreach Fund*	\$24,829
Phinney Fund*	\$10,028
Rector Housing Fund**	\$929
Operations Reserve	\$192,797
Columbarium***	\$57,657
Donor Gift**	\$72,225
Curate Assistance Fund*	\$9,144
<b>Total in money market fund</b>	<b>386,829</b>
<i>Invested in stock and bond funds</i>	
Legacy Fund**	\$90,728
Landscaping Fund*	\$42,749
Donor Gift*	\$17,202
Capital Improvements Reserve**	\$35,885
Sabbatical Reserve**	\$10,058
Cash reserves	\$61,139
Donor Capital Improvement Fund*	\$289,382
Donor Clergy Assistance Fund*	\$285,832
2008 Campaign Funds**	\$317,137
<b>Total in stock and bond funds</b>	<b>\$1,150,112</b>
<b>Total investment at Vanguard</b>	<b>\$1,536,944</b>
* Donor Restricted--Can only be used for donor's purpose	
** Restricted by the Vestry for specific purpose	
*** Permanently restricted by law	

## 2024 Audit

The “audit” (it is actually a financial review) of our 2024 statement and financial procedures was conducted. The audit was clean with no significant findings and only minor recommendations.

## 2026 BUDGET

The Vestry is presenting for your review and approval the 2026 budget. This budget represents an enormous amount of preparation and consideration by the Treasurer, the Finance Committee, and the Vestry. Last year the Finance Committee developed a “forward look” memo designed to project earnings and expenses for three years. The goal was to understand what it would take for Grace to produce a balanced budget over the next several years. The Finance Committee and the Vestry have carefully considered this document in accepting this budget. There is a tension between conserving resources and not budgeting funds we do not have, and the need to preserve what makes Grace, Grace in order to attract new individuals and families to our community.

The budgeting process was made easier by the strong response to the dedicated work of the Stewardship Committee and the Trustee for Stewardship Wendy Tyner, bringing in a record-breaking pledge total of \$717,703. Every line of the budget was scrutinized to make sure that we budgeted accurately. We have little control over many expenses, such as electricity, water, insurance, and the like.

There are three large categories on the expense side of the budget. The largest piece—62% of the budget—is attributable to personnel. Our wonderful staff of six is the heart and soul of Grace. We budgeted a 2.7% COLA increase on their anniversary dates. We also pay a significant amount for accounting in lieu of a staff bookkeeper and we have a part-time communications person, nursery workers, and substitute music directors and clergy.

The budget for building and grounds is 10% of the total. We have a large, beautiful building to maintain as well as a large piece of land. While we do not want to neglect either, we are careful to make sure every expense is necessary and efficient. Again, we are taking some expenses for improvements from our capital reserves. While we believe this is a prudent thing to do, we must be careful to conserve these funds for major expenses. Grace no longer depreciates its assets nor does it provide for a sinking fund or reserve out of its operating budget for capital expenses. Thus, our current capital reserves would be needed for the replacement of significant items (such as the boiler or refrigerator).

And third, we support our diocese with the mandatory 14.5% charge of our gross income. That leaves little resources for administration, outreach, and programmatic support.

The initial budget I presented to the Vestry after working with staff and program ministers to understand their needs had a \$100,000 deficit. The recommended budget has a \$21,366 deficit. How were we able to reduce it substantially?

- (1) The Vestry has planned a fundraiser in May that hopefully will produce \$50,000 net income.
- (2) We are budgeting only \$5,000 in unpaid pledges (and maybe that will continue to be zero!), a savings of \$10,000.
- (3) We are using about \$30,000 in restricted funds to cover various operating expenses but will have to pay the Diocesan Assessment on the use of those funds, netting about \$25,000.
- (4) Finally, we will continue to draw on capital reserves for any capital expense.

## PROPOSED 2026 OPERATING BUDGET

<b>Income</b>	
Current Year Pledge Payments	\$717,703
Previous Year Pledge Payments	\$3,300
Plate	\$20,000
Current Year Unfulfilled Pledges	-\$5,000
Rental Income	\$12,500
Payment for Services	\$18,600
Other Income	\$600
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$829,703</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Faith Formation	\$11,600
Expenses for services	\$17,600
Program + Parish Life	\$2,500
Outreach	\$18,000
Music and Liturgy	\$2,725
Administrative	\$50,070
Bank Fees	\$5,000
Diocesan Support	\$118,575
Contracted Services	\$56,930
Facility Expenses	\$84,990
Staff Wages	\$375,992
Staff Benefits	\$65,640
Payroll taxes	\$26,647
Stewardship + Convention	\$2,800
Fundraiser Expenses	\$12,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$851,069</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>-\$21,366</b>

### A word of caution

Although this year's budget has a reasonable deficit—it is still a deficit. Looking ahead to 2027, we will need to further increase our pledge commitment in order to not only manage current expenses but also increased costs. We may again need an annual fundraiser and to draw on restricted funds to close the gap. While we have operational reserves to cover our deficits during this transition, they will not last forever. With the support of the parish, I am hopeful that we can return to financial solvency in the near future.

## WHAT'S NOT IN THE FINANCIALS

While Grace has a dedicated and skilled paid staff, Grace would not survive without the support of our volunteer labor force. The Vestry recognizes the tremendous sum we are saving by not having to hire people to do the “work” that our volunteers do—mostly behind the scenes—that is often carried out by paid labor in other nonprofits. Imagine what our personnel budget would look like if we had to pay the following groups of volunteers:

- The Vestry who provides financial, legal, and oversight support
- The PMC who organizes programs and oversees ministries
- The Music Circle who provides professional level music on Sundays
- The Sunday school teachers to whom we entrust the education of our youth
- Parents and other volunteers who help with youth programs
- The flower team who provides arrangements on Sundays
- Men’s Group volunteers who help at Homecoming, Shrove Tuesday, and Christmas
- Volunteers who help on the grounds, the forest and trails, the labyrinth, and maintain the planting beds
- The Night Owls who provide security at night
- The volunteers who assist families at funerals and provide reception support
- The financial volunteers who provide financial and investment assistance and prepare the audit
- Parishioner lawyers who provide pro bono legal services
- The Home Groups and their leaders who organize and “cater” Sunday coffee hours
- The pastoral care team, liaisons, and Home Group members who provide pastoral care for parishioners
- The “techies” who help on Sunday morning with sound and Zoom, and those with technical skills who advise Grace on other projects
- Those who coordinate the Grace art gallery
- The crew that folds the bulletins

A rough back-of-the-envelope calculation tells me we are easily saving more than \$100,000 of labor costs due to the generous talented support from Gracies. A huge thank you to all these people who help to sustain Grace.

### It takes a village



Although I, as Treasurer, am responsible for the day-to-day finances of our parish, I do not work alone. I am blessed to have the support of many people. On a daily basis I work with our parish administrator, Lindsay Masters, who prepares and submits invoices, handles all receipts, and deposits our funds and manages our Realm account—in short, a huge amount of back-office support. Each Sunday two members of the Vestry and PMC count receipts and prepare a statement. Once a month I meet with the Finance Committee—Michael Bronsdon, Norm Bruce, David Sanders, Eric Mason, and John Shea. The Vestry relies on their financial expertise and oversight. They review the financials and budget and provide recommendations to the Vestry. Several times a year the Investment Committee—John Shea and Walt Yund—meet with me to review our

portfolio and make recommendations. Not all Vestry members have a financial background, but they take their job seriously. As the governing board, they have a legal obligation to marshal our resources and provide financial oversight and they do so quite competently. Most people who hear the word “audit” run, but not “the Cindys.” Cindy Logan and Cindy Shea returned another year to conduct our Diocesan-mandated financial review. The time and support of all these people in helping me do my job is gratefully acknowledged.

## STEWARDSHIP WENDY TYNER

*“Be more tender than yesterday, and notice the small miracles, seeing giving as a way to counter darkness and live a miraculous, interconnected life, finding joy in simple acts and connections.”*

—Brian Doyle

We have been blessed by the steady life of Grace and by the generosity that has come before us, allowing us to contribute in the way Brian Doyle describes. Prior to 2025, Grace flourished through gifts from annual stewardship campaigns, individual donations, fundraisers, events, and legacy giving. These treasures have supported our ministries, clergy, and staff, and the care of our beautiful building and grounds, including the Memorial Garden and the labyrinth. Just as importantly, your presence, attention, time, and talents have shaped who we are today and carried us to this moment.

Grace continued to experience an abundance of giving this year. **Grace’s 2026 Annual Stewardship Campaign, *How Then Shall We Live***, welcomed a record **164 pledges**, including the largest single gift to date of \$30,000 and the highest average pledge of \$4,489. Pledges totaling **\$717,703** brought us to **96% of our 2026 goal**. We welcomed **25 new pledges**, saw **55 increased pledges**, and only 17 decreased pledges.

This remarkable milestone was made possible through the dedication of parishioners who helped set campaign goals, design and assemble the brochure, prepare mailings, offer quotes and testimonies, send personal cards of thanks, and celebrate together, even with sparkling non-alcoholic cider.



We raise our fundraising chalice to Russell and Karen Barmmer, Nancy Beck, Ginny Bell, Ruth Blaney, Rachel Brandt, Ronda Broatch, Linda Bruce, Dennis Carlson, Emily Chamberlain, Ted and Judy Cozine, Jane Crane, Daphne Davies, Virginia Davison, Mary Ellen de la Peña, Kathy Deasy, Lori Dickerson, Beulah Downing, Martin Garthwaite, Kathy and Mike Gillogley, Mary Hall, Carol Heine, Barbara Hume, Terry Jones, Tootie Kuhn, Anne Kundtz, John Kydd, Barb Levy, Cindy Logan, Mary Lou Macala, Judy McKenzie, Florrie Munat, Ann New, Nancy Norton, Heather Parr, Rhonda Peacock, Robb Petersen, Doug Picha, Valerie Reinke, Tom Ringo, Deborah Schenk, Cindy and John Shea, Marg Schultz, Bob Spanfelner, Tom Tyner, Krista Webb, and Rachel Yobs, and especially graphic **artist Kelly Hume, Reverend Eric Mason, and Lindsay Masters.**

Saving the best for last, **Julie Shryock**, who was part of Grace’s founding vision 33 years ago and continues to be a guiding visionary for our future, offered extensive time, intellectual talent, and financial treasures as co-coordinator to help build our shared life at Grace. Deep thanks to everyone for their overwhelming generosity.

Additionally, Grace received two special gifts totaling \$56,790. Gifts totaling \$32,195 will support the Legacy Program, and \$24,595 will support youth programs.

Here at Grace, our stewardship tells the story Brian Doyle describes, where tenderness, generosity, and simple acts of connection become miracles that sustain our common life. Blessings to you.

## HUMAN RESOURCES MARY ELLEN DE LA PEÑA

The HR Trustee's primary role is to represent Vestry in assuring that personnel policies are up-to-date and are being administered in accordance with state and federal laws, the requirements of the Diocese of Olympia, and are consistent with Grace values. It is also the role of the HR Trustee to partner with Rev. Eric Mason as the steward for Grace staff perspectives, personal well-being, and professional growth.

## HIRED GRACE YOUTH MINISTRIES COORDINATOR

In April 2025, Melissa Meyers was hired to work 20 hours per week as the Youth Ministries Coordinator. In her time as a Grace staff member Melissa has shown herself to be a competent, caring professional with a unique gift for connecting with children, youth, and families. With her focused efforts, there has been a pronounced increase in the number of Grace activities offered to children, teens, and families as well as increased participation. Melissa's open-minded approach to learning and her thoughtful and warm-hearted orientation to her work are among the many attributes that make her a great addition to the Grace staff.

## COMPLETED MINISTRY REVIEWS

Throughout the year, it has been a privilege to partner with Rev. Eric to meet with each of the five Grace staff members to complete individual Ministry Reviews. Each newly hired staff member completes a 90-day and six-month review designed to help them make a successful transition to their position at Grace. An Annual Ministry Review is designed to give each staff member the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their work at Grace. In this process, they are asked to identify what gives them a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. They are also asked to identify workplace challenges and ways in which they might benefit from greater support. Annual goals and professional development opportunities are also discussed. Participating in this process has provided the HR Trustee with a clearer understanding of the inner workings of Grace Church, as well as a closer view of Grace staff as talented and collaborative professionals.

## INCREASED APPRECIATION

While completing my second year as HR Trustee, I have become deeply appreciative of the ways in which Grace staff members function as an effective team. Each clearly has a focused commitment to performing their individual responsibilities, i.e., administration, grounds/facilities, music, and faith formation for youth and adults. Each staff person also demonstrates, through support for one another and a collaborative spirit, an overarching commitment to making Grace Church a vital place of work and worship. **Grace is fortunate to have this skilled, generous, and devoted team!**

## PLACE FOR GRACE DAN ROHAN

The Place for Grace Ministry encompasses two aspects of Grace’s mission: the stewardship of our treasured buildings and grounds, and the maintenance of our digital presence and infrastructure. As we safeguard and adapt our physical spaces to serve both enduring traditions and evolving needs, we also ensure our technology extends Grace’s welcome to guests near and far.

When Eric asked me to extend my service for a fourth year as Place for Grace Minister, I’ll admit I didn’t harbor much hope that 2025 would be the year we’d overcome some of the formidable obstacles standing between Grace and some of our most ambitious goals. I’m delighted to report that—as I’ve learned time and again in my life—I was wrong. While 2025 had its share of challenges, it proved to be a year with many things to be proud of.

### SOUND SYSTEM RENEWAL

In October 2024, Eric Mason asked if I would lead the selection and installation of a new sound system for Grace. Our existing system, installed in 2003, had far exceeded its useful life, and the consequences were impossible to ignore. As we worked to become a more welcoming congregation, we discovered our failing sound system was actually excluding people—those with hearing challenges couldn’t make out readers or musicians, and even those without hearing loss struggled with poor audio quality. Years of piecemeal repairs had our volunteers scouring the internet for discontinued parts, jury-rigging solutions to keep things working. Our in-ground cabling was corroding, producing buzzing and artifacts. Our assistive listening system’s FM broadcast quality was so poor—pops, drops, distortion—that many who needed it simply gave up. Musicians couldn’t hear each other in our cavernous sanctuary. Some microphones operated on illegal frequencies, while others no longer captured key frequency ranges, leaving everything sounding tinny and indistinct.



The new system installed addresses all these challenges with modern wireless microphones, a state-of-the-art assisted listening system capable of providing direct audio to hearing aids, professional monitoring for musicians, reliable components with readily available parts, and speakers that blend beautifully with our sanctuary’s architecture. Most importantly, we now have clear, intelligible sound for everyone in our sanctuary, regardless of where they sit. This investment ensures that everyone who enters Grace can fully participate in our worship, exactly as it should be. I’m deeply grateful to our volunteers and staff who have worked tirelessly to make this transition smooth: Rhonda Peacock, Richard Rosenthal, Kim Thompson, Luke Yoder, Elizabeth Cromwell, and Eric Mason. Your dedication to this project was an essential ministry that will impact our congregation for the next two decades.

## AN UPDATE ON SOLAR POWER

Four years ago, on the day my nomination as Place for Grace Minister was confirmed, Gary Lagerloef approached me with an appeal to think about how to address various building systems that negatively impact the environment. When Marcy later invited me to join the Greening of Grace team, I jumped at the opportunity. After three failed proposals over two years, we're feeling hopeful that we may see concrete action on this project in 2026! Accordingly, our team has been gathering electrical data, compiling infrastructure details, soliciting vendor quotes, and praying for good news.

Solar power represents more than environmental stewardship. We want to ensure that Grace can serve our community in a crisis. In partnership with Bainbridge Prepares, Sage, and Island School, Grace has committed to be part of an emergency hub serving the north end of the island. We still need energy storage and stronger emergency partnerships, but this is a crucial step.

Deep gratitude to the Greening of Grace team, whose persistence continues to make this dream possible: Marcy Lagerloef, Gary Lagerloef, Ruth Blaney, Eric Matthews, Dave Haley, Terry Jones, Robert Cromwell, and Jens Boemer.

## A WORD ABOUT ERIC MATTHEWS



The stewardship of our facilities continues to flourish under our Building and Property Manager, Eric Matthews.

Throughout 2025, Eric led countless improvements and repairs that kept Grace safe, functional, and beautiful. The scope of his work is remarkable: coordinating HVAC maintenance and repairs, managing plumbing emergencies, overseeing electrical upgrades, winterizing outdoor spaces, maintaining our fire suppression systems, coordinating with contractors for specialized work, ensuring our safety equipment stayed current and functional, managing our grounds-keeping operations, addressing the never-ending parade of small repairs that keep a building of this age running smoothly, and responding to after-hours emergencies with grace and good humor.

Over these four years, I've watched Eric tackle every challenge, from the mundane to the monumental, with steady grace and quiet competence. This is hard, often thankless work, yet Eric approaches each day with humor, and genuine care for both our building and the people it serves. What makes Eric exceptional isn't just his technical expertise, though that's considerable. It's his heart for this community. From the youngest to the oldest, Eric knows who we are and his work benefits each of us.

I leave this role more convinced than ever that Grace is extraordinarily blessed to have Eric as both dedicated parishioner and skilled steward of our facilities. Eric, thank you for your partnership, your wisdom, and for making this ministry work. The next Place for Grace Minister inherits the greatest gift of the job: the opportunity to work with you.

## VOLUNTEERS

This ministry thrives because of generous hearts and willing hands. I want to thank the many volunteers who contributed to Place for Grace work in 2025.

Regular volunteers and helpers: Mike Leamon, Nancy Norton, Martin Garthwaite, Fran Moen, Cassie Picha, Dave Haley, Tom Tyner, Wayne Herbert, John Shea, Jan Jeffcoat, Tootie Kuhn, Connie Ballou, Mark Kruse, Tom Leigh, Joe Paar, Ken Wesley, Gary Lagerloef, Norm Bruce, Anthony Lewis, David Schultz, Bridget Berry, Rudy Broatch, Don Rooks, Kelly Hume, Walt Vandenberg, Mel Ivey, Randy, Peter, Frank Gibbons, John Kydd, Liz Shaw, Charlie Laymon, the Men's Group (Kids' Camp cleanup), and many others.

Technology and communications support: John McKenzie, Ruth Blaney, Kelly Hume, Luke Yoder, Rhonda Peacock, and the dedicated volunteers who manage sound and livestreaming each Sunday.

Landscape and grounds committee: Nancy Norton, Nancy Peregrine, Fran Moen, Connie Ballou, John Shea, Dave Haley, Martin Garthwaite, Marcus Lang, and the faithful 3rd Saturday crew.

Night Owls security team: Don Rooks, Dave Schultz, Randy Otto, Mike Leamon, Mel Ivey, Dave Haley, Keith Butler, and Kelly Hume.

If I've inadvertently omitted anyone, please accept my sincere apologies. Every contribution—large or small—makes Grace what it is.

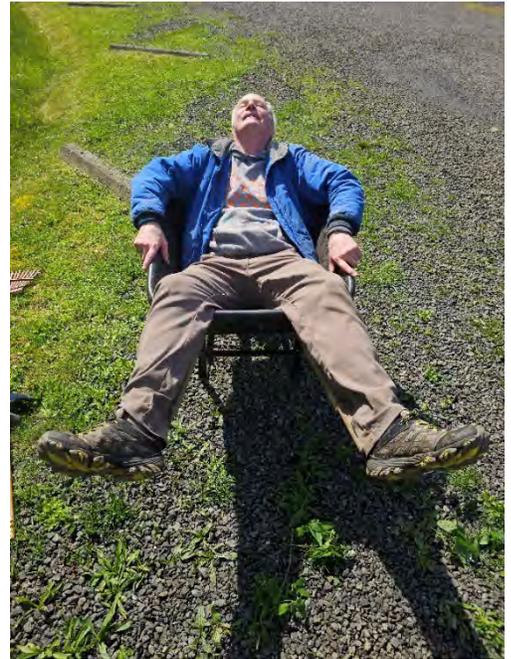
## LOOKING AHEAD

While I'm proud of what we accomplished in 2025, I haven't lost sight of the substantial work that remains. Our oil-burning boiler continues to chug petroleum. Our aging windows leak energy. The maintenance demands of a 10,000-square-foot building on ten acres only intensify with time. Simultaneously, we're discovering the limits of our annual funding capacity to sustain the budgets these maintenance needs require.

The next Place for Grace Minister will inherit these challenges that I wish I could have fully resolved during my tenure. I wish them the best of luck. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have served as their steward these past four years, and I'm confident that the work will continue in capable hands.

In partnership,

Dan Rohan  
Place for Grace Minister



## GROWING GRACE JEFF BASSETTE

The Growing Grace initiative, commissioned by the Vestry in 2024, focuses on expanding Grace's membership while deepening the faith and joyful engagement of all who call Grace home. Our guiding question remains: What actions in the next 5–6 months will most strengthen Grace's growth? Each cycle, we set measurable goals, evaluate progress honestly, and establish new targets.

### 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- Installed new exterior directional signage and designated Guest Parking.
- Advanced plans for Narthex redesign to enhance beauty, hospitality, signage, and social space.
- Strengthened our Follow-Up Pathway: 46 newcomers requested follow-up; most continue attending; 40% became members in September.
- Adopted and implemented a liturgy to welcome and affirm new members.
- Welcomed 17 new members at Homecoming, including four families with children.
- Supported revitalization of the Family Home Group.
- Reorganized leadership for growth, forming three ministry teams for 2026: Invite, Welcome, and Connect—collaborating to set goals, evaluate progress, and foster a culture of growth.

### 2026 GOALS & DREAMS

- Launch the Invite Team to extend Grace's presence in the community and encourage first-time visits, especially among families.
- Launch the Connect Team to help people engage more deeply with Grace.
- Complete the Narthex redesign.
- Collaborate with Stewardship to support financial health.
- Establish clear benchmarks to track growth and progress.

### THE SHAPE OF GROWING GRACE IN 2026

We're excited to see more lay leadership emerging to support the growth of Grace. The functions of **inviting** people to Grace, **welcoming** them, and helping them get meaningfully **connected** have traditionally been the role of Grace's Membership Chair. However, that's far too much to ask of any one person, especially a volunteer. So, in the last couple of years, those Invite-Welcome-Connect functions have been further supported by the Growing Grace team.

As we move into 2026, we will phase out Grace's traditional Membership Chair role and divide those functions across three ministry teams: Invite, Welcome, and Connect teams. This significantly expands our capacity to lean into growth and allows our dedicated lay leaders to serve where they have the most passion. For instance, our former Membership Chair, Liz Shaw, is excited to become a Co-Leader for our new Connect team, since this is the area she most wants to help us with.

The image on the opposite page shows the new shape of Growing Grace for 2026. These three teams will collaborate with each other, set goals together, and team up to foster growth. We believe this reorganization can have a significant impact on our progress moving forward.

We give thanks for the steady growth of 2025 and pray that even more people discover the beauty of this community of Grace in 2026.



# Growing Grace

**VISION:** Help Grace Church become more deeply a place of spiritual vitality and transformation, a church that attracts those who long for spiritual community and formation.

**MISSION:** Facilitate the church’s membership growth, financial strength, and spiritual vitality.

## Steering Team

**Mission:** Provide strategic oversight of Invite, Welcome, and Connect (IWC) Teams to fulfill the Growing Grace mission.

**Responsibilities:**

- Alignment of IWC Teams
- Oversight/Support of IWC Team Leaders
- Annual Membership and Retention Review
- Church Spiritual Vitality and Financial Strength



## HOME GROUPS RANDY OTTO & DAVE SCHULTZ

Our Home Group Ministry this last year at Grace has been a challenge, a mystery, and a blessing. My heart is full of gratitude to be a small part of the collective love, energy, and commitment of all the participants making “Church” happen. As we are all “ministers,” we have taken care of each other all year long with the church services mostly running smoothly, pastoral care needs being met, and community-building firmly taking place. Many newcomers have been added to our groups as Grace grows. And our Home Groups remain a vital component of welcoming hospitality and invitation. A shout out to our intrepid Home Group leaders and their dedicated gift of time, skill, and amazing ability to organize and “herd the cats!” Equally to the Pastoral Care Liaisons and their compassionate hearts and warm embrace when the need arises. Yay to all of us!

We rise. Every week. And help craft the Sunday experience. And often it’s a challenge pulling last minute participants together. It always works! Grace happens.

We have a new group of leaders for the Family Home Group, which is a major blessing. Together with Kim Cockroft’s and Melissa Meyers’ guidance and coaching, they are learning the ropes.

Last spring and fall our Home Group Leaders and Pastoral Care Liaisons participated in joint Lunch & Learn events with the Pastoral Care team, Rev. Eric, and the Home Group ministers. These meetings stimulated good conversations, some problem solving, and overall encouragement.

Through the fall season Rev. Eric, Dave, and Randy participated in meeting with all the Home Groups sharing Home Eucharist. These gatherings were deeply meaningful, and we look forward to doing that again this year.

In these times of joy and challenge, our Home Groups will continue to provide us structure, strength, and encouragement.

Blessings,  
Randy and Dave

## MEMBERSHIP/WELCOMING LIZ SHAW

**We are all ministers**, the statement written every week on the front page of the Sunday bulletin, offers a peek into the work of Welcomers. Two years ago, we started the Welcomer Team, whose job is to forge relationships with newcomers to see if Grace is a spiritual home for them. Every week two Welcomers greet, listen, and converse with guests at Grace Church.



- This year we chatted with at least 100 people.
- We hosted four Newcomer Meals and 27 people attended. (We had at least 6 people for the March 2025 meal.)
- All of those 27 people are attending semi-regularly and consider Grace their church.
- We have given out 40 Loving Loaf bags filled with information about Grace and a loaf of homemade bread.
- For the past six months at each 9:30 service there have been at least five first-time visitors or people who have attended a few times.

We encourage you, our community, to greet the stranger. Continue to talk to new people at Grace, guide them to communion, and chat with them at coffee hour.

Many Gracies have graciously done these acts of welcome—and many thanks! I have heard from new members how these acts of welcome have made them feel comfortable in our community.

I heartily thank Mary Ellen de la Peña, Edith Cobourn, Jen Alleva and Ellie her daughter, Valerie Reinke, Ellyse Rengstorf, Mark Kruse, Martin Garthwaite, Randy Otto, and Ken Wesley for saying yes to being Welcomers! They are doing a wonderful job.

Thanks go to Mike Leamon and Cathy Bronsdon for supplying the Loving Loaves.

This year I will be co-chairing the Connect team and leaving the Welcome team. In the past five years of doing Welcome I have:

- Created the Grace Brochure.
- Led a team of six to review and improve our website.
- Led efforts to create the position of the Welcomer.
- Led the Welcome team for two years.
- Worked with Growing Grace members to create the Pathway in Realm, using ideas of previous Membership leaders.
- Communicated to newcomers using the Pathway in Realm.
- Created and implemented the “Loaving Loaves” bags.
- Invited newcomers to come to Grace events with me.
- Met newcomers for tea or a walk.

I look forward to continuing this work of knowing and connecting newcomers to Grace.

## **OUTREACH/FAITH IN ACTION KATHLEEN ABELL & CINDY LOGAN**

The Outreach/Faith in Action ministry at Grace continues to explore ways to:

- Seek out, support, partner, and build relationships with local and international organizations that support our core values of inclusion, service, discovery, and gratitude.
- Grace Outreach embraces and advocates individual involvement as well as monetary gifting prioritizing organizations that feed, clothe, and provide aid, hygiene and shelter to those in need as well as assisting immigrants and providing safe-keeping locally and internationally.
- Encourage and assist parishioners of all ages and abilities to connect with our service ministry partners by providing opportunities to become engaged.
- Discover new and creative ways to work with other branches of ministry programs to build a more integrated church community.

**A Butterfly Gift** is a one-time financial donation gifted to an organization, project, or ministry. A request form is submitted to Outreach outlining how the funds will be used, how they fit into the Grace mission, and how many people will benefit. Upon approval the amount is deducted from the Outreach budget and forwarded.

**Service Sundays**, usually falling on the last Sunday of each month, have focused on our established ministry partners, working toward the goal of achieving a hands-on and “being with” relationship with our ministry partners and organizations in the community and beyond. One Sunday of each month, following the 9:30 service, parishioners meet and gather donated items, or work on a simple project to support the ministry partner of the month. Notification of the selected ministry and description of requests are highlighted in the eNews and bulletin. We have had an exciting and rewarding year!

*"It is not the magnitude of our actions but the amount of love that is put into them that matters."*

—Mother Teresa

In **January** we collected warm and waterproof outerwear and underwear for our Ministry Partners Chaplains on the Harbor, Fresh Start Monday Shower Project, KIAC, Fishline, Helpline, Kingston Severe Weather Shelter, Suquamish UCC, and ShareNet.

**February** found us creating "Blessing Bags" of items needed by unhoused people to have ready in our cars to give out to those on street corners.



In **March** we collected Maseca, rice, black beans, and cooking oil for KIAC families.

**April** found us focusing on the needs of our neighbors in Grays Harbor, donating hygiene and food items to Chaplains on the Harbor's "Freedom Church of the Poor."

Rogation Sunday was celebrated in **May** as we gathered for a sweet time of blessing of our Gifts of Dirt Garden. The G.O.D. garden provides fresh produce to Helpline and other local food banks and flowers for IVC bouquets.

In **June** we had a fun time assembling bags of "Cowboy Chili" items to make a healthy meal. We delivered 40 Meal Bags to Fishline Food Bank, who served 3,485 families in 2025.

In **July** the focus was on the Fresh Start Monday Shower Project, which serves 22-32 guests every week. We collected food and hygiene products for their pantry.

At the end of **August** the Gifts of Dirt (G.O.D.) garden harvest season was over, with a grand total of 2,580 pounds of fresh produce donated to Helpline Foodbank. The garden still had plenty of beautiful flowers, so for Service Sunday in August Grace parishioners had the opportunity to make beautiful bouquets to gift to a friend or neighbor in need of cheer.

Support for teens from KIAC families going back to school was our focus in **September**. We collected Gift Cards to provide extra help with athletic equipment, shoes, backpacks, and haircuts, and we received grateful thank you notes from thankful students.

In **October** we received an urgent request from Fresh Start Monday for underwear and warm socks, so we "showered" the Fresh Start Monday Shower Project with these vital articles of clothing.

"Snowflakes for Seniors" was our theme for **November**, and our faith community generously donated 30 gift cards from local establishments for Helpline Seniors on the island. For the November Service Sunday activity, Grace parishioners had an opportunity to create bright beaded snowflake ornaments to be included with the gift cards—a little something extra to lift their spirits.

In **December** we circled back to our January call and began a new request for warm and waterproof outerwear to benefit several of our Ministry Partners that serve unhoused people. This call continued through January 2026.

## ONGOING MINISTRY PARTNERS

**Gifts of Dirt Garden:** Grace’s community garden is operated by volunteers from Grace, providing fresh produce and flowers to Helpline and the community.

**Super Suppers:** Providing a free monthly dinner meal served by Grace volunteers.

**Mom’s Morning Retreat:** A meeting place at Grace for mothers to connect and replenish.

**Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center (KIAC):** Assisting the well-being and empowering of immigrants.

**Peace Trees Vietnam:** Headquartered in Seattle, Washington, and Quảng Trị Province, Vietnam—is dedicated to addressing the legacy of the U.S-Vietnam War through mine action, community assistance, and citizen diplomacy. In partnership with Vietnamese leadership and local communities, Peace Trees safely clears land of explosive remnants of war and supports community-led education and economic development initiatives so that future generations can thrive. [www.peacetreesvietnam.org](http://www.peacetreesvietnam.org).

**Helpline House:** The food bank that provides food and extended services to our local Bainbridge community.

**Fishline, Poulsbo:** The food bank that provides food and extended services to North Kitsap County.

**Chaplains on the Harbor:** Serving the “Freedom Church of the Poor” in Grays Harbor County.

**Fresh Start Monday Shower Project:** Located at Faith Episcopal Church in Poulsbo, unsheltered guests are offered a warm welcome and access to a shower, laundry facilities, a hot meal, fresh clean clothing, and a “food and toiletries to go” pantry.

**Resettlement with Grace (RWG):** Two teams of church members have settled two Afghan refugee families, helping them secure housing, transportation, access to services, and enrolling their children in school. Now partnering with World Relief Western Washington to support people released from the ICE detention center in Tacoma.

### Grace 2025 Outreach budget also contributed to:

**Scarlet Road**, which serves victims of sexual exploitation, and provides long-term holistic support for those seeking to exit sexual exploitation and sex trafficking in Kitsap county. <https://scarletroad.org>.

**Suquamish Community Kitchen**, where a team of youth and adults from Grace provide a free meal once a month in Suquamish.

**First Aid Arts** Provides global access to mental and emotional first aid for people experiencing trauma using art-based tools supported by science. <https://www.firstaidarts.org>.

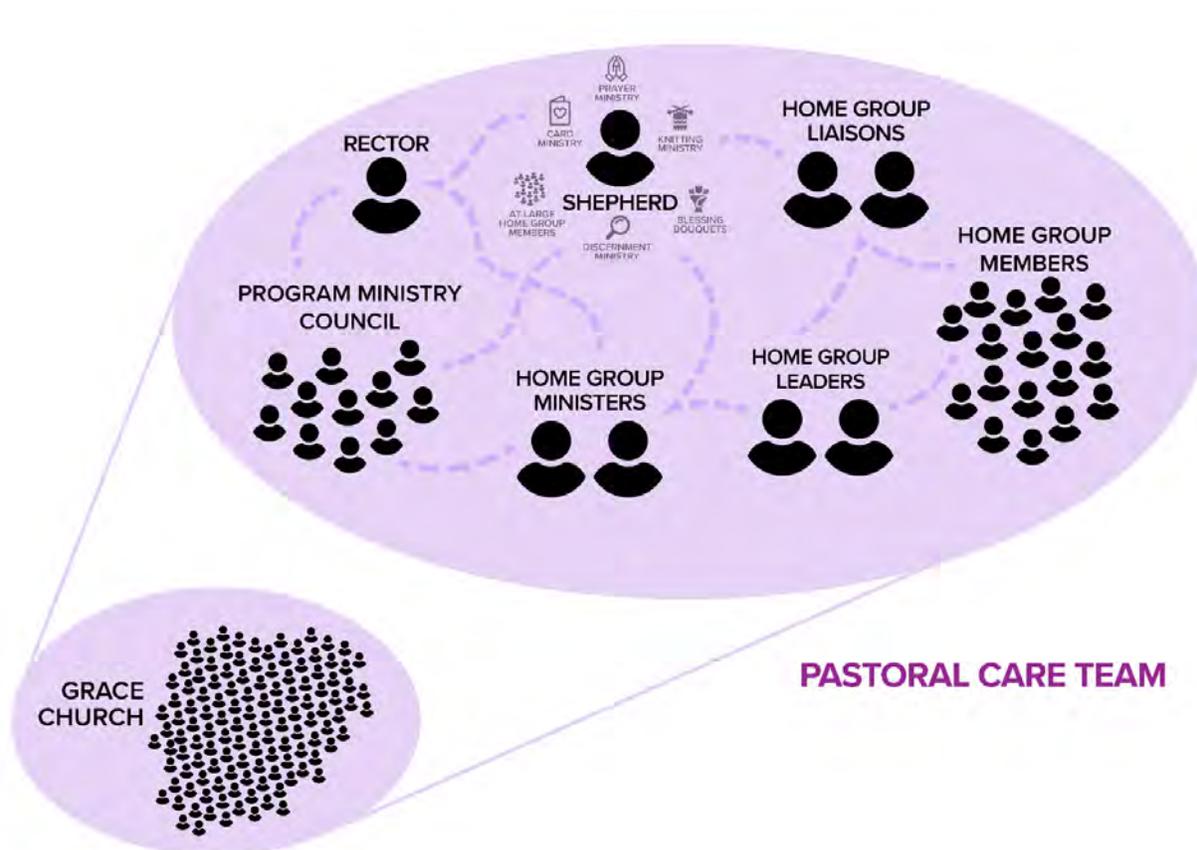
Gifts of Dirt Garden \* Mom’s Morning Retreat \* Fresh Start Monday Shower Project  
Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center (KIAC) \* Super Suppers \* Chaplains on the Harbor \*  
Episcopal Relief & Development (Israel/Hamas War Victims) \* Resettlement with Grace \*  
St. Peters Church, Texas (Flood Crisis Support) \* Suquamish Community Kitchen \* Peace Trees Vietnam \*  
Helpline House\* Fishline Food Bank \* First Aid Arts \* Scarlet Road \*

**Monetary Gifts from the 2025 Outreach Budget: \$17,944**



# PASTORAL CARE SHANNON MOORE & RHONDA PEACOCK

At Grace, we are all ministers to one another. This year, the Pastoral Care Leadership Team (Shepherds) created an infographic to illustrate how pastoral care is interwoven throughout our church community. The graphic provides a broad view of the spectrum of care offered at Grace and clarifies the roles of the various ministries that together comprise pastoral care.



The Pastoral Care Shepherds work collaboratively with the Rector, Home Group Liaisons, Home Group Ministers, and the Program Ministry Council to support the wellbeing of the congregation.

Shepherds offer support and resources in several ways:

- **To the Rector**, through pastoral care communication, visits, and coordination as needs arise
- **To Home Group Liaisons**, who work directly with Home Group members and leaders to provide care and practical support
- **To Home Group Ministers**, who support Home Group Leaders
- **To the Program Ministry Council**, through participation in monthly meetings and submission of monthly activity reports

Home Group Liaisons are members of Home Groups who help coordinate care within their groups. This support may include organizing meal trains, home visits, check-in calls, rides to appointments, and other forms of practical assistance.

Home Group Ministers support Home Group Leaders, who coordinate lay participation in Sunday worship, including greeting, scripture reading, receiving the offering, presenting the oblations, and organizing coffee hour.

Prayer remains at the core of all pastoral care. Shepherds pray regularly for those requesting prayer through Prayers Please (Grace's emailed prayer list), for those who are grieving, for individuals dealing with long-term challenges, and for confidential prayer requests.

Shepherds also connect with the wider Grace community through the Card, Prayer Shawl, and Flower Ministries, and reach out to parishioners needing support who are not currently part of a Home Group.

This year, Shepherds ensured their Safe Church training remained current, in accordance with diocesan guidelines (renewed every three years). Safe Church training is required for lay leaders and helps ensure the safety and dignity of children, youth, and vulnerable adults by promoting healthy boundaries and clear, accountable practices.

The Shepherds, along with Home Group Ministers and the Rector, conducted fall and spring Lunch & Learns for Home Group Leaders and Liaisons. In these gatherings, participants shared experiences and explored ways to better minister to one another through Home Groups and beyond.

Pastoral care is also expressed through community presence and connection. For the second year, Gracies, led by Southies Home Group Liaison Wendy Tyner, brought musical holiday cheer through a caroling event, singing to 87 people while visiting six homes and three assisted living communities within the Grace community.

In the spring, Shepherds conducted a caregiver support and grief support survey. This led to partnering with Faith Formation Director Kim Cockcroft and with the Rev. Erin Grayson, who works in partnership with Island Volunteer Caregivers (IVC) and their Restorative Retelling Grief Group program. In fall 2025, a group of Grace members were trained as facilitators using this curriculum. These conversations and trainings have helped broaden Grace's understanding of grief support and have strengthened connections among Pastoral Care, Faith Formation, and community partners.



**2025 Shepherds:** Terry Jones, Shannon Moore, Jim Quitslund, Rhonda Peacock, and the Rev. Eric Mason

## PARISH LIFE RACHEL BRANDT & RACHEL YOBS

Parish Life supported many celebrations and annual events in 2025, including:

- Lenten Dinners—soup and worship
- March 4—Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner
- April 17—Maundy Thursday Dinner, liturgy, and foot washing
- May 4—Rogation Sunday for the Gifts of Dirt Garden at Grace (Walker Hall)
- May 7—Men's Spring Gathering
- June 22—Summer Kickoff BBQ
- August 19—Men's Group BBQ
- September 8—Homecoming BBQ on the patio
- September 23—Supper Club Kickoff
- October 3-5—Grace All Parish Retreat
- October 17-19—Men's Retreat
- October 18—Supper Club Kickoff, remix of supper clubs
- November 4—Men's Group Chili Cook-Off
- November 30—Advent wreath-making after the 9:30 service
- December—Tuesday soup suppers for Advent
- December 13—Men of Grace Christmas Party, the Schenks' home
- Annual Signup Genius to weekly launder the kitchen towels

With overwhelming gratitude, we thank all the Gracies who pitch in to set up and help when needed. These Grace community events would not happen without many hands helping.

## ALL PARISH RETREAT



The 2025 All Parish Retreat took place at Seabeck Conference grounds. There were 53 adults and kids who stayed for the weekend and 34 daytime attendees. Our adult program was led by Rick Jackson. The children's program was robust with crafts and stories. All participants had the opportunity to help weave the group project on a large loom. The finished product will be displayed at Grace as a reminder of the community we all share. We enjoyed beautiful weather, games, and free time to socialize, hike, and even take a cold swim.

Since part of the prohibitive nature of the family retreat is to pay for a whole family, there was no charge for children. This policy increased the number of families that were able to attend. Lindsay Masters, our parish administrator, was a huge help with registration and details, thank you!

Several community-building groups operate under the sponsorship (but not the funding) of Parish Life. They include:

- Men's Group: chaired by Eric Matthews, open to all men at Grace, with many fellowship events and service projects during the year.
- Women's Group: This new group, chaired by Rachel Brandt, is open to all women at Grace and will add fellowship and service events to the calendar as opportunities arise. The first event was a Clothing Swap on January 10 in Walker Hall.

The goal of Parish Life is to provide logistical support for events that promote fellowship within the Grace Community. There are many participation opportunities; with the plethora of events that happen at Grace, volunteering is the glue of Grace. If you would like to help with any Parish Life event please inquire with the Parish Life Leaders.



# EARTH AND SPIRIT JOHN KYDD, MARCY LAGERLOEF, NANCY PEREGRINE

*If the world is to be healed through human efforts, I am convinced that it will be by ordinary people, people whose love for life is greater than their fear. —Joanna Macy*

Earth and Spirit is a ministry at Grace which serves all ministries and members by drawing us closer in our relationship with the Holy. We are deeply concerned about the state of the climate and the political response to it. We acknowledge the interdependence of all living and non-living elements of our sacred world. We are engaging more intentionally to support and learn from each other so we can co-create activities and actions that will contribute to a healthier environment and a positive future.

## OUR ACTIVITY IN 2025

1. **Conversations to Care for Creation** – Earth and Spirit continued to facilitate Conversations to Care for Creation throughout the year. Meetings typically occur on the first Sunday of the month in the Living Room during coffee hour and last about an hour and a half. Between 7 and 15 people gather to share personal connections we have with our sacred world. Nancy opens with a poem suggesting a theme for the discussion and ends with it as well. This format brings people together to freely express concerns and insights. Everyone is invited. Conversations often featured personal experiences of the Holy and our deep connections to nature. We recently explored the challenges of aging and opinions on what happens when we die. We have expressed dismay over the current state of politics in America and generally seek God’s help in finding hope and practical actions to heal. A strong sense of community built on trust, faith, and affection has resulted amongst attendees. Earth and Spirit will continue these discussions; Nancy Peregrine usually facilitated, with Deborah Milton assisting.
2. **Love God, Love God’s World** – Beginning in January, Scott Deasy, John Kydd, and Marcy Lagerloef co-facilitated this nine-session curriculum provided by our national church. Most sessions took place via Zoom, so that widely scattered individuals could participate. The focus was on understanding more fully our relationship as simply one part of Creation. The writers of various segments reflected on how we’ve impacted Earth and then approaches, like Indigenous wisdom, that show us a new path in that relationship. A final session was held in August with a guided forest hike at IslandWood environmental learning center, led by Marcy.
3. **“For the Birds” Concert** – We recognize that the arts form a uniquely potent entry point for engaging our hearts and minds in a commitment to act regarding climate change. In March, Grace hosted the Nelda Swiggett jazz quintet, performing their latest composition, “For the Birds.” The jazz was accompanied by powerful visual images of birds and poetry and a text that described the multiple ways that a changing climate is impacting bird populations across the globe. Regional environmental organizations that work to mitigate climate impacts and protect habitat were featured at a reception afterwards. The concert brought in 120 individuals, many new to Grace, but for whom the environmental message resonated.
4. **Greening of Grace** – We were once again assisted by the non-profit, Olympia Community Solar, in developing and submitting in November a proposal to the WA Department of Commerce for installing solar panels on the Grace roof as a key step towards Grace’s resilience as a Bainbridge Island Emergency Hub in conjunction with Island School. We are hopeful that this third proposal will finally be funded and we can become part of the movement to increase the generation of electrical energy on Bainbridge. Great thanks to the hard work of the Greening of Grace Committee who made it possible to meet the tight proposal deadline (see Dan Rohan’s message under Place for Grace).

5. **Spirituality, Resistance and Love: What our Faiths Can Do to Heal Democracy** – On November 8, led by John Kydd, Grace hosted a community event designed to bring folks of different faiths to consider how faiths can heal our troubled democracy. On one level it meant distinguishing ourselves from White Christian Nationalism. On another it meant exploring ways we could act to take political action to resist governmental actions that violated our faith values. In sum, the goal was to engage in politics as a means of honoring our spiritual values and integrity.

We had several discussions about this program before it was initiated. There was concern that this could violate our non-profit status. Research revealed that political action did not violate our tax status. Only “partisan” political action (which is narrowly defined as promoting a candidate) was out of bounds. The IRS recently took back a ruling on that, and this is interpreted to allow partisan political action. This program did not seek to take partisan political action but rather to support people of all faiths to take faith based political action. It was meant to address our duty to reach out and assist our community on an important moral and faith issue.

The program brought in folks of many faiths as well as those with no belief in God or much comfort with a church. About 160 people came, approximately 60 from Grace and 100 from other communities. Many had never been to Grace. A few had not been to any church for many years due to prior church related trauma and they reported coming only for their deep concern about the state of our democracy. They later reported that the event left them feeling better about being in a church and better about what they could do to defend their democratic faith values.

The program mixed music, song, speech, and group meetings. The four speakers, Dee Eisenhower (UCC), Phillip Favero (Quaker), Kathryn Lafond (Sufi) and our Eric Mason all spoke compellingly, and their speeches were coordinated so that more issues could be covered. After a deeply moving cello etude, participants broke into facilitated small groups to share what was calling to them and what actions they might take. The post-event survey found that these discussions were very helpful, and that participants would have liked more time to meet each other. In sum, it appeared that the recognition of shared anxiety and struggle created strong feelings of empathy and a sense that no one was alone with their worry. Similarly, by listening to the political actions some planned to take, others were better able to discern what actions they were called to do.

Participants next met with 13 non-profits doing good work for our community. This resulted in both new interest and new support for Faith Action Network, Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center (KIAC), Fishline, Helpline, NAACP, and many others. Many of the organizers expressed thanks for support by Grace for bringing them new people.

We are grateful for so much support and welcoming from Grace members on the day of the event to make everything run smoothly with the unexpectedly large attendance.

## STAFF REPORTS

### **PARISH ADMINISTRATOR LINDSAY MASTERS**

The parish administrator’s job comprises a weekly cycle of deceptively incongruent to-dos and encounters. Every week brings bulletins to prepare, receipts to code, paperwork to submit, print jobs to shepherd. But all of that must pause, and yield, when real people walk through the door and toward the front desk seeking connection. It’s a unique mixture of hard and soft, process- and human-driven, analytical and relational. I’m honored to do work that strikes such a meaningful balance, in service to Grace and all of you.

Office hours are 9 am to 1 pm Monday through Friday. Email me at [office@gracehere.org](mailto:office@gracehere.org). As always, I look forward to connecting.

## MUSIC KIM THOMPSON

I have been in my position as Director of Music at Grace for a year and a half, and I continue to be blessed by the warmth of the community and its dedication to providing worshipful liturgies with excellent music. In the past year, the liturgical music at Grace continued to be vibrant, a collaborative effort between myself, Rev. Eric, and the Music Circle, and representative of a broad range of musical styles. The 15-member Music Circle continues to be a ministry open to people of all skill and ability levels, attested by its membership of both new and veteran musicians. In the past year, the Grace congregation enjoyed singing familiar hymns and songs as well as new songs, some “paperless,” to further develop the sense of community and communal singing at Grace.



The most significant change to the experience of worship at Grace was the installation of the new sound system in January of this year. Broadly speaking, the new sound system improved the experience of the congregation during worship in terms of the quality and volume of the sound. The new sound system specifically enhanced the experience of the Music Circle in a multitude of ways: the re-do allowed us to achieve a better configuration for the musicians; there is a new and better microphone for the pianist; for the first time, the piano is being amplified so that it is better balanced with the other instruments and voices; four new monitors help the musicians hear themselves and each other better; and two new choir microphones are amplifying the choir more effectively than ever before. I would like to extend my gratitude to those besides myself who sat on the steering committee and put in countless volunteer hours vetting quotes and finally arriving at a recommendation for the Vestry. Grace’s investment in a new sound system is arguably the most important thing that we could do to improve the experience of worshippers at Grace.

## FAITH FORMATION KIM COCKROFT

Faith Formation in 2025 tells the story of deep connection, joyful engagement, thoughtful exploration, and volunteer generosity across generations. We are particularly grateful for Faith Formation liaison **Florrie Munat's** wise, gentle leadership.

We began the year grounded in gratitude as we wrapped up **What’s Your Story?**, a writers’ group led by Faith Formation liaison Florrie Munat and Kim Cockroft. Our winter programs set the tone for the year: creative, participatory, and lovingly held by volunteers who showed up with energy and care during busy seasons.

One of the most enduring gifts of 2025 has been the strength of our small groups. **Coffee & a Psalm**, co-facilitated throughout the year, became a weekly sanctuary—rooted in silence, lectio divina, and gentle sharing. Averaging 6 to 10 participants each week, this simple offering of scripture, hospitality, and prayer exemplified what we have learned again and again: small, open groups meet a deep hunger for connection. **Parent gatherings** echoed this theme, whether around books, podcasts, or pie in the informal setting of a family kitchen. **Wednesday’s Bible Study** brought together an inquiring group of faithful and growing number of participants who studied the week’s readings, prayed, and shared communion together.

Our **Foundations Class** brought adults and youth together in a shared journey of learning and belonging, serving simultaneously as a confirmation class, a refresher of Episcopal tradition, and a place of spiritual nourishment. Strong participation and intergenerational conversation reflected a community eager to grow together in faith. We celebrated and cried together at confirmation on **Cathedral Day at St. Mark’s Cathedral**.



At the heart of our program year was our Lenten series, **“How Then Shall We Live?”** In a season marked by cultural change and uncertainty, this question guided soup suppers, book study, Sunday speakers, and heartfelt conversation. Drawing on Anabaptist wisdom and Cesar Garcia’s reflections on God’s Kingdom and faithful citizenship, Lent invited us to imagine how justice, peace, and simplicity might take flesh in our own lives. Guest speakers from Mennonite, nonprofit, and ministry contexts helped ground theology in lived experience, while children kneaded dough and shaped pretzels alongside the adults’ conversations—a powerful picture of formation across generations. Attendance was strong,

engagement was deep, and many named this series as a defining spiritual moment of the year.

Our engagement in meaningful topics continued in May with a three-part seminar offered by Spiritual Director Nita Baer on **spirituality and resilience**.

As the seasons turned, Faith Formation expanded into **summer podcasts** under the warm summer sky, led by engaging facilitators on a wide variety of topics, from creation care, music, and politics. Summer also held kickball and popsicles, shared service at the **Suquamish Community Kitchen**, and a joyful return of **Grace Kids’ Camp**, supported by an impressive team of crew and station leaders. Our children’s ministry flourished with growing classrooms, consistent **Children’s Moments**, and a beloved summer **Ministry of Play** rooted in the Psalms.



Fall brought a vibrant **parish retreat**, *Considering Courage*, at Seabeck with facilitator Rick Jackson. Children attended free and enjoyed a parallel program of fun and fanciful activities; a highlight was the all-ages Variety Show. As fall ripened, Kim Cockcroft and Eric Mason led a well-attended **parables series** inviting us to hear Jesus’ stories with new ears, and continued rhythms of small groups and hospitality. We closed the year with a beautiful series of **Advent dinners** and candlelit programs of poetry, music, and Holden Evening Prayer and an **Advent Pageant**, written by Kim Cockcroft, coordinated by Melissa Meyers, and directed entirely by teens. Members and visitors alike felt welcomed warmly into the Christmas season at our family **Christmas Eve service**.

None of this would have been possible without the many volunteers who taught, facilitated, cooked, hosted, served, led and learned alongside our children, welcomed newcomers, and quietly made space for others to encounter God. Together, they helped us practice what we asked all year long: *How, then, shall we live?*

## YOUTH PROGRAMS MELISSA MEYERS

In 2025, Grace experienced meaningful growth in youth programming, marked by increased participation, deepening partnerships, and expanded opportunities for leadership, creativity, and service. Across community events, intergenerational service, and faith formation, our youth were not only present—they were often leading.

### COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND BELONGING

This past summer, 17 youth leaders from Grace and the wider community served as counselors at **Grace Kids' Camp**, building relationships with more than 50 children. These young leaders modeled care, responsibility, and joy while creating a welcoming and nurturing environment for campers.



Throughout the fall, Grace hosted several successful **family-centered events**, including a community kickball game and a bowling night. We also offered two **youth hang-outs** that brought together as many as 35 middle schoolers for games, karaoke, tacos, and friendship.

New partnerships expanded our reach and affirmed Grace as a place of welcome. Following a warm connection made at the **Bainbridge Pride Festival**, Grace collaborated with Little Island Crafts and St. Barnabas to host **Queer Craft Nights**. These evenings provided a safe, creative space for LGBTQIA+ teens and allies to gather and build community.

Youth leadership also flourished in worship. This year's **Advent Pageant**, *The Whole World Waits*, was a deeply moving, fully teen-directed production that included approximately 30 children and teens.

Looking ahead to 2026, enthusiasm for shared experiences remains strong. Our winter **youth ski trip** to Mt. Baker filled overnight, with about 20 youth and five adult leaders signed up to participate.



## INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Grace deepened its commitment to service through intergenerational ministry in 2025. Grace became one of the churches hosting dinners at the **Suquamish Community Kitchen**, serving three times over the year. These evenings brought together teens, families, and older members of the congregation to prepare and serve 70–75 in-person meals, along with 15–30 takeaway meals. Grace is scheduled to host six additional dinners in 2026.

Members of all ages also staffed the face-painting and balloon-animal booths at the annual **Kitsap Immigrant Assistance holiday party**. This event continues to be a meaningful service opportunity for children, youth, and families and reaches 200–300 immigrant families across our county.

## YOUTH GROUP AND FAITH FORMATION



Grace strengthened its youth ministry through collaboration in 2025. Partnering with local churches and Young Life, Grace participated in monthly **Island Youth Night events**—youth-led gatherings held on the first Sunday of each month. These events bring together 20–40 teens to share meals, build relationships, and engage in conversations about faith.

In fall 2025, with the support of Nels Flesher and Sara Hayward, Grace opened a **dedicated middle school classroom** during the 9:30 a.m. service. Meeting once a month, this group focused on building community through games, donuts, and reflection on the week’s Gospel reading. In January 2026, the group began meeting weekly.

Also in January 2026, Grace launched its own middle school youth group, **The Thing**. A committed and talented team of adult leaders—including Kathie McCarthy, Walter Hauptman, and Bea Crook—has stepped forward to guide this program. Plans for a high school youth group are in discussion, with hopes to begin in fall 2026.

Together, these efforts reflect a year of growth, collaboration, and faithful investment in the spiritual lives of young people at Grace.

## COMMUNICATIONS BARB LEVY

The website and weekly eNews are your online resources for staying up to date on what’s happening at Grace. The weekly newsletter, sent to 675 subscribers each Thursday afternoon, is often quite long, but we hope you read it to the end! You can also find it by clicking on the **News** menu on the website. Note that there is a link at the bottom of each page on our website, which allows anyone to sign up for the newsletter.

Each Tuesday, a video and an audio version of the sermon are posted on the website. There are links to **sermons** on the home page, in the menu under **Worship**, and on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GraceChurchBainbridgelsland](http://www.facebook.com/GraceChurchBainbridgelsland).

Beginning last year, service recordings have been available to the general public for only one week to protect the privacy of our parishioners, especially children. The sermons will always be viewable.

If you have suggestions or want to submit content for the bulletin and/or eNews, email [communications@gracehere.org](mailto:communications@gracehere.org) and [office@gracehere.org](mailto:office@gracehere.org) by Tuesdays at noon. You’ll find submission instructions near the end of the eNews, on the **News** tab of the website.

I enjoy working with the wonderful staff and vibrant community at Grace!

## LAY LEADERSHIP NOMINATIONS

The programs and fiduciary leadership at Grace are carried out by our small but mighty staff and a robust team of volunteer leaders. Together, we engage in mutual ministry supporting our community and our programs. The life of the church is rooted in the countless hours of volunteer service. Volunteers serve in the classrooms, kitchen, and grounds maintenance and in Home Groups, committees, and liturgy, as well as those formally appointed to the Vestry and PMC. We are so grateful for all those who serve in leadership roles, and especially want to thank those who are completing their term of service in the Vestry and PMC.

### VESTRY

Vestry members are elected by the community of Grace to serve three-year terms of service. Nominees are proposed by the Rector in consultation with the Wardens and endorsed by the Vestry.

This table shows the proposed 2026 Vestry (nominees in **bold**):

Warden	through 2027	Ann New
<b>Warden</b>	<b>through 2028</b>	<b>Erica Moen</b>
Trustee for Finance	through 2026	Deborah Schenk
Trustee for Stewardship	through 2027	Wendy Tyner
Trustee for Human Resources	through 2026	Mary Ellen de la Peña
<b>Trustee for Place for Grace</b>	<b>through 2028</b>	<b>Martin Garthwaite</b>
<b>Trustee for Lay Leadership Development</b>	<b>through 2028</b>	<b>[Open]</b>
<b>Trustee-at-Large</b>	<b>through 2028</b>	<b>Tootie Kuhn</b>
<b>Trustee-at-Large</b>	<b>through 2028</b>	<b>Leon Robert</b>
<b>Trustee-at-Large</b>	<b>through 2028</b>	<b>Robert Cromwell</b>
Rector	non-voting	Eric Mason
Clerk	non-voting	Anne Kundtz

## PROGRAM MINISTRY COUNCIL

This table shows the planned 2025 Program Ministry Council (new members or positions in **bold**):

Rector	Eric Mason
Warden	Ann New
<b>Warden</b>	<b>Erica Moen</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Invite: Jeff Bassette, Valerie Reinke</b> <b>Welcome: TBD</b> <b>Connect: Liz Shaw, Linda Baker</b>
<b>Parish Life</b>	<b>Kay Roach, Kathy Gillogley</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	<b>[Open]</b>
Pastoral Care	Rhonda Peacock
Earth and Spirit	Marcy Lagerloef, Nancy Peregrine, John Kydd
Home Group Ministers	Randy Otto, Dave Schultz
Faith Formation	Kim Cockroft (staff)
Adult Faith Formation	Florrie Munat
Youth and Families	Melissa Meyers (staff)
Growing Grace	Jeff Bassette
Music Director	Kim Thompson (staff)
Deacon	Scott Deasy

## DIOCESAN DELEGATES

Each year Grace sends delegates to the Diocesan Convention, the number determined by size of church membership. Delegates are elected to 2-year terms by the Grace community, must be over 16 years of age, and be members of Grace for more than 2 years. Existing delegates and alternate delegates are shown in the following table. Nominated new members are shown in **bold**.

Delegate	2025-2026	Holly Renfrew
Delegate	2025-2026	Ken Wesley
<b>Delegate</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>Ann New</b>
<b>Delegate</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>Mollie Bogardus</b>
<b>Delegate</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>[Open]</b>
<b>Delegate</b>	<b>2025-2026</b>	<b>[Open]</b>
Alternate Delegate	2025-2026	Rachel Yobs
Alternate Delegate	2025-2026	[Open]

# PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON DISCERNING THE USE OF GRACE LAND FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The idea for affordable housing on Grace land has been percolating for a long time...probably since 1999 with the purchase of 10 acres on Day Road to build Grace Church. The idea has only grown in urgency as real estate prices have escalated and the people who work here can no longer live here. The average single family home price in 2025 was over \$1.5 million and 2/3 of the people who work on Bainbridge Island—educators, first responders, caregivers, and many more—must live elsewhere. Bethany Lutheran’s “Finch Green Project,” which will break ground in 2027, is one model of a church response to this crisis.

For Grace, the following resolution begins to answer the question: “How then shall we live?” It would initiate a robust and transparent exploratory period to discern Grace's response to the affordable housing needs on the island.

So we propose the following resolution.

—Valerie Reinke and Julie Shryock

## Resolution on Discerning the Use of Grace Land for Affordable Housing

Grace resolves to:

Form an Affordable Housing Discernment Group, to be appointed by the Wardens and Rector, to:

- Explore the feasibility of allowing affordable housing to be built on Grace land, with “feasibility” to include considerations of design, location, costs, funding, and potential partners
- Communicate with the Vestry, PMC, and congregation through regular updates
- Discern with the Vestry whether to proceed with the project, and secure congregational approval through a parish wide vote



# MUTUAL MINISTRY AGREEMENT

## Mutual Ministry Agreement

Grace Episcopal Church and The Rev. Eric Mason

February 2026

**Preamble:** The Rector, Vestry/PMC and Congregants of Grace are mutually committed to the three goals outlined below. The activities undertaken to meet these goals will be creatively and thoughtfully infused with and enlightened by Grace's core values of Inclusion, Service, Discovery, and Gratitude.

### **Goal 1: Work towards increasing new members**

#### Rector's Role:

- Participate in the Growing Grace initiative
  - Provide leadership support to the Growing Grace ministry teams
  - Support and help shape newcomer welcoming events
  - Facilitate newcomers' orientation class and faith formation class
- Reach out to and cultivate relationships with new and returning members of all ages
- Continue to use Invite/Welcome/Connect as a tool to improve and refine our systems and practices

#### Vestry/PMC Role:

- Support the efforts of the Growing Grace Initiative by
  - Committing to actively welcoming newcomers during worship
  - Sharing information about church events with friends, colleagues, neighbors
  - Cultivating intergenerational relationships and opportunities
- Work to incorporate new members in Home Groups, Parish Life events, Faith Formation activities, Pastoral Care, Outreach and Membership
- Learn and practice the Invite/Welcome/Connect model to engage newcomers, current members, and to improve and refine our systems and practices

#### Congregation's Role:

- Commit to reaching out to and welcoming newcomers during worship & coffee hour
- Help to spread the word about Grace events that are offered/open to the community
- Invite friends/colleagues/neighbors to visit Grace
- Facilitate connecting newcomers with Grace ministries such as Home Groups, Parish Life Events, Faith Formation activities, Pastoral Care, Outreach
- Learn and practice the Invite/Welcome/Connect model

## **Goal 2: Move from a paradigm of “Membership” to one of “Discipleship”**

### Rector’s Role:

- Attend to the cultivation of spiritual formation through prayer/meditation, study and fellowship
- Articulate a vision for Discipleship, following in the way of Jesus, and lead the congregation into that vision
- Work with PMC/Vestry in implementing that vision in our work together
- Provide spiritual formation through homilies, Foundation/Confirmation class, and faith formation classes for teens and adults

### Vestry/PMC Role:

- Cultivate spiritual formation and growth, studying the way of Jesus, through practices of prayer, reading scripture, and attending worship
- Thoughtfully attend to living in a way that reflects the love of Jesus for the world.
- Commit to the growth, development and use of the gifts and talents each of us bring to our leadership role
- Participate in Leadership Retreats and Vestry/PMC meetings

### Congregation’s Role:

- Cultivate spiritual formation and growth, studying the way of Jesus, through practices of prayer, reading scripture, and attending worship
- Thoughtfully attend to living in a way that reflects the love of Jesus for the world
- Commit to the growth, development, and use of the gifts and talents each of us bring to the Grace community
- Participate in worship, fellowship and faith formation classes and opportunities

## **Goal 3: Deepen Grace’s Outreach to the world**

### Rector’s Role:

- Facilitate a re-envisioning of our Outreach Ministry
- Support the growth and development of the Outreach Ministry
- Through homilies and classes provide an intellectual foundation and encouragement for living out our faith in ways that bless the world

### Vestry/PMC Role:

- Help support and collaborate with the efforts of the Outreach Ministry
- Deepen their own commitment to live out their faith in ways that bless our world
- Initiate and support community outreach events

### Congregation’s Role:

- Participate in the process of re-envisioning Outreach Ministry
- Volunteer to be part of the Outreach Ministry
- Participate in events and activities that bring us deeper into relationship with our neighbors
- Bring awareness of community needs and resources to the attention of Grace leadership



Art and photo contributors: Ronda Broatch, John McKenzie, Kathie McCarthy, Fran Moen, Eric Matthews, Melissa Meyers, Liz Shaw, Julie Shryock, and other faithful photographers and documenters. Thank you!

**Grace Episcopal Church** ♦ Bainbridge Island, WA  
*inclusion service discovery gratitude*

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