

It is with great excitement that I anticipate my upcoming internship at Grace Church. I have been asked to share a bit about myself: I live in Washington, MA with my husband of eleven years, Frank and our special-needs animals (Abigail, the 'Sheltie-huahua', and the cats, Tasha, and Tobias). We have lived in the Berkshires for about thirteen years, previously living just outside of Manhattan in northern New Jersey.

I retired from the corporate world nine years ago, fulfilling a dream to commit myself full time to volunteer activities. I have been active on a number of professional and not-for-profit boards, served as editor and publisher of our town paper, and held numerous positions at St. Helena's Chapel in Lenox.

In 2012 I received what I can only describe as an invitation that I could not turn down, as I felt called to the priesthood. I became a licensed lay preacher and lay worship leader. I have led morning services at St. Helena's in addition to the yearly Blessing of the Animals and the Blue Christmas Service. Early in 2014 I was formally accepted as a Postulant to Holy Orders by the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts. I recently concluded my internship at St. Stephen's in Pittsfield.

I have attended Hartford Seminary and am currently completing my bachelor's degree while concurrently pursuing my Master of Divinity studies at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, MA. I am passionate about working with wisdom keepers (elders), LGBT issues, and feminist theology as well as developing interfaith relationships. I also serve as a volunteer chaplain at Albany Medical Center.

Two scriptures that are very meaningful to me are *"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some have entertained angels without knowing it"*: Hebrews 13:2, and *"The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today"* ~ St. Francis of Assisi.

I look forward to my time at Grace Church and all I have to learn from each and every person I meet and have the opportunity to work beside and serve.

May your day bring you peace, blessings, and knowledge.

Yours in Christ.

Virginia Vogel-Polizzi