

February 15, 2026 Phone 845 343-6101 FAX 845 343-8321 www.gracechurchmiddletown.org
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Last Sunday After The Epiphany February 15th (Rite II)



"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude."

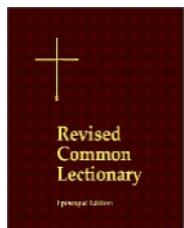
~Colin Powell

Subdeacon/Chalice	Rick Scott
MC/2nd Chalice	Claire Newquist
Thurifer	David Brokaw
Crucifer	David White
Acolyte	Marlene Presley
Acolyte	Eileen Barrett
OT Lector	Mark Strunsky
NT Lector	Rick Scott
Intercessor	Joseph Barrett
Ushers	Joseph Barrett Mark Strunsky Volunteers

Use our audio mixer to listen to the 9:30 Sunday Mass live. [Click Here](#)

To watch Sunday Mass on Facebook live. [Click Here](#)

For the Sunday prayer bulletin. [Click Here](#)



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/Calendar2026.html>

Upcoming Events

Sunday February 15th	9:30 AM Sunday Eucharist in-person and on-line (Rite II)
Monday February 16th	11:15 AM Monthly Vestry Meeting
Tuesday February 17th	Presidents' Day Holiday - Office Closed
Wednesday February 18th	5:30 PM Shrove Tuesday Potluck and Burning of Palms
	Ash Wednesday
	10:00 AM Healing Mass with imposition of ashes
	7:00 PM Mass with imposition of ashes
Friday February 20th	6:30 PM Stations of the Cross
Sunday February 22nd	9:30 AM Sunday Eucharist in-person and on-line (Rite I)
Wednesday February 25th	10:00 AM Healing Mass
Friday February 27th	6:30 PM Stations of the Cross

The Photography Corner



This week's photograph was sent to us by Pam Mather-Cathy. Thank you Pam!

I would like to thank all who have shared photographs with us. I do need some more photographs if you could send a few. ~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 was 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 tortured story.

Going to the other side,

just as You are.

Fear and trembling,

just as you are.

We are. I am.

Where am I?

The woman in Your story

knows her side of the story.

Crouching in the dust, human dust,

she holds out a new story

in trembling hands, offering

all that she was and she is,

just as she is in just one moment,

leaving behind all the stories,

so many stories, so many years,

to find something new

in her beating heart.

And Love asks the question:

What have you come to see

and who are you?

A voice in the wilderness of living

just as we are.

Reeds blowing in the wind.

New songs. Always new.

And another story begins:

Who are You?

~Eileen



LGBTQ+ task force invites survey input by March 15.

Episcopalians are invited to complete a 15- to 20-minute survey offered by the Task Force on LGBTQ+ Inclusion to help the church better understand how it honors the dignity of all people and where work remains to be done.

The 80th General Convention established the task force in 2022, charging it with conducting an audit of how The Episcopal Church has lived into its public commitments affirming the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people. A survey report will be shared with the 82nd General Convention in 2027.

Members across the church—those who are LGBTQ+ and those who are not—are encouraged to share about their experiences with pastoral care, sacramental access, representation in leadership, and institutional accountability.

[Take Survey](#)

SHROVE TUESDAY

A potluck dinner will be held on Shrove Tuesday, February 17th at 5:30 pm in the parish hall. A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board outside of the GSM Director's office. If you would like to come and bring something to share, but will not be in church to sign up before the dinner, please call or email the church office and leave a message. Also, if you would like to come, but need a ride, please call or email the church office and someone will get back to you to try and arrange transportation. ~Joe



February 14 @ 10:30 am: Absalom Jones Service.

Feast of Blessed Absalom Jones



Saturday, February 14th
10:30am

Guest Preacher
The Rt. Rev. Carlye Hughes, Bishop of Newark

Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine



Join the annual Absalom Jones celebration At the Cathedral. The Rt. Rev. Carlye Hughes, Bishop of Newark, will preach.

[Register here.](#)



The “Board Room Cinema” will open on Saturday, February 21 at 3 pm with a showing of “Chocolat”. The movie stars Juliette Binoche, Johnny Depp, Alfred Molina & Judi Dench. Synopsis: “Single mother Vianne Rocher and her young daughter arrive in a rural French town in the winter of 1959, and open an unusual chocolate shop (just after Shrove Tuesday) that disrupts the moral fiber of the strictly Catholic townsfolk and mayor.” In English. Running time 2 hours & 1 minute. The Boyers give it 4 thumbs up. Popcorn will be served. Bring your own beverage. No admission charge. Please RSVP to Don Boyer cdboyer@optonline.net, 914-443-9423.



From the Rector's Desk

This year's Black History Month started off with our sitting president amplifying a horrifically racist attack on former President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle. Undeterred by this presence of evil in our world, I wish to invite you to join me at Middletown's celebration of Black

History Month on Saturday February 21st. The City of Middletown is opening the Mulberry Senior Center, on East Main Street, from Noon to 5:00 PM for a celebration of Black History organized in collaboration between the Greater Middletown Interfaith Council and the YMCA. I will be giving an invocation to start things off and the event will include: Food, Vendor Tables, Free Giveaways, Live Music, Dance, Poetry, Special Presentations and more. Please come and share the love of neighbor, learn something new about the Black experience and contributions to our society.

Ash Wednesday is just around the corner so please allow me to share our plans here at Grace as well as many wonderful offerings organized by our Diocese.

Ash Wednesday Services, February 18 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM

Fridays during Lent, Stations of the Cross At 6:30 PM, with benediction on February 27 and March 27

Easter

Great Vigil April 24, 8:00 PM

Easter Day, Rite II, 10:00 AM

All around the Episcopal Diocese of New York people have been feeling the fear and strain

of federal government abuse and a number of very valuable Lenten resources have been put together for our support and education.

Episcopal Diocese of New York 2026 Lenten Offerings

Starting Ash Wednesday, February 18

We offer blessings to our clergy and congregations as they prepare for their Lenten traditions and rituals. Throughout the season - beginning on February 18th, Ash Wednesday - the Diocese will provide spiritual formation resources to support communities in prayer, learning, and faithful engagement.

Our Lenten theme is Reclaim Our Humanity. Offerings will include daily spiritual meditations delivered by text message and a weekly online book study of For a Time Such as This: An Emergency Devotional by Dr. Hanna Reichel, held on Thursdays at noon, hosted by Bishop Matthew Heyd. You can [click here](#) to receive the daily spiritual meditation messages and [click here](#) to register for the weekly online book study. Registration for Lenten Devotional texts will close on Tuesday, February 17.

In addition, a Lenten Diocesan study - offered in collaboration with the EDNY Antiracism Committee and the EDNY Young Adult Network - will be available both as a Book Study or a Discussion curriculum. This course explores why the ideology known as White Christian Nationalism does not align with The Episcopal Church, grounding the study in Scripture, Episcopal theology, and Christ's call to love God and neighbor. You can [click here](#) to learn more and access the relevant resources.

White Christian Nationalism has been a fringe movement in this country for some time. With the current administration in Washington they have gained a loud platform for their message. The movement is an insidious corruption of Christianity with a strong white supremacist and misogynistic ideology. Bishop Allen Shin has done great work debunking their rhetoric, I highly recommend the zoom event below.

Reclaiming Christianity: A Conversation with Bishop Allen Shin

Thursday, February 19, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EST via Zoom

Join Bishop Allen Shin for a pastoral conversation about what it means to be Christian in the face of White Christian Nationalism, ICE raids, violence, and chaos. We'll tackle pressing questions like, "What does it mean to be a martyr?" and explore the theology of passive resistance, civil disobedience, Christian theology of protest. This is an opportunity to explore big questions about how to show up and what we're willing to risk.

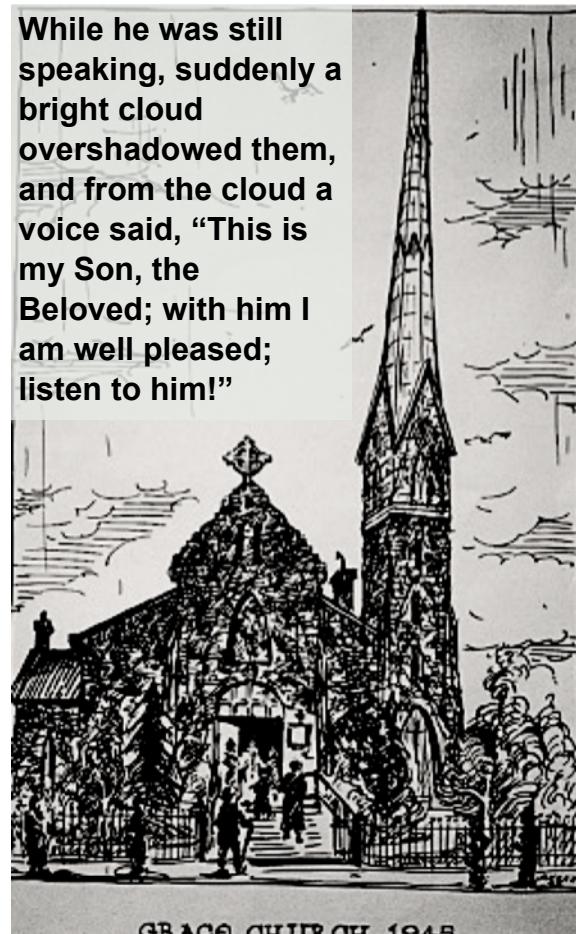
Bishop Shin is the chair of the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops, and a leading scholar on the rise of White Christian Nationalism and how the Church can and must act. This is an informal conversation meant to help folks process big questions about what's happening in our country. Click [here](#) to register for the Zoom session and for questions please email Lucy Breidenthal at lbreidenthal@dioceseny.org

As always, my dear friends, I remain yours in the peace and love of Christ.

Fr. Vic



While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!”



GRACE CHURCH 1948

Vestry News

The next Vestry meeting will be held in the boardroom on Sunday February 15th starting at 11:15 AM.
All are invited to attend!

[Click here to read the minutes of the December 21, 2025 Vestry meeting.](#)

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

Your Grace Church Vestry.

Wardens:

John Cusack

Claire Newquist

Clerk of the Vestry:

Kathleen Hamilton

Treasurer:

Phyllis Guardino

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)