



Grace Presbyterian Church

To see Long Island awakened to the glory of Jesus Christ

Update from Pastor Mark

Every year, I need to remind myself that spring tends to take a while to appear on the East End of Long Island. Thankfully, it has arrived.

In many ways, springtime is symbolic for what God does through the gospel: light emerging out of darkness, life springing from death, seeds taking root, dormancy yielding to growth. With this in mind, we are experiencing a springtime here at Grace Presbyterian Church.

GraceTeams, which we launched last May, are up and running, and they are having a tremendous effect on our church body and local community. Since our Mission Statement is – To REACH the Lost, BUILD Community, GROW Disciples, SERVE our Neighbors, and in all things WORSHIP God – we formed a team for each mission objective. So we have a REACH Team, BUILD Team, GROW Team, SERVE Team and a WORSHIP Team. Each team has two gifted and motivated leaders who are leading their teams toward excellence. After only one year, we have seen exponential benefits from each team. Imagine what the next five years will be like as God blesses the work of each team member!

In February, we held our sixth annual Christianity Explored class. Including leaders, we had fifty-three people attend. A large number of participants had never read the Bible; nor were they church-going types. After the seven-week class they had read through the entire Gospel of Mark and tried to answer three questions: Who is Jesus? Why did he come? And, what does it mean to follow him? God used the class to bring new Christians into his family, and a number of participants now enjoy coming to Grace Church on Sundays!

Another area that has experienced a spring-like effect is our giving. For a number of reasons, our giving was down significantly in 2015. We substantially reduced our 2016 budget and were challenged to obediently and joyfully give to the important work we are doing on the East End. I am so delighted by the way Grace Church has responded. Much of the year remains, but if we continue to allow the gospel to shape our generosity, we have every reason to believe we will exceed our budget and be enabled to expand our work not only on the East End but throughout Long Island and around the world.

If this summer is like those past, then we can expect lots of visitors to the Hamptons and to our church. Part of our vision is to be a strong gospel witness to those who visit the Hamptons during the summer. And so we seek to welcome all who come, whether for the summer or for just a day.

May the seeds sown this springtime grow into a bountiful harvest in the months ahead!

Yours truly,
Rev. Mark Middlekauff



Youth Group Winter Retreat



Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



Ladies' Night Painting

Lesley Middlekauff

GraceDinners

Over the past year, Grace Presbyterian Church has enjoyed the opportunity to put our GraceTeams into action:

Throughout the winter months, the BUILD Team at Grace, which encourages our church family to connect with one another and build community, launched a new event called GraceDinners. Everyone who attends Grace Church was invited to attend or host a dinner on designated Friday evenings. Once we received all the RSVP's, dinner parties were organized to take place in homes all over town. As a result, many people were blessed to make connections around these dinner tables that went much deeper than a quick "hello" in passing on Sunday mornings. For example, one person who attended a GraceDinner mentioned that she finally got to know a family that she had sat behind in church almost every week. Another mentioned that they really enjoyed the fact that their GraceDinner was so relaxing and that their night was characterized with laughter from start to finish. Overall, we have been very encouraged to see that these dinners have successfully served the the BUILD Team's goal of helping to strengthen relationships in our community here at Grace. For as we know each other better, we will also learn to love and serve each other better. May our church family flourish like the early church in Acts 2:46, who "broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."



GraceDinners

Christine Marocco

Meet Christine

While living in the city and attending Redeemer Presbyterian Church, I heard that a church was being planted in the Hamptons. I had a home in Amagansett and had been looking for a church that taught the full breadth of the Bible. Totally excited, I called the number given and an utterly charming young mother, Lesley Middlekauff, answered the phone!

I liked Grace Church right away. I loved the entrepreneurial environment; the church was small and taking form, the atmosphere genuine and scrappy (as in feisty, tenacious, vigorous, and dynamic). The leaders were flat-out followers of Jesus. I grew to love worshipping here.

One evening, at an International Dinner, Lesley mentioned the need for someone to pray over the church. I instantly thought, "I can do that. I want to do that!" Shortly thereafter, Debbie Cuthel and I began praying for church needs. On Sunday mornings, we pray in the balcony while the music team practices. This has been such a blessing. Not only have I come to know Debbie as a good friend, but I've learned that when one prays, God connects one's heart with the hearts of those for whom one prays. This results in a greater desire to pray for them, which again leads to greater love for them and for God – God's multiplication!



A little over a year ago, Linda Dupree and I started visiting the Hamptons Center weekly. I didn't admit this at the time, but I clearly remember thinking that we would do this for three months and be finished. Well, guess what? Once again, God, in his graciousness, took a little love and made it into much more love – God's good ways! Through service at Grace Presbyterian Church, God has allowed me to grasp more fully his rich love and to see it worked out in my life and in the lives of others. Praise God.

Adriana Pariz

Multiplying

Our vision at Grace Presbyterian Church is "to see Long Island awakened to the glory of Jesus Christ." One of the ways we move toward the fulfillment of that vision is by hosting Bible studies throughout our community so that men and women can learn and grow together in community.

When I first began attending Grace in 2010, we had one men's and one women's Bible study that met every Tuesday morning. As these studies took place, there were many folks who could not attend because their schedules did not allow it. Two years ago, we began a second women's study on Tuesday night since there were many asking for another scheduling option.

This same need has also risen with the men's Bible study and as of this May 9, another study has begun in the home of Tristan Vaughan! This is very exciting for our church and our community as it allows more options for gathering and studying the Bible. These times are invaluable - we know that spiritual growth happens through the means of Scripture, prayer, and fellowship with other disciples, and our study gatherings allow for all of those things!

Someone recently approached me after attending our women's study for the first time and said, "My favorite part of the night was when we shared prayer requests and prayed for one another; I am so thankful for a group where we can be honest with our needs." Our desire is that these groups will continue to multiply to different areas on the East End and that many others will come and partake!

The Mission of Grace Presbyterian Church is to REACH the Lost, BUILD Community, GROW Disciples, SERVE our Neighbors, and in all things WORSHIP God.

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