



# Grace Episcopal Church Asheville, NC

2022 Annual Report

Annual Meeting – January 15, 2023

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## 2022 Vestry Members

Elaine Potter, Senior Warden	Tara Lonneman, Treasurer
Scott McKenzie, Junior Warden	Ron Sims
Doug McClellan	Steve Birkhofer
Jim Compton	Mathes Mennell
Terri Frue	Vicki Vest
Katherine Kaderabek	Andrew Beasley

### **Rector's Report for 2022**

Dear Good People of Grace,

First, it has been a truly amazing year! After almost three years serving with you, I am deeply rooted in a place of trust and love now here at Grace. This reality is a consequence of time, fellowship and continued commitment to one another. I am grateful. So, thank you for showing up, being present both here at church and in the world around us in such a loving and compassionate way. It is such an honor to be your priest.

2022 here at Grace has ended in such a positive and life-affirming way. We closed our books with a reserve of over \$ 13,000, we have installed the solar panels, we will be breaking ground on our new playground in just a few weeks and we hired new and amazing staff!!! We celebrated together and communed with one another, and our pews have been full of warm and loving people!

In 2022, Grace ministries have thrived; Outreach, Liturgy, Pastoral Care, and Greeters, our different formation gatherings, prayer teams praying, and Taizé' growing from monthly to weekly gatherings. All of these are lay-lead ministries and have grown and flourished, truly meeting their missions with such joyful spirit! And the necessary and timely advent of the Winter Shelter. Father Mike, thank you for this amazing and encouraging work. I am so blessed to be your co-worker.

And, of course we had some challenges as well. Yet even those turned into blessings as we saw our community and our vestry rise to each challenge with courage, hope, curiosity and commitment.

Which leads me to my last thought for 2022. My heart is so full of gratitude for our 2022 Vestry and for our Wardens, Elaine Potter and Scott McKenzie. When I consider that both were baptized as infants and raised here at Grace, it shouldn't surprise me that they gave their whole hearts to the work this year. But, I have been utterly blown away by their level of commitment and care for this community. And, we had a darn good time.

Thank you to our entire vestry, to those rotating off (Ron Sims and Jim Compton and Joe Aull) and Thank you Elaine and Scott, I really can't say that enough. You are all blessings.

So, with all of these blessings and with all of this trust and love, we move into 2023. What we are capable of accomplishing is astounding to me. My curiosity and excitement about this new year is overflowing. What will we do with all of this abundance? What will we do with all of this potential? What will we do with all that God has blessed us with here at Grace.

Join me in the journey to discover just that, as we walk this way of love, together.

Happy 2023.  
peace and love,  
Rev. Milly

### **Vestry Election for 2023**

Kokayi Cobb, Tahani Sticpewich, Kim Hayes, Donald Alford



#### **Kim Hayes**

Kim Hayes and her husband Rick live in Weaverville and have been members of Grace Church for 41 years, during which time, she has served on vestry, headed the Family Service acolyte program, chaired Country Store, coordinated the Grace Outreach program and edited the Grace TEAM. A graduate from Florida State University, Kim worked as a writer and in creative services for local radio, a credit union and a religious conference center until her retirement. She now enjoys taking classes at OLLI, writing poetry, reading and running. She and Rick have a daughter, Rachael, who grew up at Grace and currently lives with her husband and their two teenagers in Florida. Kim is looking forward to being on the vestry and serving the people of Grace.



### Tahani Sticpewich

Tahani and her husband Bill moved from Oakland, California with their three children in 1998. They lived alongside her parents, eventually building a house on their property outside Weaverville. She homeschooled the children, now young adults, and works as a legal assistant in a small Asheville law firm.

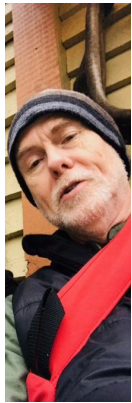
Tahani followed Milly from All Souls and has been attending Grace since June 2021. Through Milly and her former colleague the Rev. Naomi Tutu, she learned of “liberation theology” – a theology which aligns with her instincts and ethics and resolved for her the puzzle of Jesus’ sacrifice. It is important to her that her church take up space in the public sphere to represent the loving and inclusive Christianity which has somehow been outshouted by the other kind.

She is a member of the Outreach Committee, the Graceful Greeters, Women Walking the Way, and her tabernacle group. She loves her new community at Grace and looks forward to deepening her relationships with the people she has met so far and getting to know the rest of you.



Kokayi Cobb

Hello my name is Kokayi Cobb. I have lived in Asheville since I was twelve years old, and I recently turned twenty-five in December. I have been going to Grace for close to two years; from the day I visited Grace I instantly fell in love with the community and the Church. Everyone has always been so kind and welcoming to me and I will share this same love and spirit as a member of the vestry. It would be a big honor to me if I were to be elected. I appreciate everything this church has done for me and I will always do all I can to share this experience with everyone inside and outside our congregation. Thank you all for for having such a big impact on my life.



Donald Alford

Donald was born and raised in the small Mississippi Delta town of Cleveland, being baptized and confirmed in the 1st United Methodist Church there. Donald is the youngest of the four siblings, all who attended Cleveland schools and each graduating the same high school over a 13-year

span. Donald attended Delta State University (as did two sisters), before graduating from Mississippi State and returning to Cleveland to begin his architectural career.

Donald moved to Georgia in 1989, met Rebecca shortly thereafter and lived in Atlanta some 30 years before choosing Asheville as their forever home. Donald and Rebecca have been members of Methodist and Presbyterian congregations, ultimately finding comfort in the Episcopal tradition. Prior to joining Grace, we attended Episcopal congregations in both Lawrenceville and Brunswick, Georgia. Our first visit to Grace Episcopal Church was a Christmas Eve service during a vacation. Only after moving to Asheville would we realize 'Grace' was that same church, that we lived so close and would be so welcomed into this wonderful congregation.

### **Senior Warden's Report**

When Milly originally asked if I would be Senior Warden I just laughed, because in no way did I feel qualified. But, after praying about it and contemplating it, I STILL didn't feel qualified, but I did feel like it would be a great growth experience for me. And, if I sucked at it, well, it was only a year (or shorter if she decided to go in a different direction). So I said yes, and lo and behold we all survived me for theyear. So YAY!! During my tenure we slowly came out of Covid restrictions, and were able to fully open back up on Easter Sunday. Of course, I really had nothing to do with that, though. We also had a very successful Solar Panel campaign. Which, I really didn't have anything to do with either. But, we will be installing a new playground (which I kind of have something to do with, but the new Senior Warden will be able to take credit for since it won't be fully installed until next year). One thing I DID do was lead us through lots of repairs and upgrades to the church. Okay, that wasn't me, that was Scott. So, looking back on the year, I'm not really sure WHAT the heck I did. But whatever it was, I actually had a lot of fun doing it, and



that wasn't expected.

As the year comes to an end we are in a really good place. We have an amazing Vestry that is ready to lead us into our next chapter. We also are blessed with an incredible staff to help things run smoothly. I am so grateful to all of them and all of you, that give so generously not only of your money but especially your time. And though it's probably not acknowledged nearly enough, it IS very much appreciated.

It's been a blessing and a privilege to be your Senior Warden.

Elaine Potter

## **Junior Warden's Report/Building and Grounds Ministry**

### **2022 Stewardship Report for the Annual Meeting**

First, let me express my deep appreciation for the second year of faithful service to committee members George Davis, Cheryl Deyton, Doug McClellan, Catherine McKenzie, and also to Elaine Potter who answered our call this year for a Vestry member to join us to help increase communication and coordination.

"Stewardship as a Way of Life: Love, Serve, Share" has been our theme this year, keeping us all mindful of the gift of our abundance and what God is calling us to do, both individually and collectively.

Early in the year, we conducted a survey of the membership to help us structure our interactions with you.

Your feedback helped shape and inspire the content of the articles, photos, videos, and graphics we shared through TEAM and TWAG, the worship bulletin, and also during the announcements and testimonials before Sunday services.

In May, we hosted a breakfast to offer an opportunity for fellowship and to express appreciation for your support of Grace.

To kick off the fall campaign, we hosted an ice cream social and declared our stewardship theme in a banner over the front church doors.

The goal for our campaign was \$500,000 and 100% participation by members (140

pledge units). The latest accounting of pledges for 2023 prior to the printing of this publication is \$ 343,327 (69% of goal) and 100 pledges (71% of goal).

Louise Cate Wernicke, Stewardship Chair

### **Adult Choir**

Grace Church is blessed with a talented group of vocalists always ready to offer their musical gifts to enrich our worship. In a day when people are hesitant to give up their free time, Grace is truly fortunate to have a choir of giving and dedicated singers - a rarity in many churches today. The Grace Choir, strong in spirit and talent, sings from a large repertoire of hymns and anthems which varies from Renaissance motets to beloved Southern folk hymns. There is also a core of individuals who serve as cantors during the summer months and for funerals and other special services.

This past year we welcomed several guest musicians who joined us on Sunday mornings. Grace additionally enjoys our very own roster of parish instrumentalists who share their musical gifts throughout the year. We continue to be blessed with the inspiring talent and dedication of our parish organist, Cathy Adkins. It is through her stirring playing and solid musical support that Grace boasts a congregation that sings strong and joyfully.

Parishioners are encouraged and always invited to consider joining the choir and sharing their music talents. Choir rehearsals take place on Wednesday evenings at 6:30. They are lively and a lot of fun!

I'm always available and eager to discuss the musical life of Grace after church on Sundays or by phone or email.

James Cassarino  
Music Director  
802-558-6583  
[jamescassarino@gmail.com](mailto:jamescassarino@gmail.com)

### **Altar Guild**

The Altar Guild led by Shannon Townsend is the ministry that takes care of the sanctuary for services including preparation and clean up as well as caring for the altar, altar linens, vessels, candles and vestments. My heartfelt thanks go to this group of people who have been very flexible and dedicated to the shifting requirements over these last few years. As we now worship in the sanctuary, we would love to have more hands to help set up and especially to clean up after services. Please contact me, Shannon Townsend or any member of the Altar Guild to join us.

We thankfully have a budget that allows us to provide what we need for services and to continue clean, repair, and replace our items as they age. Respectfully submitted,  
Shannon Townsend

### **Children's Formation**

After a long wait, children's formation is returning with Sunday School available to kids from 3 years old through third grade. The children are meeting in the Level I Atrium with Shannon Townsend, the catechist. Called The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, it has been a part of Grace for over twenty years. While it is simple, it is very rich in how it offers children the ability to explore their individual spirituality within the sacramental structure of our faith. This fall, they have explored the Parable of the Good Shepherd, the Land of Israel-Bethlehem, Nazareth and Judea, the liturgical calendar, practical life works, the sacraments, and the prayer table. Our needs and goals for 2023 is to have others join in helping in the Level I Atrium and expand to having a Level II Atrium that would serve first through third graders. If you wish to help, please contact Shannon Townsend or one of our priests.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shannon Townsend

### **Endowment / Planned Giving Report**

The Church endowment pool effectively declined from a January 31, 2022 adjusted spend position of \$701,474 to \$645,723 at November 30, 2022, for a net year to date decrease of 7.95% (note the S&P 500 is down 14% for the same period). One significant withdrawal from the investment pool occurred in January 2022 for approx. \$38K in support of capital spending and outreach in 2022.

Brief analysis: While general parish contributions to the pool were less than \$1,000.00, broader market averages declined measurably in 2022 due to a series of global issues with underlying inflation being the primary contributor (e.g. the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 7% from late Jan 2022 early Dec 2022).

Grace Church has maintained a well-diversified portfolio of equities (stocks), fixed income (bonds), and a marginally conservative 5% cash position. Equities were the major lagging vehicle in 2022 (both domestic and international) with other portfolio components yielding comparatively marginal returns. Grace Church is fortunate to have Parsec Financial Management serve as its investment and advisory manager, and the portfolio's results for 2022 are testimony to Parsec's expertise in outperforming the broader market averages.

Committee Stewardship: well managed endowment funds require discipline to ensure that they remain a sustainable funding source. The Endowment Committee recommended a 4.5% annual spending rate against the endowment pool (fund), based upon a rolling average of the most recent 12 quarters, for proposed budgeting in 2023; 6% was drawn for 2022 given the stronger market performance in '21. The resulting calculation releases \$30,107 for the 2023 Church budget to be used for purposes consistent with the Endowment's By-Laws.

Your Endowment Committee includes: Ms. Anne Jarema (Secretary and Associate Coordinator), Mr. Todd Kaderabeks, Dr. Gael Paschall, Mr. John Chastain, and Steve Birkhofer (Lead Coordinator/Chair). Your Committee meets quarterly (typically the second Monday or Tuesday eve following the end of each calendar quarter). All Parish members are welcome to attend and contribute to these meetings.

Peace to All,  
Steve Birkhofer

### **EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN (ECW)**

The Episcopal Church Women of Grace has been in existence since the 1890's according to an article published in The Highland Churchwoman, September 26, 1984. Over time, it has been called several different names: the King's Daughters; the Women's Industrial Society; St. Martha's Guild which became a branch of the Diocesan Women's Auxiliary Guild; and, finally, the Episcopal Church Women.

Our mission and goals have remained consistent through the years although our ways of achieving them have changed. In the early days sewing for the church, holding suppers and bazaars to raise funds for local church projects and missionary work abroad, and addressing the needs of children were the primary focus. Interestingly, our own Mary Hayes served as a missionary nurse in a log cabin hospital in Fort Yukon, Alaska, an Indian Village seven miles north of the Arctic Circle. During the 1950's the Women's Auxiliary Guild provided funding to have the sacristy built, the first time water was available in the church building.

The ECW supported Grace's Annual Country Store for many years. Funds raised through these efforts were initially used to reduce loans associated with construction costs of the Parish Hall. As loans were reduced funds raised through the Country Store were redirected towards outreach. Even as the Country Store was ongoing ECW also conducted an annual Rummage Sale. When Country Store ended in the early 2000's, the

Rummage Sale became ECW's sole source of income to support our mission and various outreach programs, including children's attendance at Camp Henry. Interrupted by Covid, the Rummage Sale was brought back this year on April 30, 2022. More than twenty members of ECW spent the week of April 25th -29 th setting up the displays in the Parish Hall and the Storage Building with the wonderful Christmas Store in the Foyer. We were assisted by several members of the Men of the Church for which we are truly grateful. We raised \$3663.68. Thank you to all who donated items, assisted with the sale, and brought the wonderful lunches! Without your help we wouldn't be able to hold this annual sale.

We look forward to meeting in spring 2023 to elect new officers and to set our priorities for funding projects. All women of Grace are automatically members of ECW. We would love to have more women actively participating! If you are interested in running for office or just want more information about ECW, please contact one of our current officers:

Cheryl Aull, President [ckaul@charter.net](mailto:ckaul@charter.net);

Jeanne Sims, Vice-President [ronjeannesims@charter.net](mailto:ronjeannesims@charter.net);

Anne Jarema, Secretary [anne\\_jarema@verizon.net](mailto:anne_jarema@verizon.net); and

Mary Ann Warren, Treasurer [maandwrw@gmail.com](mailto:maandwrw@gmail.com)

### **Finance Ministry – Year to Date, December 31, 2022**

The closing year has delivered more exciting growth and change at Grace, including many new faces in the congregation and additional programs. Growth and change have included staff position changes (Katie Douglas as extraordinaire Bookkeeper/Accountant, Jill Stevenson has successfully succeeded long time Office Manager Valerie Heavens, and Angel Stoudt's service role as Sexton has expanded). We know the many benefits we have experienced with these additions, and naturally expenses have grown as well.

Expenses have increased about \$60,000 in 2022 from 2021, and this increase is largely attributable to deferred spending for Outreach and a full year of service for our Associate Rector. Through the generosity of

congregants, Grace ended this year with a modest operating surplus of \$13,360.

Challenge: In 2022, there were 112 pledges totaling \$384,314 at the end of the stewardship ministry. For 2023 (at Jan 7, 2023), 100 pledges totaling less than \$343K have been delivered.

For 2023, income is projected at \$460K (this includes an assumption that final pledges will net \$400K and other revenues will net \$82K). Expenses are budgeted at \$482K. A deficit of \$22K is projected as of early Dec 2022. Comparatively, the original budget for 2022 reflected all income sources of \$449K and expenses of \$471K, with a projected deficit of \$22K; through Dec 2022, adjusted receipts and expenditures net to a nominal surplus. For 2023, most budget entries will require a continuous due diligence on expenses. Other than an inflation adjustment for ministry compensation, no other measurable increases are included in the project 2023 budget and it is anticipated that savings will be realized once the solar project is complete.

For 2022, the most significant facility improvement initiatives included the solar project campaign and the playground. The solar project required a \$50K commitment that has been generously met by parishioners and the needed funds for the playground are still being accumulated. The solar install is 'in progress' for mid- January 2023 and a federal rebate of \$13K should be recovered early in 2023.

Tara Lonneman very successfully served Grace as Treasurer through most of 2022 but transitioned from this role in November given the needs of her new baby! Previous service included Anne Jarema (2021) and Joe Aull from many years before (and still contributing). Grace welcomed a new bookkeeper/reporting accountant in late summer; Ms. Katie Douglas succeeded Ms. Lindsey Farmer. Grace was fortunate to recruit Katie and she has further advanced the quality of Grace's financial reporting. Please continue to follow our financial progress on a monthly basis in the Grace TEAM.

Steven Birkhofer, Interim Treasurer

## **Flower Guild Ministry**

As I reflect back on this year, I am so very grateful for our strong core of flower arrangers. Each one brings their own unique style and talent as witnessed each Sunday. The strong leadership of Marzy Israel, who died last year, helped to guide and develop our abilities and appreciation of flower beauty. Our team consists of: Judy Booze, Judy Bowen, Teesha Johnson, Nora Jones, Bonnie Kistler, Mary Ann Warren, Jennifer Witt (also Donor chair), Chance Wyatt and myself. We are also blessed to have Ginny Moser as our treasurer, and Angel Stoudt, our sexton, who helps us every week carrying the large arrangements back and forth.

Our two big events are Easter and Christmas, when we decorate windows, doors and anything outside that we deem “decorable”. We order materials for “Hanging of the Greens”--swags, wreaths and two Christmas trees. Also included are Advent materials, candles & holders, pins and wreaths. These expenses are covered by donors and the generosity of parishioners, who make Christmas and Easter donations using the special envelopes placed in the pews in honor of loved ones. These names are listed in the church publication.

If you would like to make a flower donation for a particular Sunday in memory or in thanksgiving for a loved one, please contact Jennifer Witt (828-423-4941).

With much appreciation,  
Pat Davis, chairman

## **Greeters Ministry**

We formed the current version of the Grace Greeters Ministry, which we call the Graceful Greeters, with an organizing meeting in the parish hall on July 31, 2022. There were nine people at the meeting. The first service we covered was on Sunday, September 4th. We have a strong core group of seven who are quick to sign up on the SignUp app whenever I send out the next two months of Sundays. It is a collaborative group, so no one really leads it, but I (Diane Wilkey) manage the schedule, so I am also the contact



person for those wishing to join our ministry. My phone number is (404) 202-4750, but the best way to reach me is at [thewilkeys@gmail.com](mailto:thewilkeys@gmail.com).

Our mission is to supplement the work of the ushers by greeting and welcoming parishioners and visitors when they enter the door next to the church office. We have two people stationed in the foyer to greet all who enter and remind regular parishioners to wear their name tags (or sign up to have one made). Our mission regarding visitors and newcomers is first to make sure they are seen, greeted, and welcomed. Next, we want to help them find the sanctuary, bathrooms, and Sunday School/nursery; answer any questions they may have about the worship service itself; offer them a temporary nametag; and invite them to have coffee and treats in the foyer following the service. Finally, we offer additional information in the form of a one-page flyer composed by Kim Hayes that has pictures of the clergy and staff and their contact information as well as times and places of our worship services. The flyer is currently our only expense, and I don't know if we are in the budget to cover that, as it is only a nominal amount.

Two of our three biggest highlights for 2022 were getting started and receiving an enthusiastic response from those who have joined the ministry and those we have served. The third highlight is that we have combined forces with the coffee hour ministry going forward. One of the two greeters each Sunday will also bring a treat for after the service and make the coffee and lemonade.

One goal for 2023 is to attract and retain additional greeters and coffee hour providers. We also hope to meet soon with a social worker who can help us recognize and assist any visitors who might need more from us than just a greeting.

Diane and Tony Wilkey

**Liturgical Ministries**

2022 continued to bring exciting changes to our Sunday Liturgy. We opened our in-person worship to members of Grace and to those in the community interested in joining us. In doing this, we've been able to increase the numbers of servers in each ministry. The Acolyte and Chalice ministries have grown from four to 10 adults. Traditionally the acolyte ministry is a youth-based ministry while the chalice is typically an adult ministry. As our parish grows and we develop our youth programs, it will be our goal to have youth once again serve as acolytes. For now, these ministers alternate between serving as an acolyte and chalice. We have a detailed customary for the two positions that helps the new minister become familiar with the liturgy and what is expected.

If serving as an acolyte, chalice, lector or intercessor at Grace appeals to you, we welcome your participation. We have a dedicated group of lectors and intercessors. If you are interested in joining this ministry please contact Carol Booth, [carolbooth5@gmail.com](mailto:carolbooth5@gmail.com).

Another important liturgical ministry is our Taizé service on Tuesday nights. If you are interested in learning more about this special worship service please contact James Cannon, [imjcannon@charter.net](mailto:imjcannon@charter.net).

If you have been a liturgical server in the past or are interested in learning more about these rewarding opportunities to contribute to the life of Grace, please contact Rev Milly Morrow.

Respectful submitted,

Lorie Tola

### **Men of the Church**

Most at Grace are familiar with the Men of the Church and our annual 'Pig-Pickin', the proceeds of which we donate for various causes. The 2022 Pig Pickin' resulted in a net profit of \$ 1,500.00 and we contributed \$ 2,500.00 to the Grace solar panel project. In the future, we look to broaden our efforts to include other works for the benefit of others, and we invite all who wish to join us to contact any one of us at any time.

Our group was formed soon after Grace became a parish, and we have been active since the early days of Grace. Our monthly meetings are hosted by one of the members, usually at their home, or sometimes the fellowship hall. We begin with an hour of fellowship followed by dinner, then an informal business meeting, as we have no elected officers or dues.

Jack Frue

### **Office Ministry**

Since beginning this job in August, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you. It has been a pleasure working in such a wonderful environment. Many thanks to clergy, Katherine Johnson, Elaine Potter, Scott McKenzie and Angel Stoudt for their assistance with the transition. My office hours are Tuesdays and Thursday from 9-3 and Wednesday from 9-12, although I always have access to church voicemail and email. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of assistance to you at any time.  
Jill Stevenson

### **Outreach Ministry**

Grace's outreach committee underwent a season of change and transition in 2022. After years of faithful and skilled leadership from Kim Hayes, both Rev. Mike and Rev. Milly have co-led the committee for the past year. The committee has retained its core mission, stated as, "Together, with God's help, outreach at Grace Church is building the kingdom of heaven on earth." This year has blessed outreach with many successes. Outreach transitioned to a grants-based model of giving, a program that we have aptly called 'Grace Grants.' Community groups apply for funding, and we assign groups a liaison to remain in communication and relationship throughout the year. Additionally, groups are invited to quarterly breakfasts at the church so that we can continue to grow together in relationship and express our gratitude for their hard work in the

community. Outreach has continued long standing programs and traditions—the backpackers program, angel tree, the pumpkin patch, and many others. We have also taken on new initiatives.

In addition to the Grace Grants program, we have worked hard at opening a winter shelter for in- tact families that is set to begin at the beginning of 2023. This work has been done in collaboration with both Trinity United Methodist Church and Grace Covenant Presbyterian. In 2023, we pray that we may continue our relationships with community organizations, that we may work with both our bodies and spirits for justice in our city, and that we may grow together in love.

Rev Mike

### **Pastoral Care Ministry**

The Pastoral Care Ministry supports the sick, homebound, bereaved and lonely of Grace Parish and is defined by our mission statement:

The mission of the Pastoral Care Team at Grace Episcopal Church is making the compassionate presence of Christ known through intentional connection and through the physical and spiritual care of those in need.

Some of our efforts in this mission include:

Feed My Sheep – arrange for food to be available in the freezer at Grace for those who are ill, recovering from surgery or otherwise unable to prepare food for themselves. We can always use contributions of soups, chili, or stew in freezer bags labeled with description and date.

Friends in Christ – visit homebound or hospitalized parish members and take Holy Eucharist to those who desire. Also taking Christmas cookies and Easter Baskets to the same members. In addition we make visits to homes, hospitals, and senior living facilities.

Cards and Calls – sending cards to parishioners and making calls to parishioners on their birthdays. Also make contact with those who are ill or in need of support and works with clergy to stay in touch with those on the prayer list.

Our new Associate Rector Mike Reardon, has joined our team and is providing guidance and leadership to Pastoral Care. In addition to Mike our team includes Cliff Albertson, James Cannon, Pat Davis, Sydnor Thompson, and Lorie Tola.

We meet weekly and our discussions center on updating the prayer list, what resources are available for those in need and how we can connect those in need to those resources.

We make calls to those on the prayer list and we pray together for all of them and their needs.

This past year three of our members received the Diocesan license for Lay Eucharistic Visitors and are now able to take communion to those unable to make it to church.

To contact the Pastoral Care Team, please contact any of the members or send an email to the team at [Pastoralcare@GraceAVL.com](mailto:Pastoralcare@GraceAVL.com)

We remain committed to ensuring that we are faithful to our mission. To that end in addition to our team members we have volunteers who have made themselves available to provide transportation, home sitting, medical advocacy, and other services to those in need. If you would like to join our team or if you can volunteer to provide some services to those, contact us at our email address or call any one of us.

Cliff Alberston

## **PubSing**

PubSing, the monthly sing-a-long of hymns, old time gospel and Americana inspirational music returned in its post-Covid form in 2022. Indoor sessions were held at the Cork & Keg, downtown Asheville, during January through March. In April we switched over to our outdoor venue at Zillicoah Brewery. We met there through October.

As I write these words, we are back at the Cork & Keg and will be there through the winter of 2023. We are typically there on the

second Sunday of the month from 3:00 to 5:00. Our next session is February 12th.

So, come out and join us on Sunday afternoons in 2023. Hope to see you there.

Monty Wooten

### **Tuesday Taizé at Grace**

Taizé styled services at Grace are a long standing tradition offering wonderful silence, prayer and music for nearly twenty-five years. This past Spring as we re-emerged our Taizé services were offered weekly during Lent. Rev. Milly seeing the appreciation of those attending suggested that we take what had been a monthly service for years and move it to a weekday evening and earlier time so that folks could attend on the way home from work and not have to block out an evening. The Taizé team wholeheartedly endorsed the idea and Tuesday Taizé was begun in May.

Banners were placed on the front lawn proclaiming the new time and day. The earlier service was enthusiastically embraced as was the change of day. Judy Rhodes, Grace's former children's choir director, who has led the music of Taizé for many many years continues to offer the perfect musical accompaniment and spiritual atmosphere. Her ability to lead by following the worshipers is what provides the service with it's apparent free-form feeling. James Cannon and Monty Wooten serving as co-presiders, Amy Trees as Healing Prayer leader, along with Judy Phillips and Debbie Thomas as Healing Prayer ministers, all contribute to Grace's beautiful Taizé style service.

Attendance is mostly from non-members of Grace who make up an eclectic group from many varied traditions and those we sometimes refer to as un-churched. The service is known as open to everyone and we often have visitors from area faith communities who come to observe and worship with us.

Just as encouraging are the occasional notes and comments we receive from folks who after a long absence come back for a visit and remark on how the service is just as they remember it.

Taizé styled services are just another example of how Grace is reaching out and providing for a need in our community —

Grace's Taizé styled services are ecumenical services known for their melodic chants and prayers. Although music forms a central part of the service it is mixed with comforting periods of silence allowing for contemplation. Lighted mostly by candlelight in the sanctuary of Grace Church, the vesper light of approaching evening offers a safe and nurturing space for a well-deserved moment of peace in our hectic lives. Healing prayer is offered throughout the service for oneself or on behalf of someone else.

For more information visit:

<https://www.graceavl.com/taize-grace/>

James Cannon

### **20s and 30s Ministry**

2022 was the first full year of Grace's 20s and 30s ministry. The group was formed out of the increase in young adults joining us at Grace for worship, and a desire to connect together in a setting that felt approachable and would grow bonds and friendships outside of Sunday service.

Led by Rev. Mike, the group meets once per month for a Bible Study at a rotating list of breweries. The group hosted several additional events throughout the year. We've met for brunch, recently shared a wonderful Friendsgiving feast, and have even helped each other move furniture!

Perhaps most importantly, we have helped young adults feel more connected to the congregation, and to engage our young adults in other ministries and positions of leadership across the church. Notably, 20s and 30s member Kokayi Cobb has agreed to serve on Grace's vestry beginning

in 2023. In the coming year, we hope to continue to grow both in membership and in spirit, offering additional events and continuing to serve as a place for connection for our church's young adults.

Rev Mike

### **Wedding Ministry**

The Wedding Ministry at Grace has been in existence since the founding of the church as a space for unions to be communally celebrated and affirmed. Currently, it is led by Rev. Katherine Johnson, an ordained minister in the PCUSA tradition and friend of Grace Episcopal. Both Katherine and her son were baptized at Grace, and she has also served as interim office manager. The mission of the wedding ministry is to be a welcoming presence for those searching for a welcoming space for their ceremony, and seeks to create long term relationships with both local and visiting couples and their families. In 2022 we were able to welcome couples back to the church for in-person ceremonies that ranged in size from a handful of friends and family to a full house of 160 attendees. Grace has been a place of welcome and acceptance for couples from different faith traditions, including Eastern Orthodox, Baptist, Presbyterian, Non-Denominational, and Episcopalian.

In 2023 we are expecting to continue to grow this ministry, and are always looking for individuals that would like to be involved to send cards to couples on their first anniversary, invitations to worship, and in person help on the day of ceremonies.

Thank you for your continued support of this ministry as a way to walk alongside couples as they take their first steps into their next chapter!

Rev. Katherine Johnson