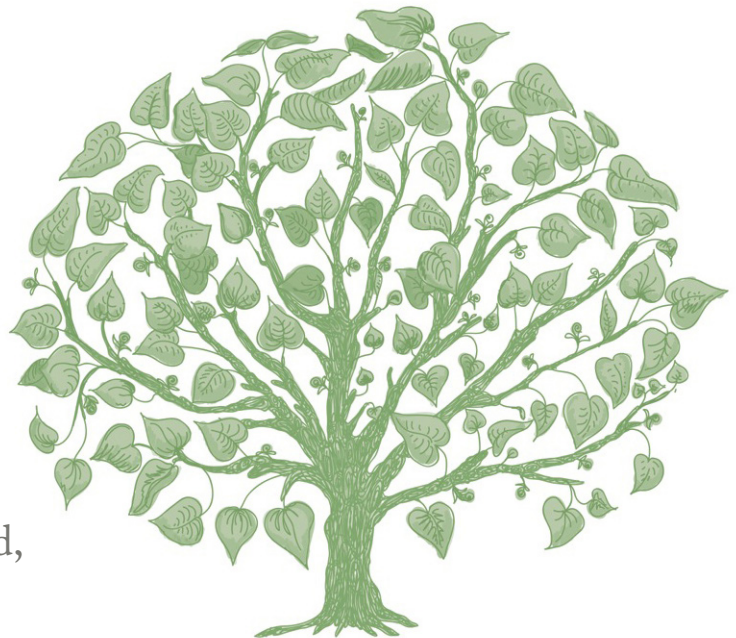


The Fourth Annual Meeting of

GRACE CHURCH

an Episcopal Community in the Southern Berkshires

January 24, 2016
Crissey Farm, 426 Stockbridge Road,
Great Barrington, Massachusetts



The Five Marks of Mission

A unifying commitment of
The Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church

The Mission of the Church is the Mission of Christ...

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

To teach, baptize and nurture new believers

To respond to human need by loving service

To seek to transform unjust structures of society

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

The Book of Common Prayer, p. 855 (Catechism)

GRACE CHURCH
an Episcopal Community in the Southern Berkshires
Third Annual Meeting ~ January 24, 2016

AGENDA

Call to order

Opening Prayer (all say)

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, as we begin our fourth year together as Grace Church, hear our prayers. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Old Business

Minutes of the 2015 Grace Church Annual Meeting (January 18, 2015) as attached to this booklet.

New Business of Grace Church

Vestry and Convention Delegate Nominations and Elections
Presentation of the Ministry Budget of 2016

Presentation of Results from the Mutual Ministry Review Survey

Remarks from the Priest in Charge

The Blessing

May God give you grace to never sell yourself short, grace to risk something big for something good, and grace to remember that the world is now too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but love. (William S. Coffin) And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen

The Dismissal

People's response "Thanks be to God."

GRACE CHURCH
an Episcopal Community in the Southern Berkshires
Third Annual Meeting ~ January 24, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>REPORT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Minutes of the Third Annual Meeting of Grace Church	5
 REPORTS FROM THE PRIEST IN CHARGE AND OFFICERS	
Priest in Charge	6
Senior Warden	8
Junior Warden	9
 REPORTS FROM MINISTRIES/COMMITTEES/GROUPS	
Adult Christian Formation	9
Books and Bread	10
Children's Formation Ministry-Church School	10
Diocesan Convention	11
Finance	11
Food Pantries, Lee and Peoples' Pantry	12
Gideon's Garden	13
Grants & Scholarship	13
Healing Ministry	14
Hospitality and Coffee Hour	14
Men's Group	14
Tuesday's Child Newsletter	15
Third Sunday Suppers	16
Welcoming and Ushering	16
Wisdom/Outreach	17
Worship	18
Year Round Stewardship	20
Liturgical Rites Celebrated	20
2016 Vestry, Officers, Convention Delegates	21
Treasurer's Report and Balance Sheet	21
2015 Budget, 2015 Actual, and 2016 Operating Budget	22

MINUTES OF THE THIRD ANNUAL MEETING January 18, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 11:40 am.

Janet led us in prayer.

The minutes of the 2014 annual meeting were accepted as written.

Geoff Perkins and Sue Gore were recognized for their dedication and service to Grace Church as they go off the Vestry.

NEW BUSINESS

The slate of officers and members of the Vestry were presented and accepted.
Paula Doyle and Ethan Novack were introduced as the Class of 2018.

BUDGET

We are in very good shape, and have a healthy surplus!
There are 49 pledging units, which is down from 53 in 2014.
There will now be line items listed for special events, services, receptions, and supplies like tents.
This budget symbolizes what is important to GraceChurch. We prioritize worship, and outreach.
Someone from the Diocese will be helping us be better stewards of our finances, this will include the idea of a church building.

COMMITTEES

All committee reports were accepted as submitted.

PRESENTATION of the WISDOM GROUP INITIATIVE

As a result of the four community dinners at the Guthrie Center, the following projects will be implemented:

- A drip irrigation system for the greenhouse at Taft Farms will make it easier to water plants.
- JV van Sant from Multi Cultural Bridge will work with Janet on grants.
- We will develop a youth ministry in the community involving Gideon's Garden and Bridge.
- An initiative to "adopt" home bound individuals will be started. Training will be included. St.Paul's and Christ-Trinity will also be involved.

Janet expressed how grateful she feels to be called to Grace Church. She loves worshipping in different places, like Gideon's Garden, and Taft Farms, and looks forward to sharing our ministries with the wider community.

After a final blessing, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Gray, Clerk of the Vestry

REPORT FROM THE PRIEST IN CHARGE

On September 1, 2015 I completed my first year with you as Priest in Charge and it has been a year that has gone very quickly. But as I review this year, I see that one reason it has moved so fast is that the people of Grace Church are always in action, offering vibrant love and committed service to God's people in the name of Jesus Christ. I have watched and learned many things in this first year. I have learned that the people of Grace Church long to have a closer relationship with God and so faithfully come together to worship and participate fully in prayer, study, and conversation. I have learned that the people of Grace Church love to be together. Fellowship time following worship and gatherings beyond our Sunday mornings are well attended and joyously celebrated. I have watched and learned that the people of Grace Church enthusiastically support the ministries of this church and respond quickly to the needs of the local community and the larger world through their committed participation and generous sharing of their resources. Grace Church listens carefully to the hopes and needs of people around us and is eager to participate in God's work in the world. I am honored to walk alongside you.

We continue to offer beautiful liturgy, music, and prayers of gratitude in our weekly worship on Sunday mornings at Crissey Farm. This setting has allowed us a warm space to offer the Eucharist, inviting many in to praise God and to be welcomed into a generous community. On Thursdays, we gather at noon to learn together about the holy men and women of our faith and celebrate the Holy Eucharist.

Opportunities to gather our community in fellowship continue to be an important part of who we are as Grace Church. Without a building that belongs exclusively to us, we are very resourceful in finding spaces that are accessible and welcoming for all who come. We gather at our Grace Church Office for times of study, prayer, planning, and conversation. This space has been remarkably flexible and supportive of our needs. George Raymond consistently finds restaurants that bridge the geographic distance between us and allows us relaxed time to get to know each other better. Members of this community generously open their homes for book groups and foyer dinners so we can share a more intimate space. Coffee hour is a favorite for members of all ages. I am grateful for those who share their hospitality so all may experience the love of this community. I will continue to work with you to find more ways that we can be together in large and small groups.

Time and again over this year I have been witness to the generous hearts of this community. From caring for each other in times of illness and loss, to responding to the needs of the world, you have consistently lived out your ministry of loving and serving each other. This year in addition to your generous participation in our Grace Church ministries in Gideon's Garden, the Lee Food Pantry, and the People's Pantry, we supported Hands in Outreach, a program that supports education for girls in Nepal; a summer camp for children in the Berkshires conducted by Multi-Cultural BRIDGE; forums on communicating with our youth in partnership with Multicultural BRIDGE and Railroad Street Youth Project; and are currently gathering an offering that will be sent to the Mampong Babies Home in Ghana. A large group of this community took food and participated in worship at the Cathedral of the Night in Pittsfield, a ministry that offers prayers, fellowship, and a meal to our neighbors without traditional homes in the Berkshires. We generously supported CONSTRUCT'S Walk that provides emergency funds to care for our neighbors in need. Several members walked the course from the Butternut Ski Resort to the Fairgrounds. These are only the large projects. You also have generously supported other needs through your time and your treasure.

This year has been a time of transition as well. Geoff Perkins served with great generosity as our Acting Treasurer following the sudden illness of our beloved Treasurer Louise Robitaille. He organized our books and entered data into our computer system. He also thoughtfully arranged our financial information so that we could better see the stewardship of our financial resources. Ethan Novick then volunteered to step in for Geoff as Acting Treasurer so Geoff could return to his full role as father, teacher and coach. Ethan, working closely with Geoff and Sue Gore, has done a superb job of learning about our finances and how best to

manage and report them. I am very grateful for Geoff, Ethan, and Sue's dedicated work to making sure the gifts we receive are carefully administered.

Our long time secretary, Bonnie Weiland decided to retire after more than 15 years in service to this church. We are very grateful for her work and her willingness to adapt to our changing needs as we moved from two congregations with buildings to one that for a time had no consistent place to call home. Working from her own home for a period of time then moving into our office space when it was available, she produced our worship bulletins, organized our many ministries, kept up to date with birthdays and anniversaries, address changes, and travel plans. In December, I hired Maria Mayorga as our new office assistant. Maria is rapidly learning our computer system and getting to know the members of our community. Though she joined us in one of the busiest seasons, she is well on her way to being a great support for the work of our church. Please drop by the office and introduce yourself.

This year has also been a time of great loss. We said goodbye to people in our church whose lives were the best examples of the good fruit of Christ's presence. Nancy Cobden, Louise Robitaille, and Howard Smith slipped the bounds of earth and entered into the loving arms of their God. We miss them terribly and we hold their families in our prayers as they grieve the loss of those they love and see no longer.

Others moved away for jobs and long awaited retirement. Susan Gray, Vestry Clerk and fellowship planner extraordinaire and her husband, Dan, retired and moved to Cape Cod. Kuukuya Yamekpe, former Spiritual Director at Simon's Rock Bard College, left to take a new job in upper state New York. We miss them and wish them every blessing. We hope they will visit whenever they are in the Berkshires.

I continue to develop relationships with our surrounding community. I serve as a member on two Boards of Directors that provide housing for our brothers and sisters who cannot afford to live in traditional housing. At CONSTRUCT and Bostwick Gardens I am learning how to engage the community in caring for our most vulnerable neighbors. In working with Multi-Cultural BRIDGE and Railroad Street Youth Project, I listen for ways that Grace Church can be a partner in providing a safe and welcoming place for all the people of the Berkshires. I attend monthly meetings of the Southern Berkshire Interfaith Committee to build relationships that will support the care of God's people. Recently I met with a member of Hevreh who is interested in working with us in Gideon's Garden and supporting the youth of this community. The Wisdom Group is looking at immigration and refugee resettlement in the Berkshires. Our meeting with the Reverend Jenny Gregg, an associate at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and the Director of The Berkshire Servant Leadership Center, and our visit to the Berkshire Immigrant Center is helping us listen for how God is calling us be a part of this work.

In August, I was invited to participate in Nuevos Horizontes Conference at the Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas. There I met with people from across our church to learn from and celebrate ministry with Latino/Hispanic communities. I was introduced to liturgies, music, and other resources, but most importantly I met creative and vibrant followers of Jesus Christ who are passionate about welcoming our brothers and sisters to worship. I continue to meet with a group who traveled to Austin as we support each other in developing worship and discipleship opportunities in English and in Spanish.

In prayer and in faithful listening to the dreams and needs of this community, I look forward to planning new learning, new times of fellowship and new ways we can join together in offering our lives and our gifts to God and God's people. I thank you for calling me to this glorious and love filled ministry. I hope that you will continue to share with me the ways you believe God is calling you and this church to be alive and active. We have much good work to do together. Thanks be to God.

by the Rev. Janet Zimmerman, Ph.D., Priest in Charge

REPORT FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

The work of the senior warden was much reduced this year because we now have our full time and very capable priest in charge. In fact I found that it was a great pleasure to meet with Janet on a regular basis to be a witness to her deep commitment to Grace and Jesus' mission, and to share the joys that being members of Grace allows us. I was happy to help organize elements of vestry meetings and work behind the scenes to enable various projects to unfold. What a talented group our Vestry is and how inspiring it is to be a member of the leadership team. Although I usually lead vestry meetings, this was an unusual year for me personally and I am deeply grateful for those who stepped up to cover my responsibilities, especially Rick Gore, Junior Warden.

Although not typically the work of a senior warden, I was excited to be part of the revision of the Gideon's Garden video, which is featured on our website. We updated it to include Janet's perspective and to allow viewers to see the new hoop house at the garden. Additionally we created a welcome video for the visitor page featuring Janet's warm message of invitation.

The composition of our Vestry has been transformed this year. When our dear Louise Robitaille became ill and was unable to perform the duties of Treasurer, as you have read in the previous report written by Janet, financial operations were overseen by a series of people. Along with Geoff, Sue, and Ethan, our Finance Committee took up detailed issues and were able to advise the Vestry on matters to better our financial position. Additionally, when Susan Gray took leave of the Berkshires moving to her beloved summer home of Cape Cod, Paula Doyle stepped forward to serve as our acting clerk to bring us to the end of 2015. This effectively reduced the number of vestry members from nine to seven. What we have found on the Vestry, is that with the advice coming to us from the Finance Committee and from the passionate and hard-working Wisdom Group we are able to operate with a smaller number of members. The essence of what is studied, discussed, and prayed about in these advisory groups funnel into the Vestry and we can then take the necessary actions to support their implementation.

Throughout the year I served as Grace's web master so that our site is regularly refreshed. It is an important portal to the cyber world and one that we know tells the story of our rather unique church. It is an important part of our identity and I welcome any and all comments that come my way in an effort to improve it.

Following the thoughtful idea of a previous senior warden I also organized the system of prayer partners we on the Vestry have. Each year we identify members of the parish and pray for them on a regular basis. Those people receive a card from their vestry partner and may receive other communications throughout the year, but most importantly this creates a kind of web of prayer that connects all of us at Grace.

As I reviewed last year's report, how thankful I am to submit this very short report in comparison. All is well at Grace as we continue to follow our dear Lord in bringing love to those in our community and world.

by Kathy Clausen, Senior Warden

REPORT FROM THE JUNIOR WARDEN

This past year we primarily spent time going through all of the storage items that both churches had before we became Grace. We had items stored in the Sheffield Storage Facility on Route 7, in the B-Safe Storage Facility in East Lee, and above the garage at Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home in Great Barrington.

A group of us met a couple of times at the Sheffield Facility to go through the boxes that came from St James. We went through each box and made a list of what was there. Items that we felt had no use any longer or were of no value, we threw away. Items we kept were listed in a book kept by Doreen Hutchinson and then re-boxed. Some items like the small red chairs were donated to Taft Farms for the kids to use there. Pennie Curry says they use them all of the time.

One large item in the Sheffield Storage Unit was the organ from St. James. John Cheek took the lead on trying to sell the organ. Unfortunately there was not much interest for this organ. Luckily Charles Olegar, organist of Waller Hall in Hoosick Falls, NY bought this for \$5,000. The sale of the organ allowed us to relocate the remaining items from St. George's from the B-Safe Storage to the one in Sheffield leaving us with only one storage facility that we are paying for. This was completed on December 21st.

Our next goal is to go through what is left at Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home and either move the remaining items to Sheffield or donate them to Habitat for Humanity. Once we have all of the items at the Sheffield Facility we will see what we want to keep or donate to another church.

by Rick Gore, Junior Warden

ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Bible study is a central part of our faith development. It is in reading, studying, and reflecting on our holy scriptures that we are able to enter into the stories and traditions that have shaped our view of and guide our relationship with God. Every Tuesday night we gather to read, study and regard the words of scripture and how they impact our lives. We use the lectionary for the upcoming Sunday as our texts. We are beginning a study of the Gospel of Luke and welcome all.

We also offer a time of reading and learning through literature in our monthly Books and Bread group. This is a time of fellowship, but also a time to reflect on how works of literature speak to our longing for meaning and purpose in life. Our journeys of faith are often the background of our conversations around a particular book we have read.

In Lent we gathered after worship on Sundays to explore what it means to be a Christian. Using the *Embracing an Adult Faith* DVD series we listened as Marcus Borg, theologian, scholar, and author, shared his ideas around: *Who is God? Who is Jesus? What is salvation? How do we practice our faith? How do we live in community?* Active conversations helped us think about our beliefs and how they guide our journey toward God.

In Advent Elizabeth Holland and the Reverend Annie Ryder taught us the ancient practice of Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is a way of preparing our body, mind, and spirit to receive the gift of God's always present love. We continue to gather on Thursday evenings to support our learning of this way of opening ourselves to God.

by the Rev. Dr. Janet Zimmerman

BOOKS & BREAD

The grid below captures all the important information for the 2015 year. As shown, we met to discuss books on eight occasions with a meeting on January 14 devoted to planning. Five of the eight meetings involved dinners and started at 6:00 pm. The other three meetings started at 7:00 pm with the food restricted to appetizers and desserts. Whether the meeting was "long form", beginning at 6:00 pm, or "short form", beginning at 7:00 pm, was determined by the host. Discussion at all meetings began at 7:45 pm which allowed enough time for social interaction before the start of discussion.. All meetings ended promptly at 9:00 pm. Attendance is guesstimated to have averaged in the 10-12 range for the eight meetings.

A planning session for 2016 is planned for January 13 at the church offices.

Date	Book Title	Author	Pages	Host and/or Venue	Discussion Leader
February 11	Of Mice and Men	John Steinbeck	112	Garber	George Raymond
March 11	Butcher's Crossing	John Williams	274	Kimball Farms (Raymond)	George Raymond
April 8	Pride and Prejudice	Jane Austen	304	Smith	Sey Zimmerman
May 13	No God but God	Reza Aslan	192	Peet	Carole Holliday
June 10	Confessions of an Economic Hit Man	John Perkins	288	Edelstein	Charlene Peet
September 9	The Husband's Secret	Liane Moriarty	438	Garretson	Dindy Anderson
October 14	All the Light We Cannot See	Anthony Doerr	318	Anderson	Janet Zimmerman
November 11	The Alchemist	Paulo Coelho	197	Cobden	Pam Drumm

by George Raymond

CHURCH SCHOOL

Church School continues to be offered each Sunday. It is always a pleasure to work with the children who attend and they are continually growing in understanding and ask amazing questions. We continue to use the Beulah Land Curriculum, a story-telling felt board curriculum followed by "wondering" questions.

A couple of the children assisted in making a poster for the beginning of the project "Change the Babies" and liked learning about Ghana and the orphanage.

In addition, the children participate in the planting and weeding of Gideon's Garden and it is always a joy when some of the children from Taft Farms/Gideon's Garden join us.

Finally, a thank you to those who are always ready to assist in teaching on Sunday morning: Ian and Mary Booton and Margaret Layton.

by Dindy Anderson

DIOCESAN CONVENTION

The one day convention on November 7th was entitled "Fanning the Flames" and featured a novel approach utilizing many short videos. This allowed us to hear many stories of new ministries and mission without the risk of having things get too long. Grace was represented by John Cheek and Sue Gore delegates, Lee Cheek and Dindy Anderson alternates and Virginia Vogel-Polizzi our seminarian. Janet was away at a CREDO conference. We began with a procession of Parish banners. Lee Cheek carried the Grace umbrella right behind Bishop Douglas Fisher.

Some of the new ministries include Laundry Love in Pittsfield, Worcester, and Milford where coins and detergent are handed out, Messy Church, a non-traditional family service, Diaper ministry, Cathedral of the Night, and many others. We had an address from the always dynamic and inspiring Rev. Laura Everett from the Massachusetts Council of Churches, and a terrific sermon from Bishop Doug. You can see the videos and Bishop Doug's sermon at www.conventionwma.com.

by John Cheek

FINANCE

In late 2014, Grace Church formed a Finance Committee to look at and bring forward to the Vestry recommendations with reference to our finances.

This past year the committee took on the task of consolidating our investment accounts. Once the accounts from St. James' and St. George's Churches were combined there were 25 separate accounts. With careful review, the accounts were categorized by what they were given for i.e., flowers, music, scholarships, ministry, etc. The history of these accounts is also preserved with their intentions. It was a very interesting process to look at each one individually. If it weren't for the generosity of others, most of these accounts would not exist. We did eventually go from 25 investments accounts to 12. Mick Kalber, Executive Director of the Trustees of the Diocese, was also a great help in this process.

The Finance Committee also worked on the 2016 budget which was presented to the Vestry for approval.

A big thanks you to all on the committee for your time and wisdom. Committee Members: Anne Andrews, Kathy Clausen, Tom Doyle, Ed Hutchinson, Ethan Novick, Geoff Perkins, and the Rev. Janet Zimmerman.

by Sue Gore

THE FOOD PANTRIES: LEE and PEOPLE'S PANTRY

Food, donated by parishioners, is collected at Grace Church each Sunday. Although we have an "Item of the Week", which provides focus, any food donations are welcome.

THE LEE FOOD PANTRY

Beginning Balance 1/1/2015		\$15,677.60
Income:		
Donations		\$20,165.43
Expenses:		
Food Purchase	\$19,687.76	
Lee PO Box/Veggie Cooler	194.91	
Total Expenses		\$19,882.67
Ending Balance 12/31/15		\$15,960.42

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS SERVED
2015 1650

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED
2015 4230

The Lee Food Pantry remains to be busy serving Lee and all of its surrounding towns. This coming year I would like to build a Grace Church team to take over the fifth Saturdays of the year. Currently the St. Mary's team does that Saturday but I would like to offer it to Grace Church. Members of Grace have asked me what they can do and this is one area that we could use some help. We have taken on the distribution of diapers for The Berkshire County Diaper Project. This is a community project of Austen Riggs and we are one of the three sites that distribute for them.

I am so thankful for all at Grace and the people in our community who make the pantry a success.

by Susan Gore

INFORMATION ABOUT PEOPLE'S PANTRY reprinted from Grace Church Annual Report, January 19, 2013

People's Pantry, our Great Barrington Food Pantry, was founded in the mid- 90's, and was then housed in the small garage behind St. James' Church. Over the years it has moved several times, but has continued to serve people in need of assistance in procuring food for their families, people who live in the Great Barrington area and surrounding "Hill Towns". The Pantry is now housed in the lower level of the Calvary Christian Church on Route #41 which is located about a mile and a half north of downtown. It is open every Thursday from 10AM to 1PM. The Pantry is staffed by volunteers from local churches, synagogues, and other organizations in the area. Food that is collected for the Pantry comes from religious communities, secular organizations, businesses and many individuals. Food is also purchased as needed with money donated by groups and individuals. Farm produce is provided by local markets and farms and by gardening groups like our Gideon's Garden.

by the Rev. Don Peet

GIDEON'S GARDEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

Those of us working with Gideon's Garden are often told of the great job we are doing but most of us know that it is God who is truly leading this ministry. We have been given so much year after year in order that we may serve our community and those in need of good nutritious food.

We have installed our drip irrigation this year and now have a beautiful new garden shed built by Antonio Francisco. We have also added Construct to our lists for weekly deliveries of fresh produce from our garden. This past year we continued to deliver produce to Community Health Program, The Guthrie Center Community Meals, Great Barrington Peoples Pantry, Lee Food Pantry, Otis and Becket Food Banks and supplied produce for 11 Hispanic families.

Our garden participated in hosting Multi-Cultural Bridge Summer Camp Program for 23 youth during the third week in August and plans to participate again in 2016. Grace Church continues to give an outpouring of love and financial support to Gideon's Garden that allows us to improve the conditions of our garden.

Kyle Gangel, Diego Francisco and Ethan Novick will be our supervisors again in 2016. We are truly blessed by the service given by these three as they hear and see the need of our neighbors and respond to that need.

God has answered our prayers for more help during the summer's busy harvest time by sending Berkshire Country Day School and Hevreh of Southern Berkshire County to partner with us in our garden's outreach to our community. We look forward to adding these new neighbors and seeking ways to increase the harvest year after year.

I am so thankful for God's work in helping shape our youth who serve in this ministry of Gideon's Garden. It is to the glory of God that we hear his call and answer with "Yes Lord, we hear and we see and we are ready to act!" May Gideon's Garden continue to grow with love and respect for one another and all people who God sends to our garden. This is God's garden and God's youth who are loved and fed with respect in fellowship and in prayer.

by Pennie Curry

GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIP

The Scholarship and Grants Committee had no meetings this year.

There also were no applicants for our scholarship.

Our application was updated.

We had one request for a \$1,500.00 grant to support 25 children's' participation at the Multicultural BRIDGE Camp in August 2015. It was granted.

by Doreen Hutchinson

HEALING MINISTRY

Each Sunday during the administration of Holy Communion an opportunity for healing prayer is offered at a station in back of the congregation. One may come for healing for oneself or for another. Prayer is offered in the assurance of Christ's ever-present care and power of newness of life. Members of the healing ministry are Pennie Curry, Don Peet, Charlene Peet, Elizabeth Holland, Kathy Clausen, Sue Gore, Virginia Vogel-Polizzi, and Ted Cobden.

by the Rev. Ted Cobden

HOSPITALITY AND COFFEE HOUR

Thanks to many participants, we have a remarkable coffee hour of varied treats each Sunday. We had many celebrations this year, including a visit from Bishop Doug, several significant birthdays, and a wonderful feast from Taft Farms and Gideon's Garden. Especially wonderful was our celebration of new citizenship, marriage, adoption, and progress on citizenship with the Hispanic community who walk beside us, including an amazing Tres Leches cake made by one of the families. Sadly, one of our celebrations was to say goodbye to Susan Gray who has been adept at hospitality throughout her many years at St. James and Grace. We wished her well but she is missed.

We give thanks to all who have been willing to host coffee hour. We are always looking for new hosts, so if you would like to be part of this special ministry, please let Dindy know.

by Dindy Anderson

MEN'S GROUP

The purpose of the Grace Church Men's Group is to provide fellowship and to enrich the faith of all who participate. Although we do not meet every month, when we do meet, it usually on a Wednesday evening. We meet at a residence from 6-9 for supper and discussion focused on specific topics. All men of the parish and their guests are invited. There are no attendance requirements or attendance expectations. Now and then someone can come to a particular meeting that interests him or he can become a "regular" by attending most all the meetings. At the evening meetings we average about 10 although there are about 20 on our mailing list. We meet at 6:00 pm for soft drinks, wine and cheese followed by supper. Our discussion begins at about 7:45 pm and we adjourn promptly at 9:00 pm.

During 2015, we had four meetings:

Date	Venue	Topic/Program	Presenter
March 25	Zimmerman	Very interesting topics related to the Civil War	Sey Zimmerman
April 29	Kimball Farms	Cosmology	Richard Edelstein
September 2	Doyle	Annual BBQ: Discussion of Energy Issues	Discussion Leader: George Raymond
November 4	Cobden	New Directions in the Church	John Cheek

We feel God at work in our fellowship and care for one another. We are strengthened when we share our life stories and feel the support of the other men. This year we are once again thankful for the fellowship the Men's group provides.

If you would like to monitor the group's activities by being on the mailing list or would like to attend a particular evening meeting, please contact George Raymond (637-7224)

by George Raymond and Ted Cobden

TUESDAY'S CHILD

2015 was our third full year for *Tuesday's Child*, having begun on January 22nd 2013. Every week an email is sent to a mailing list of just under 100. About 60% of those people open the email. Though it would be best if that number were 100%, 60% is a very good percentage for not-for-profit and religious e-news letters. The 'click rate' a measure of how many people click on links or articles is about 25%, again, a very good statistic for not-for-profit and religious e-news letters.

Tuesday's Child includes basic information including worship time, ROTA, lectionary, and food donations for the coming Sunday, upcoming events and other information. Also included is a personality from the Calendar of Saints (Episcopal Church), a weekly depiction with art work of the coming Sunday's readings, and links to various church-related websites. One thing added this year is a hymn of the editor's choice. Links are included with directions to specific event's locations or for more information on particular topics.

The intent of *Tuesday's Child* is to be a simple but interesting and attractive newsletter for Grace members and other interested people. Help is needed for editing and from all members on making *Tuesday's Child* more interesting, useful, and serviceable.

by Elizabeth Holland

THIRD SUNDAY SUPPERS

Each month, parishioners are invited to join together on a Sunday evening at a local restaurant for some fellowship and dining. Since inception in May 2013, we have had 32 suppers at 17 different venues.

What we did in 2015:

Date	Dining Venue	Cuisine	Location
January 18, 2015	Morgan House	American	Lee
February 22	Aegean Breeze	Greek	Great Barrington
March 22	Bombay	Indian	Lee
April 19	Shiro	Japanese	Great Barrington
May 17	Cork N' Hearth	American	Lee
June 21	Mario's	Italian	Great Barrington
July 19	Truc Orient Express	Vietnamese	West Stockbridge
August 23	Stockbridge Country Club	American	Stockbridge
September 20	Morgan House	American	Lee
October 18	Koi	Chinese	Great Barrington
November 15	Alpamayo	Peruvian	Lee
December 20	Barrington Brewery	American	Great Barrington

It will be noted that, because of particular circumstances, the actual date of the event did not always fall on the third Sunday of the month. We try only to go to restaurants that will allow each participant to order off the menu and receive a separate check. We did go to one dining venue (Barrington Brewery) where, in lieu of separate checks, participants paid a fixed price for a special menu that allowed for several choices of entrée. The program has been successful and apparently well received. The current intention is to have a supper during each of the months of 2016. The first supper of 2016 is scheduled to take place at the Bombay Restaurant in Lee on January 17.

by George Raymond

WELCOMING AND USHERING COMMITTEE

Two or three members of the committee come early each Sunday to set up the welcoming table at the door with bulletins, programs, publications and name tags. They sit towards the front of the seating area once the service begins, to welcome latecomers.

Loose plate collection is the next duty. The team then brings up the plates to the altar, with the slip of paper bearing the number of attendees that morning. After the choir goes up for the Eucharist, they let parishioners go up row by row, and receive the Eucharist after everyone else is done. After the service they pack up the contents of the welcoming table to be taken upstairs until the next week.

Serving on this committee is a wonderful way to greet newcomers and old friends right at the start, to make sure everyone is supplied with programs and a name tag, and to get the service off to a warm and friendly start. Members of the team are: Debbie Holmes, Viola Bagnaschi, Sally Brooke, Anne Andrews, Sue and Rick Gore, Doreen and Ed Hutchinson, George Raymond, Sarah Sieber and Marcia Doelman.

by Sally Brooke

WISDOM / OUTREACH

The committee has met 5 times this year, including 1 conference call and 4 face to face.

We will review the 2015 discerned recommendations and the level of accomplishment:

1. Identify members of the congregation to be trained as mentors for Railroad Street Youth (RSYP).

Early this year, Ananda Timpane, the Executive Director, felt they had more mentors than youth. In response to our Congregational Development Grant, we would fund training of adults and youth on diversity, resilience, and intergenerational communication. The plan was to train 3 congregants and we trained 7 congregants.

2. Support two projects with youth:

a) engagement of youth on Youth Operational Board, plan Martin Luther King Day Celebration in community and at Simons' Rock.

b) Support project with Monument Valley Middle School which includes adults and youth. There was training done at both Simons' Rock and Monument Valley Regional Middle School. There also was a Diversity Day at Simons' Rock.

3. Provide space in our office for a once a month Mothers' Group.

They found space at Monument for meetings during the school year, allowing children to use the gym.

We planned 2 summer meetings to occur at the office. One occurred at Tafts' Farm and we supplied babysitters. One meeting in August occurred at the office and Tafts kept the children at Tafts and covered babysitting.

4. Offer recipes and how to use Gideons' produce to all distribution points.

Recipes were provided for summer and winter squashes and how to make salads to Peoples' Pantry. Recipes provided to WIC/CHP on how to use winter squashes especially in soup.

5. Adopt five shut-ins: distribute food, visit regularly, recommend Christ Church and St. Paul's each adopt five also.

This idea was brought to other churches. We reached out to Elder Services on how best to identify which elders to visit and what training needed to be done. It was decided to wait until we have a person "step up" who is passionate about doing this.

6. Provide a drip irrigation system for Gideons' Garden.

Accomplished through an anonymous donation.

7. Provide a drip irrigation system for the greenhouse.

We supported this with a disbursement from our budget.

8. Purchase a worm farm for turtle food and soil replenishment. Accomplished.

9. Education to schools to be given by adult and youth supervisors. Counselors at schools contacted and unable to work into schedule. Suggestion was to get students to the farm. BCC did send a learning adult class to the farm to learn how the entire operation works.

Other accomplishments:

1. Wrote and received a Congregational Development Grant for \$2500 to train youth and adults on diversity,

resilience and intergenerational communication. Held a symposium with good success. Had follow-up groups of parents, youth and principal.

2. Learned about Syrian immigrant issues from John Cheek.
3. Learned about food insecurity and Berkshire Interfaith Organizational work from Jeff Lowenstein.
4. Invited the Rev. Jenny Greg from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Pittsfield to share the work they have done with immigrants so we could learn.
5. Took a health and social resources directory from Berkshire County and with our congregants validated for accuracy. It has now been updated to be used by the our priest in charge.
6. Collected gift cards for needy teens for Christmas. Counselors at Mt. Everett, Lee High, and Monument Mountain High distributed to at least 30 teens.
7. Supporting Change the Babies at Mampong Baby Home in Ghana.
8. Had the 2016 Budget approved.

Proposed Grant Match	\$1500
Totes for Gideons'	400
Discretionary (includes UTO)	<u>1500</u>
	\$3400

2016 goals:

Apply for a Congregational Development Grant to fund the Multicultural Bridge Summer Camp

Explore the feasibility of a drop in Center for Latinos.

Convene a "Listening Meeting" with immigrants to assess their needs that they identify.

Learn about the resources available from the Berkshire Immigrant Center.

Continue to support Gideons' Garden.

by Doreen Hutchinson

WORSHIP

On Sundays at 10:00 am we gather at Crissey Farm for a service of Holy Eucharist Rite II with Healing to worship God and to offer ourselves again and again in service to God's people in the name of Jesus Christ. On Thursdays at noon we offer a service of Holy Eucharist Rite I in our Grace Church Chapel. But before worship takes place much work has occurred. Thanks to the prayerful efforts of the Worship Committee: Music (Chris Clark, Lee Cheek, John Cheek) Altar Guild (Debbie Holmes), Acolytes (Ed Hutchinson) and the Rev. Dr. Janet Zimmerman each new liturgical season is planned with liturgy, prayers, music, and setting to renew our hearts and turn us toward God.

One of the great gifts of Grace Church is our ministry of music. Our choir, so capably led by Chris Clark and beautifully accompanied by Sara Keene offers hymns, anthems, chanting, and bells that not only support our community in singing, but also inspire our worship. The music is selected to help us better hear the day's readings from scripture. Week after week our exceptional choir gathers at 9:00 am to prepare their music. In addition to singing each Sunday morning, members of our choir also sang at The Easter Vigil and the Feast of the Epiphany. Lee Cheek graciously offered her keyboard gifts on Ash Wednesday and The Longest Night Service.

Every Sunday faithful members of the Altar Guild gather early to beautifully prepare for worship. No matter where the table is set, their love is evident: Crissey Farm, Gideon's Garden tent, Taft Farms greenhouse, or the Grace Church Chapel. Members include Viola Bagnaschi, Sue Happ, Debbie Holmes, Elizabeth Holland, Ed Hutchinson, Sarah Sieber, and Lynn Walker. New members are always welcome. Recently Cathy Haywood, Margaret Layton and Linda Smith joined the Altar Guild. It is a great gift to give and a wonderful team of which to be a part. We thank Rose Blakely for her talents in making the Lenten covering for the cross.

Acolytes are instrumental as service leaders. They offer final preparations before worship begins, lead us in procession, and assist at the altar during the Holy Eucharist. This year they also carried our umbrella in the Gospel procession and flew kites overhead at Easter and Pentecost. We are grateful for the service of Kathy Clausen, Cathy Haywood, Ethan Novick, Gabriel Perkins, Olivia Perkins, and Ed Hutchinson, Acolyte Warden.

We offered two services this year on Ash Wednesday in our Grace Church Chapel. We also gathered there for Good Friday. Our chapel is a lovely contemplative space for smaller groups to worship.

We were fortunate to have a beautiful day in June to bless the planting of Gideon's Garden and again in July when we gathered in the garden under the tent giving thanks for God's bounty. We blessed backpacks at the start of school. On St. Francis' Day we blessed happy dogs and all the animals sheltered at Taft Farms.

In October, several of our good friends from Taft Farms joined us for a joyous celebration to bless a marriage, adoption of a child, and the great news of promising steps toward citizenship. The service was conducted in English and in Spanish. Diego Francisco read from scripture in Spanish and Micol Arias, Miguel and Maria's son, lead the Prayers of the People in English and Spanish. Our choir prepared a wonderful selection of music in both languages. Blessings were offered in front of the community.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Douglas John Fisher, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, visited Grace Church on November 22, 2015, Christ the King Sunday. The Bishop invited members of the congregation to come forward for blessings following the renewal of our baptismal covenant. It was a joyous occasion with much of our community in attendance.

In December, we offered a time of worship close to the longest night of the year. This Longest Night Service invited participants to hang ornaments in memory of a loved one on a tree near the altar. Poems were read, prayers were offered, and candles were lit in recognition of the grief, the loneliness, and the personal losses that can make celebrating a joyous Christmas difficult. It was a beautiful liturgy. Virginia Vogel-Polizzi played a major role in planning and preparing this service.

Our service on Christmas Eve at Taft Farms continues to grow. Hanging a banner at the entrance to Taft Farms and placing notices in community papers inviting all to our bilingual worship, drew a large crowd to our humble, but lovely setting. Carmen Perkins led our Prayers in English and Spanish and Antonio

Francisco read a portion of the Gospel. Chris Clark and guest musician, Courtney English, provided joyful music for our service, including a saxophone and guitar postlude.

We are also grateful for the opportunity to worship with our sister churches, Christ Trinity Church in Sheffield and St. Paul's Church in Stockbridge. This past year we celebrated Maundy Thursday with Christ Trinity and The Easter Vigil and The Feast of the Epiphany with St. Paul's.

Preachers who offered their voices to our worship this year in addition to Bishop Doug Fisher included the Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas; Mrs. Lee Cheek, licensed lay preacher; Ricky Bernstein, Hands in Outreach; Annalise Clausen, Astarte Farm; the Rev. Tad Evans, the Rev. Jane Tilman, the Rev. Libby Wade, and Virginia Vogel-Polizzi, seminarian intern.

Because we worship in a space we do not occupy during the week, we use worship bulletins that contain every aspect of our liturgy. We are very grateful for all who proofread these bulletin each week. We now have a new copier that collates and staples our bulletins. But until this new technology arrived, Valerie Smith stapled the bulletin and John Cheek picked it up and brought it to church every Sunday morning. For their work of love, we give thanks.

by the Rev. Dr. Janet Zimmerman

YEAR ROUND STEWARDSHIP

The committee met seven times during 2015. Several of the meetings were in joint conference with Stewardship representatives from St. Paul's, Stockbridge and Trinity Christ Church, Sheffield. This provided an opportunity to share challenges and solutions. These sessions were ably-led by Bruce Rockwell, Assistant to the Bishop for Stewardship.

Again, the resources of The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) were made available to the committee for developing the Stewardship Program leading up to Ingathering Sunday. Several members of Grace Church spoke of their personal passage to giving and gratitude during worship service on each of the Sundays during Stewardship Season.

Gratitude Moments continue to be a favorite throughout the year during regular Sunday worship. We would be remiss not to remember a past member of the committee who helped initiate not only the gratitude concept but the vibrancy this committee continues with today. We fondly miss Nancy Cobden.

by Viola Bagnaschi, John Cheek, Tom Doyle, Patricia Edelstein, Janet Zimmerman

LITURGICAL RITES CELEBRATED IN 2014

Sunday/Saturday Night Holy Eucharist	53
Mid-week Eucharist	47
Private Communion	23
Baptisms	2
Thanksgiving for the Adoption of a Child	1
Burials	9
Blessing of a Civil Marriage	1
Anniversary of a Marriage	1
Garden Blessings	1
Animal Blessings	1

This is the slate for Officers, Vestry, and Diocesan Convention Delegates for 2016.

OFFICERS

Senior Warden	Kathy Clausen	(1 year)
Junior Warden	Richard Gore, Jr.	(1 year)
Clerk	Paula Doyle	(1 year)
Treasurer	Ethan Novick	(1 year)

VESTRY

Class of 2017	Ian Booton	(1 years)
	Sarah Sieber	(1 years)
Class of 2018	Sue Gore	(2 years)
Class of 2019	John Cheek	(3 years)

DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

Vestry Delegate	Rick Gore
Lay Delegate	Lee Cheek
Vestry Alternate	John Cheek
Lay Alternate	Dindy Anderson

TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCE

by Ethan Novick (acting Treasurer)

BALANCE SHEET			
Assets		12/31/14	12/31/15
Banking	\$	244,306	\$ 61,570
Trustee Account (3rd qtr figures)	\$	1,777,137	\$ 1,936,830
Total Assets	\$	2,021,443	\$ 1,998,400
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable/Vendors	\$	-	\$ -
Fund Balances			
Operational Funds	\$	291,578	\$ 667,222
Building Funds	\$	1,194,163	\$ 1,105,579
Mission Funds	\$	14,099	\$ 114,992
Memorial Funds	\$	516,437	\$ 101,203
Columbarium Fund	\$	783	\$ 757
Rector's Sabatical	\$	2,000	\$ 1,935
Gideon's Garden	\$	2,357	\$ 5,280
Gideon's Garden Vehicle Fund	\$	-	\$ 1,000
People's Pantry	\$	13	\$ 99
Lee Pantry	\$	13	\$ 99
Change the Babies Fund	\$	-	\$ 234
Total Funds	\$	2,021,443	\$ 1,998,400
Total Liabilities and Funds	\$	2,021,443	\$ 1,998,400

		2015 Budgeted	2015 Actual	2016 Budgeted
Income				
	Weekly Collection			
	Pledge	\$ 142,150	\$ 142,281	\$ 146,439
	Loose Plate	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,188	\$ 1,500
	Special Offering	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,812	\$ 1,200
	Investment Income			
	Trustees	\$ 60,000	\$ 58,520	\$ 69,000
	Crane Trust	\$ 3,560	\$ 3,440	\$ 3,560
	Other	\$ 25	\$ 14	\$ -
	Other Income			
	Flowers	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,941	\$ 1,200
	Wisdom Fund Carry Over	\$ 6,426	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income		\$ 215,861	\$ 211,196	\$ 222,899
Expenses				
	Worship			
	Flowers	\$ 1,350	\$ 633	\$ 1,350
	Liturgical Equipment	\$ 600	\$ 594	\$ 600
	Special Services Expense	\$ 1,700	\$ 1,234	\$ 2,700
	Music Supplies	\$ 200	\$ 203	\$ 200
	Piano maintenance	\$ 250	\$ -	\$ 250
	Supply Musicians	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
	Supply Clergy	\$ 1,400	\$ 950	\$ 1,400
	Benevolence - Mission - Outreach			
	People's Pantry	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
	Lee Food Pantry	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
	Gideon's Garden	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,025
	Multicultural Bridge Initiative (* also Youth Initiatives)	\$ 3,200	\$ 2,500	\$ -
	Crane scholarships/grants	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,600
	Assessment for Common Ministry	\$ 19,300	\$ 19,300	\$ 19,850
	Wisdom Group	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,400
	Clergy's Discretionary Fund	\$ 800	\$ -	\$ 800
	Christian Nurture			
	Adult Education	\$ 300	\$ 649	\$ 300
	Church School	\$ 150	\$ -	\$ 150
	Vestry Formation	\$ 350	\$ 188	\$ 350
	Coffee Hour	\$ 650	\$ 98	\$ 650
	Special Receptions	\$ 1,200	\$ 796	\$ 1,000
	Greeters Table	\$ 200	\$ 235	\$ 250
	Office and Administration			
	General Supplies	\$ 400	\$ 998	\$ 1,000
	Postage and Box Rental	\$ 275	\$ 190	\$ 200
	Printing and Duplicating	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,587	\$ 1,200
	Advertising	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,455	\$ 1,500
	Web/Constant Contact Expenses	\$ 420	\$ 470	\$ 600
	Accounting Software	\$ 1,620	\$ 1,440	\$ 1,400
	Audit Expenses	\$ 425	\$ 425	\$ 425
	Office Cleaning	\$ 840	\$ 1,045	\$ 840
	Rent, Utilities and Maintenance			
	Office Rental	\$ 17,200	\$ 18,688	\$ 18,000
	Crissy Farm Rental & Set-up	\$ 18,300	\$ 18,950	\$ 18,720

		2015 Budgeted	2015 Actual	2016 Budgeted
	Storage Rental	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,970	\$ 2,100
	Electric	\$ 895	\$ 1,117	\$ 1,000
	Gas	\$ 1,750	\$ 1,672	\$ 1,750
	Phone	\$ 2,220	\$ 2,260	\$ 2,220
	Insurance	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,267	\$ 1,542
	Personel Expenses			
	Salary and Benefits	\$ 127,753	\$ 125,242	\$ 130,015
Total Expenses		\$ 215,768	\$ 212,656	\$ 222,887
Net		\$ 93	\$ (1,460)	\$ 12
Unbudgeted Income and Distribution from Trustees				
	Gifts in Memory		\$ 2,344	
	Congregational Development Grant		\$ 2,500	
	Grace T-shirt Sales		\$ 270	
	Organ Sale		\$ 100	
	Trustees Distribution		\$ 9,683	
	250th Anniversary Fund Income - Book		\$ 666	
Total Unbudgeted Income			\$ 15,563	
Unbudgeted Expense				
	Handicap Ramp		\$ 110	
	Drinking water		\$ 179	
	Donation to Construct		\$ 333	
	Donation to Nepal Relief		\$ 910	
	Change the Babies		\$ 1,500	
	Capital Expenditure		\$ 8,183	
	250th Anniversary Expense		\$ 2,143	
	Congregational Development Grant Expense		\$ 2,500	
Total Unbudgeted Expense			\$ 15,858	
Net Unbudgeted			\$ (295)	
Pass Through Income				
	Gideon's Garden		\$ 1,368	
	Gideon's Garden Vehicle Fund		\$ 1,000	
	Lee Food Pantry		\$ 612	
	People's Pantry		\$ 612	
	Rectors Discretionary Fund		\$ 300	
	Nepal Earthquake relief Fund		\$ 910	
	Louise Robitaille Fund		\$ 815	
	Change the Babies Pass Through Income		\$ 234	
	Teen Christmas Pass Through Income		\$ 385	
Total Pass Through Income			\$ 6,236	
Pass Through Expense				
	Louise Robitaille Fund		\$ 815	
	Nepal relief expense		\$ 910	
	Peoples' pantry pass through expense		\$ 513	
	Lee pantry pass through expense		\$ 513	
	Teen Christmas Pass Through Fund Expense		\$ 385	
	Gideon pass through expense		\$ 1,220	
Total Pass Through Expense			\$ 4,356	

GRACE CHURCH

an Episcopal Community in the Southern Berkshires

The Rev. Dr. Janet W. Zimmerman, Priest in Charge

Sunday worship at: Crissey Farm, 426 Stockbridge Rd., Great Barrington, MA 01230

office: 67 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA 01230

phone: 413.644.0022

mail and deliveries: P.O. Box 114, Great Barrington, MA 01230

web: graceberkshires.org

fb: facebook.com/GraceChurchEpiscopalCommunitySouthernBerkshires

founded January 1, 2013



Join us for the Fifth Annual Meeting of Grace Church on January 22, 2017
Crissey Farm, 426 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, Massachusetts