

A Message from the Rector

Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.
Romans 12:2.

St. Paul encourages us to constantly seek transformation, “to grow into the full stature of Christ,” as our Baptismal Rite describes. The rich space and opportunities for adult spiritual formation at Grace are ways we can seek this transformation and spiritual growth. As we become more proficient in our faith, we grow closer to one another and to God. As you explore this catalogue, I invite you to wonder about all the ways God is inviting you to explore your faith!

Blessings,
Fr. Stuart

Grace's Mission

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

Grace Church pursues this mission by accepting and welcoming all people as the children of God as we pray and worship, provide education and care for our parish family and reach out into the community in which we live. As a community of faith we remain open to the ongoing revelation of God in our time.

Mission for Adult Formation

To provide parishioners with opportunities to discern the Spirit of Christ through continued learning about our faith and practice of prayer.

We pursue this by:

- Exploring our faith and personal relationship with God in Christ;
- Exploring our tradition and its expression as Grace Episcopal Church
- Learning to embody our own gifts and strengths to joyfully care for our parish family and reach out into the community in which we live.

We seek to explore each of these elements of our faith through the lenses of Scripture, Tradition and Reason.

Course offerings indicate the primary “lens” or perspective of each course with the following notation: (S/T/R) where

- S is scripture
- T is tradition
- R is reason and experience

Current Classes:

FALL 2015

Judaism, Christianity and Human Wholeness

This course will explore the concepts of wholeness and salvation from the Jewish and Christian perspectives. It will include a lecture by Rabbi Mark Biller of the Congregation Beth Ahm of Verona. The course will lead into a weekend interfaith symposium on mindful faith and practice October 23-24 which will include sessions with Rabbi Biller and other nationally recognized church leaders. (S/T/R)

Seekers

Following the Mindful Church Symposium and the Seekers will meet to discuss a topic collaboratively decided upon by the group. Typically the group has chosen topics that encourage open discussion, using a DVD based content. All are welcome.

Living the Life of Faith

This new member class is an excellent opportunity for those new to Grace, and to the Episcopal church, to learn about the various ministries and spiritual life of our parish. This class will look at your life at Grace as a way of seeing, hearing, teaching and following. You will have the opportunity to discover your spiritual gifts and where they best fit at Grace. (T/R)

ADVENT 2015

Dreams in the Bible

In this four-week class we will explore the meaning of dreams in our own lives. Suggested reading: *Dreams: God's Forgotten Language* by Episcopal priest and Jungian analyst John A. Sanford (available on Amazon). Facilitator: Susan Olson, Grace Church member and Jungian analyst. (S/R)

Potential offerings:

The following classes have either been offered in the past or are future possibilities being explored.

Mystical Theology: The Doorway of Anglicanism

Come join Fr. Stuart for a guided reflection on the spiritual life within Anglicanism. Building on his doctorate work, we will explore aspects of history, theology, spiritual formation, and practices of prayer within the rich mystical tradition of Christianity. Participants are encouraged to purchase a copy of *Living Your Strengths*, by Albert Winesman et al. As well, all are encouraged to bring their own copy of the Book of Common Prayer, a Bible, and a journal or binder for taking and keeping notes. We will delve more deeply into what Christian practice might look like in its myriad forms, as well as how we understand the presence of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives and work. (S/T/R)

Foundations of Faith

Otherwise known as “Episcopal 101”. What does it mean to be a “member” of Grace Episcopal Church? What does membership “look like” for us as a community? What is required? Baptism? Confirmation? What does the Book of Common Prayer say about membership? The Canons of the Episcopal Church? These are important questions for us as a community, and many of us have different answers to these questions! You are invited to come share in this very important forum as we seek to explore our assumptions and expectations as a community. (S/T)

Poetry, Praise and Prayer

In this class we will Spirit and an offering to God and one another. Poetry is the language of attention and silence, carried on the rhythms of breath and blood in the fragile arks of our bodies. (R)

Staying Sane During Sacred Seasons

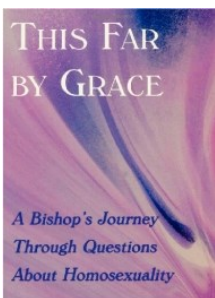
“Staying Sane During Sacred Seasons” is a program that Dr. Park developed out of her years as a family therapist and is directed toward anyone who finds that the holidays seem to create unhealthy pressure and stress to the point that they are not enjoyable. Each week focuses on issues around holiday eating, spending, drinking, and family and what the Bible and our faith tradition along with psychology can contribute to the conversation. (R)

Instructed Eucharist

A step by step journey through the Eucharist with a running commentary which highlights what we are doing and why. A wonderful opportunity to learn and reflect on the meaning behind the liturgy we share. (T)

Esther: It’s Tough Being A Woman

A facilitated Bible Study using the Beth Moore study *Esther: It’s Tough Being a Woman*, and providing an opportunity for the women of Grace to establish relationships with the young women from Brenau Women’s College. (S)



This Far by Grace

Suzanne Greene, a licensed clinical social worker, invites you to join in a three week discussion of gender and how the Bible addresses gender, using the book written by Neil Alexander: *This Far By Grace: A Bishop’s Journey Through Questions About Homosexuality*. (S/T/R)

Study the Parables in a whole new way

A guided exploration of Dr. Amy-Jill Levine’s book *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi*. Dr. Levine, herself a Jew, is professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt, and she offers a very interesting reflection on the richness of the parables, and invites us to explore for ourselves. (S/R)

Learning to Walk in the Dark

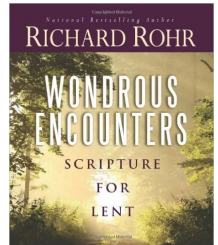
Come explore the notions of physical and spiritual darkness and our relationships with each using Barbara Brown Taylor's, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. (S/R)

Advent Reflection

A four week discussion of what it means for us, today, that Jesus came to live among using Melissa Tidwell's book, *Embodied Light: Advent Reflections on the Incarnation*. (S/R)

Lenten Reflection

A six week discussion of Richard Rohr's, *Wondrous Encounters* through which we are invited to learn more about God by letting ourselves be fully known. (S/R)



The Bible

Join us each week for a viewing of the mini-series, *The Bible* by Mark Burnett followed by a guided discussion. No prep is required. Join us for friendship and fun as we delve deeper into our faith! (S)

The Lost Gospels

Join us in this three week session featuring the video documentary *The Lost Gospels* by Peter Owen Jones. Learn more about those books that *didn't* make it into our cannon and what they have to teach us about Jesus and the early church. (S)

Praying in Color

Do you remember in your childhood how peaceful and relaxing it was to sit down with a box of crayons? It was a quiet activity that was most likely introduced to you by either your parents or teachers. Has it been a while since you have had the opportunity to create designs using shapes & colors? Have you ever thought about doodling as prayer? Please plan to join us to explore "creative" techniques for centering our prayers. Learn how to "park" your distractions and focus on your conversations with God. (R)

Christian Church History

Come explore the basics of our Anglican church history and the foundation of our tradition and practice, as well as the history of the Church at large. (T)

Contemporary Theology/Cultural Issues

Explore modern theologians and theological issues which come up in daily living and in the national headlines. (R)

The Pastoral Epistles

A study of the letters to the early church, and what they have to say to us today. (S)

Peter Rollins

Mark your calendars now for the 2016 EMW Religion for the 21st Century lecture featuring Peter Rollins. From Peter's biography: Peter Rollins is a provocative writer, philosopher, storyteller and public speaker who has gained an international reputation for overturning traditional notions of religion and forming "churches" that preach the Good News that we can't be satisfied, that life is difficult, and that we don't know the secret.

Challenging the idea that faith concerns questions relating to belief Peter's incendiary and irreligious reading of Christianity attacks the distinction between sacred and secular, blurs the lines between theism and atheism and sets aside questions regarding life after death to explore the possibility of a life before death.

Peter gained his higher education from Queens University, Belfast and has earned degrees (with distinction) in Scholastic Philosophy (BA Hons), Political Theory (MA) and Post-Structural thought (PhD). He is the author of numerous books, including *Insurrection*, *The Idolatry of God*, and *The Divine Magician*. He was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, currently lives in Los Angeles and will die somewhere as yet not known. (R)

The Artist's Way

Come join us as we explore Julia Cameron's, *The Artist's Way; A spiritual path to higher creativity*. Over the course of twelve weeks we will discover and rediscover our creative selves. We will uncover our hidden dreams, excavate our "shadow selves", recover those ideas we thought we had abandoned long ago. We will learn how to journal daily, map a course for our creative journey, have check-ins each week, make "creative U-turns" and explore possibilities beyond our imaginings. Come and play, exercise your mind, color outside the lines, give in to your curiosity and see yourself with new unexplored eyes. You'll need a copy of the book, a journal, and a willingness to play.

"What is all this stuff?"

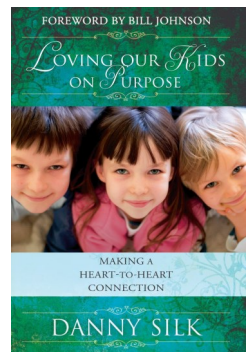
This course explores the Book of Common Prayer and looks in detail at our liturgy and all the rich accompaniments that come with it. If you have ever wanted to know why and how we do what we do in the liturgy, this is the class for you! Fr. Stuart and Dr. Park will lead us on a delightful romp through the pages of the Prayer Book! (S/T)

Cultural Literacy for Religion: Everything the Well-Educated Person Should Know

This Great Course offering focuses on developing a better understanding of Christianity as one of the world's great faiths and examining the overlap and the disparity between our faith and the other important religious traditions of modern human culture. (T/R)

Loving our Kids on Purpose by Danny Silk

Using this book and the related video series, this facilitated support group explores together the joys and trials of parenting. The book offers practical advice about how parents can train children to manage their freedoms and protect their important heart-to-heart relationships, as opposed to more traditional parenting practices which train children to learn to accept being controlled by well-meaning parents and adults. (S/R)



***Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?* by Roz Chast**

This facilitated support group follows the cartoon book *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?* written by New Yorker cartoonist Roz Chast. The book offers both comfort and comic relief for members of the “sandwich generation” who are caring for aging parents and their own children and families at the same time. (R)

Liturgy and the Moral Imagination

We tell folks all the time that, if you want to understand what Episcopalians believe, come pray with us. We have a saying: *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, the way we pray shapes the way we believe. It is equally true that, if you want to see how Episcopalians are called to practice our faith in the world, come worship with us and see how our liturgy shapes our ethical embodiment. Our liturgy, then, shapes our moral imagination. It becomes the primary lens for understanding our lives. Eucharist, Baptism, Common Prayer, the way we understand the *sacramental permeability* in our world—this is what shapes our identity. Participants are encouraged to purchase a copy of Don Salier's book *Worship as Theology*, which we will use as our guide in the conversations.

Sacred Hymnody

Join us to explore the richness and breadth of our Anglican hymnody, and learn more about the relationship of music and worship. (T/R)



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