

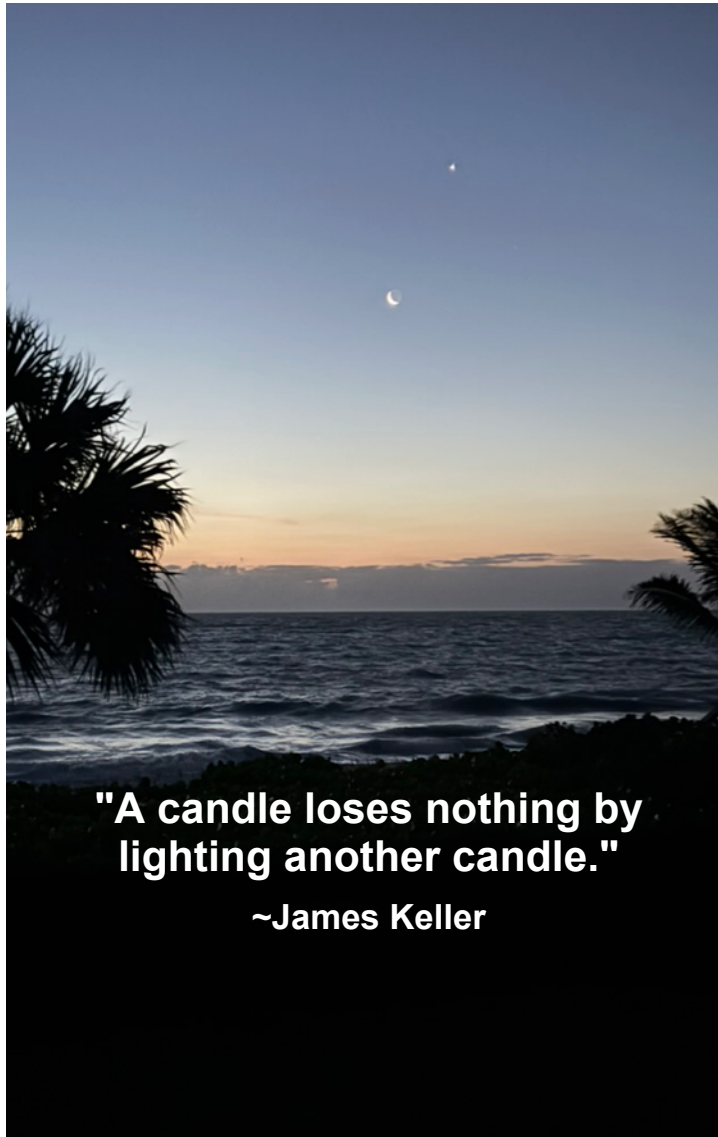


May 18, 2025 Phone 845 343-6101 FAX 845 343-8321 [www.gracechurchmiddletown.org](http://www.gracechurchmiddletown.org)

email [secretary.grace.episcopal@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.grace.episcopal@gmail.com)

*Sunday May 18th*

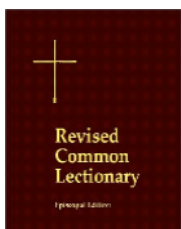
Fifth Sunday of Easter (Rite I)



**"A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle."**

~James Keller

Subdeacon/Chalice	Janet Cusack
MC/2nd Chalice	Claire Newquist
Thurifer	
Crucifer	
Acolyte	Allison McLean
Acolyte	
OT Lector	Lorraine Witkowski
NT Lector	Lourdes Cruz
Intercessor	Patty Seekamp
Ushers	Mark Strunsky Volunteers
Use our audio mixer to listen to the 9:30 Sunday Mass live. <a href="#">Click Here</a>	
To watch Sunday Mass on Facebook live. <a href="#">Click Here</a>	
For the Sunday prayer bulletin. <a href="#">Click Here</a>	



Website for Lectionary Readings

The webpage is in calendar form - just click on the date and you will see the readings for that day.

<https://www.lectionarypage.net/CalndrsIndexes/Calendar2025.html>

## Upcoming Events

<b>Sunday May 18th</b>	<b>9:30 AM Sunday Eucharist in-person and on-line (Rite I)</b> <b>11:00 AM Monthly Vestry Meeting</b>
<b>Wednesday May 21st</b>	<b>10:00 AM Healing Mass</b>
<b>Sunday May 25th</b>	<b>9:30 AM Sunday Eucharist in-person and on-line (Rite II)</b>
<b>Monday May 26th</b>	<b>Memorial Day Holiday - Office Closed</b>
<b>Wednesday May 28th</b>	<b>10:00 AM Healing Mass</b>
<b>Sunday June 1st</b>	<b>9:30 AM Sunday Eucharist in-person and on-line (Rite I)</b>
<b>Wednesday June 4th</b>	<b>10:00 AM Healing Mass</b>

## The Photography Corner



This week's photograph, the subject of which needs no introduction, was sent to us by Claire Newquist. She took this picture of the iconic structure on a recent trip to Paris. Thank you Claire!

I would like to thank all who have shared photographs with us. I could use some more if you'd like to send some. ~Joe



ShopRite Grocery Gift Cards are available for sale EVERY Sunday after each service. Grace Church receives 5% on the sale of the cards from ShopRite, while you purchase the cards at face value! ShopRite gift cards can make shopping for the family easy. Our ongoing fundraiser of ShopRite gift cards helps you prepare your holiday meals while helping Grace Church. Please keep us in mind when preparing your shopping lists!

We are happy and pleased to announce that we can accept credit card purchases for the ShopRite gift cards. So, if you use a rewards credit card you can now accumulate points while supporting Grace Church! To purchase gift cards, please see either Eileen or Claire.

## **Mystic Poets Society**

**This week's poem is sent to us by Eileen Bloomer. Thank you Eileen!  
If you have a poem or reflection that you would consider sharing with your fellow parishioners, please send it to me. Thank you, Joe.**

**A prayer is a small boat  
pushing off the bank of certainty  
into deep water,  
whatever the weather.  
~Eileen**

**On Sunday, June 1, we will be blessing a prayer shawl in memory of Canon John Osgood, one of our former rectors. The shawl will be placed in the Wayside Chapel. This tradition was started by Mary Carpenter many years ago and is a good way to honor our deceased former rectors. Please feel free to add your prayers to the shawl and to use it during your quiet time in the Wayside Chapel.**

## **Prayer List**

**You may have noticed that our weekly prayer list continues to grow each week. While it is important to pray for those in any kind of need or trouble, it is not always clear when it is time to remove a name from the list. Our plan originally had been to create a new list each month; this hasn't always worked as people have asked that we keep a name on indefinitely due to illness or other ongoing problems. I have also kept the parishioners that are known to us on month after month.**

**It is time to start anew. Beginning with the prayer list for Sunday, June 1, 2025, I will remove all names from the list other than the names of members of our parish. If you would like a name to remain on the prayer list, or you would like to add a name, please let me know before Friday, May 30th.**

**If you have any questions, or want to speak to me about this, please don't hesitate to call me at 845-343-7885 or email me at [cnewquist@frontiernet.net](mailto:cnewquist@frontiernet.net). ~Claire**

**Diocesan Celebration of Ministry Honoring Bishop Glasspool  
A Journey of Faith and Service  
Saturday, May 31, 10:30 am  
The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine  
1047 Amsterdam Avenue, New York NY**

**Join us as we give thanks for the faithful and inspiring ministry of The Right Reverend Mary Glasspool, Bishop Assistant of the Diocese of New York, as she prepares for her retirement on June 30, 2025. We will honor her 45 years of service in ordained ministry, her unwavering commitment to God's people, and the love and wisdom she has shared throughout our diocese.**

**Eucharist service will be followed by a reception. Please RSVP below.**

**[Register](#)**

# **180th Annual Meeting of Grace Episcopal Church Wrap-up**

## **Rector's Report**

The year from our last meeting till today has proven to be remarkably busy and at times genuinely intense. Over the past year the poverty rate Middletown appears to have slowed, but we are not talking about a marked improvement. With our partners in the Greater Middletown Interfaith Council, members of the congregation and I supported the Warming Station over this last winter, which turned away an average of four people a night due to being at capacity. On nights when the temperature was expected to drop below freezing, these individuals were connected with HONOR, or other county resources, for emergency shelter.

The Guild of Saint Margaret leadership have prepared a beautiful and detailed report for you, and I recommend it highly. In thumbnail this has been a year of transition which will continue through June of this year. Phyllis Guardino, who has been the director for a considerable number of years, will be retiring at the end of June and Carolanne Cusack will be taking over the leadership in July. I will certainly miss Phyllis's presence around the offices, at the same time I am very happily looking forward to working with Carolanne, and watching the ministry grow into its new future. Last year the combined programs of both the Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry hit a new, all time, milestone, giving out over 100,000 meals to the hungry in the Middletown area. Please take a good look at their report.

Over the past year we have trudged along without a parish secretary, and I want to especially acknowledge the folks who have made this possible. Claire Newquist and Janet Cusack have stepped in to take care of bank deposits, bill paying and a myriad of miscellaneous tasks. Thank you, ladies! I continue to draft and print the Sunday bulletins but would be at a total loss without the support of David Brokaw and Claire Newquist. They work behind the scenes to edit my rough work and make it ready for publication, thank you both!

Don Boyer and our choir members bring a mighty and beautiful gift of music to our worship life here at Grace. I apologize to you for the bulletin snafu at Easter, and joyfully thank you for the tremendous gift you have brought to us all!

Along with our regular worship of God we have welcomed into the baptized community two wonderful young children: Saint Paul Walker, the Spisso family and Myla Johnson.

Over the past year we have commended four of our own into God's eternal loving embrace: Ruth Ann Guidance, Jeanine Goggins, Peter Matthews, Marge Ostergaard and Canon John Osgood. May they, through the loving mercy of God, rest in joyful peace.

Respectfully submitted by  
The Rev. Victor J. Sarrazin  
Rector

## **Warden's Report - John Cusack**

As I reflect upon 2024, I remain encouraged by the enduring spirit at Grace Church. Our strong Anglo-Catholic liturgy and committed outreach ministries demonstrate our ability to serve both our faith and the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community. Every day, we reaffirm this through prayer and action.

Before continuing, I would like to thank Phyllis Guardino, our dedicated Guild of St. Margaret director, as she prepares for her well-deserved retirement this summer. Through her leadership and tireless work ethic, our soup kitchen has expanded to meet the increasing demands of our urban community. This expansion now includes a food pantry and strong collaborations with community stakeholders, ensuring we address not only hunger but also the broader well-being of those we serve. Her thoughtful service has fostered a greater sense of community, and for that we are profoundly grateful.

While we should celebrate our many strengths and achievements, we must also address challenges. As a warden, I recognize the effort required to sustain our church's financial health and grow our congregation amid an uncertain economy and increasing demands on our time and resources. Moreover, our aging and beautiful historic church requires significant cost and countless hours of dedicated maintenance. To address these, we recently called upon you in a café meeting to share insights and brainstorm ideas. Your participation demonstrates our commitment to navigating these demanding times. This must remain an ongoing conversation, so please feel free to reach out with further suggestions or other ways you can help serve.

In closing, I would like to thank Father Victor, our vestry and all others in positions of leadership for their dedicated service and stewardship. Your efforts in overseeing our church's ministries and resources are essential to the life of Grace Church. A special thanks to Claire Newquist. Claire's generosity with her time and talent is an inspiration to me and I am sure to all who work closely with her.

Though the road ahead may be challenging, I remain confident that through careful planning, open dialogue, and dedication to our core values, we will continue to serve Middletown with grace and compassion.

## **Warden's Report - Claire Newquist**

Congratulates to our newly elected and re-elected Vestry members; I look forward to working with you over the next two years. Thank you to Lenora Vaughan for her service on Vestry over the past three years and to Bill Gunn for his service on Vestry this past year and his previous service as Clerk of the Vestry.

I want to thank you for once again putting your trust in me by re-electing me to a second term. As I sat down to write my Warden's report for this year, several thoughts occurred to me. First, the title of my report is Warden's report, not Senior or Junior Warden. This year, Father Victor, John Cusack and I decided to drop those distinctions as many parishes have done over the years. The distinction that once was made between Senior Warden—the Rector's Warden—and Junior Warden—the People's Warden—really no longer applies. I think that these distinctions came about when our priests seemed more removed from the congregation and perhaps needed an intermediary.

**(Continued on next page)**

Second, I realized that this is the 14th Warden's Report that I am writing. I'm not certain whether or not this is a good thing. I guess it speaks to continuity of leadership and knowledge of the parish (and perhaps my stamina). I hope it does not speak for the future.

I think that both of these point to our current reality. Grace Church is at a turning point. We are seeing new faces in church. Our new members are becoming more involved in what we do—serving on the altar, helping with fundraising, hosting coffee hours and running for Vestry, to name a few. One of our priorities needs to be finding ways to nourish and nurture these new members and to find ways to attract more. As I have said in this past, this may mean changing the way we do things. Looking back at what I said last year, I think the same things apply for the coming year. Our Guild of St Margaret programs and our involvement in the Greater Middletown Interfaith Council, help keep us visible in the community, but it often feels as if we are better known as the Soup Kitchen church than as a welcoming community of people of faith. It is time for us to make some decisions about where we want to go next.

The recent Cafe Meeting (which took place this year not last) was a beginning. We were able to hear the thoughts of a number of you. The desire to continue with one Sunday service, which brings all of us together each week came through loud and clear. There were also thoughts about our weekday service. The need for us to share more specifics about our budget and the impact of our stewardship of time, talent and treasure was emphasized. Many of you had thoughts about broadening our music program and the importance of doing more for the growing group of children in the parish. Most importantly, we learned that we need to share more with you and to find ways to solicit your ideas and input about where we go from here.

I'll end today with the same request that I made last year. What do you think should come next for Grace? Please consider speaking to Father Victor, John, me or one of the Vestry members if you have ideas or questions. Please join us for one of our monthly Vestry meetings, which are now on the 3rd Sunday of the month after coffee hour, to hear what is being planned and to share your ideas. These meetings are open to the entire congregation. The future of Grace Church depends on all of us.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the incredible contribution that Phyllis Guardino has made to Grace Church. Phyllis first became Parish Administrator in 2005 and working with Father John Warfel and the Wardens made the day to day office operations much more efficient. While continuing to work as Parish Administrator, in 2012 she also became Director of the Guild of St Margaret, helping to keep that program running at a time when we had lost one of our major funding sources. Since becoming full time Director of the Guild, Phyllis has expanded both the program and our funding sources and helped increase our visibility both in the community and throughout the diocese, and kept the program running during the COVID 19 pandemic. While doing this, she still finds time to help and guide us as we muddle through trying to keep the office running without a secretary. I will miss seeing Phyllis in the office or in the kitchen or just running from place to place keeping things running smoothly when I come into the Parish House. The good news is that we will see her (and Torry) in church on Sundays. Many thanks to Phyllis for all that she has done for our parish and our outreach program. In true Phyllis fashion, she has also made certain that she left the Guild in capable hands. I know that Carolanne Cusack will take us into the future.





## Grace Calendar

### Vestry News

The next Vestry meeting will be held in the boardroom on Sunday May 18th starting at 11:00 AM.

All are invited to attend!

[Click here to read the minutes of the February 16, 2025 Vestry meeting.](#)

[Click here to read the minutes of the March 16, 2025 Vestry meeting.](#)

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."



GRACE CHURCH 1948

### Your Grace Church Vestry.

#### Wardens:

John Cusack

Claire Newquist

*Clerk of the Vestry:*

*Treasurer:*

Kathleen Hamilton

Allison McLean

#### Vestry:

Lorraine Witkowski

Anne Caldwell

Barbara Chumard

Michelle Tubbs

Analise Reed

Joseph Barrett

Mark Strunsky

Eileen Bloomer

Torry Guardino

David White (Student member of Vestry)