



NORTH CENTRAL REGION MONTHLY MISSIVE

April 2023



Region Missionary Musings

Dear siblings in Christ,
Two little personal stories to share with you this month: at a Tuesday morning Lay Preaching Prep hour I was reminded that the God that created all things has invited all of us to be co-creators. We were reading the story of Ezekiel and the dry bones ([Ezekiel 37:1-14](#)) and God asks Ezekiel a question

- perhaps one that might have even been considered rhetorical (as in, God doesn't expect an answer) - can these dry bones live again? And Ezekiel, pragmatic as usual, says - gee, I don't know God, but you would know! God could have just *poofed* and made the dry bones alive again, but instead (and this is the important part) God invites Ezekiel into the act of re-creation. It's that invitation that I am finding so remarkable because it implies that God thinks that each and every one of us is fully capable to co-create with the being that created all things. The key word is with - God and I will work together to create something. God and all of us will work together to create something new, something that hasn't ever been made before because each one of us brings a unique perspective and unique gifts to the act of creation.

This month I also tried on a new thing called a "God Box" and it holds all the stuff I want to bring to Jesus *and leave* with Jesus. Have you ever been told to leave your troubles at the foot of the cross? I long to do that, but find that as soon as it's time for me to "leave the foot of the cross" I just pick up my baggage and continue on my way. I'm not very good at trusting that Jesus can handle my stuff. The "God Box" is literally a box in which I write down on a sticky note the stuff I'm worried about, or mad about, or confused about, or whatever, and pop it inside. I've got an old cigar box and a pad of pink sticky notes on my home altar, and that's where it sits. When I need to, I grab a sticky and jot down my thought then put it in the box. Where it stays. I leave it. It's a physical reminder that God has this and I don't have to carry it around with me. In some ways it's like the Psalms; I bring all of myself to the God box and practice trusting that I do not have to carry my burdens or my joys alone. It's been pretty transformational.

Maggie

Photo taken by Rev. Rachel Thomas, SE&SC Region Missionary, at the 2022 NC & NE Region Convocation



The Good News of what is happening at Grace Hartford

When I think of Grace Episcopal Church on New Park Ave. in Hartford, I cannot help but think of my journey to Christianity—something I was not born into. And when I think about that journey, I cannot help but think of Saint Luke and the Road to Emmaus (24:13-35).

You remember the story: two disciples who were leaving Jerusalem, heading home to the village of Emmaus. They had adored Jesus, had hung on His every word, and so were devastated when He was killed, particularly in such a horrific manner. Then, they waited. They expected Jesus to come back, but after three days they simply could not endure one more moment of the grief and anguish. So, they left.

Scholars have debated furiously over Emmaus' exact location, but no one's ever found any irrefutable evidence of not only the village's location but its very existence. And that is where, in my opinion, the scholars went wrong: the story of Emmaus was never about geography—it was about shelter from the storm.

After having watched the world go mad, the two disciples needed to be some place where they could be reassured that unconditional love and sanity still existed, somewhere they could count on to be a refuge from the atrocities of men. So where do you go? When everything else in the world becomes unendurable, where do you go? Home, of course. Back to family and friends, back to the one place you know you will always find acceptance and comfort, consolation and recuperation. All the things Jesus represented to them. Shelter from the storm.

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That is what Grace is: my Emmaus. And not just mine! Grace Church, quite literally, has something for everyone. Certainly, Anglo-Catholicism is a big part of our identity, but we are so much more than that!

We are a diverse, inclusive community that invites and welcomes everyone *as they are*, irrespective of age, race, nationality, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or religious background. We live in Hartford as well as cities and towns throughout the state.

Want a High Mass complete with organ and choir music, incense, and Sanctus bells? We have got that. Want a Low Mass that is just as fulfilling, only shorter? We have got that, too.



We also have informal weekday services you can join in-person or virtually on Facebook. And we have Breakfast Club: every Wednesday morning after Low Mass, we all go to Effie's Restaurant on Park Road for breakfast and camaraderie.

We have a large parish hall where we gather for events like adult education, Annual Meetings, and coffee hour. It is where we celebrate baptisms, birthdays, graduations—all the milestones in our parishioners' lives. And it is where we conduct *A Place of Grace*, our food pantry: a weekly outreach program we have run for decades, currently providing groceries for approx. 250 Hartford-area families per week.



Grace is a place where people can come when they are hungry—for food, for love, for acceptance, for worship, for serenity, for friendship. We invite everyone who is reading this to come check us out. Take a break from the day-to-day pressures of the world and celebrate Jesus Christ with us in a safe haven with loving people.

article and photos by Pamela S. K. Glasner and Mark & Jane Lacedonia, Grace Episcopal Church

Upcoming Events and Resources

Registration for Spring Training & Gathering 2023 (ST&G23) is now open! Join us as an individual or as a group from your parish.

More information, course schedules, and registration can be found [HERE](#)



SPRING TRAINING & GATHERING 2023
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!
Together We Learn.
Together We're Sent.
April 17 - April 27 via Zoom
April 29 in-person



Community Dinner @ Camp Washington - 1 April, 5p

Join Rev. Tuesday Rupp for worship and then a wonderful meal afterwards. [Register HERE](#)



"The Lone Violin" a recital of music by J.S. Bach - performed by Brunilda Myftaraj

Saturday, 15 April, 6:30p

Church of the Good Shepherd, Hartford - call 860-525-4289 x10 for more information