

The Gracevine

September 2019

 **GRACE**
EPISCOPAL CHURCH & SCHOOL

4040 W. Bellfort
Houston, TX 77025
832-667-8601
graceinhouston.org

“A New Chancel to Improve Accessibility”

The Rev. Scott Painter

This is Grace!

At our Annual Meeting in January, I observed with you all an emerging dynamic in our worship, related directly to the shape and configuration of our historic chancel. (We know that a “chancel” is the raised area in a church where the clergy and others who assist in leading worship perform their ministries.)



The architecture of our church is representative of the era in which it was constructed as St. George Episcopal Church in 1959. At that time, Episcopalians worshiped according to the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. With the '28 BCP, Holy Communion was not at the center of weekly worship but was only called for on occasion (usually monthly). The altar was placed on a high chancel, four steps higher than the rest of the church — not a problem for a congregation that was then much younger.

With the advent of a new Book of Common Prayer in 1979

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 8th Charmian Kendrick
- 9th Chuck Luke
- 12th Charlie Spruell
- 16th Danilo Novoa
- 18th Nancy Hannan
- 22nd Valerie Carter

Please tell us if we forgot yours!

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 3rd Patricia Powell
- 13th Sara and Brent Bushell

FLOWER DEDICATION

- 1 Thanks to God for our new Chancel
- 8 TBD
- 15 Cecelia Johnson (Noah Lazaro's Birthday)
- 22 The Kimbrough's (In loving memory of Anne Ladner)
- 29 Eddie Nnodi (Astride's Birthday)

COFFEE HOSTS

- 1 Daughters of the King
- 8 The Kimbrough's
- 15 Ministry Fair
- 22 Helen Rose Ebaugh
- 29 TBD

(adopted as a response to new discoveries about the importance of Eucharist and Baptism in the 1st century church), the sacred meal of Eucharist was brought to the center of weekly congregational life.

Because of the four steps to chancel, many of our current congregants had been unable to make the trip to the high altar for several years. The solution to this problem—in place when I arrived at Grace—was to distribute the Bread and Wine in two places: at the altar rail, for those able to access it; and in a station at the foot of the chancel steps, for those unable to navigate the steps or distance to the altar.



This dynamic was troubling, because it effectively divided the community at the very liturgical moment in which we are supposed to experience the most profound unity and mutual affection in worship. We were being divided into two classes of worshipers – those with the physical strength and ability to go to the altar, and those without.

A new short-term answer to the dilemma was to invite all the gathered people to one place for sharing Eucharist. We began a new established practice of distributing the bread and wine to everyone in stations at the foot of the chancel.

But now, we have a new reality. Beginning on Sunday, September 1, 2019, worshipers can gather at a new accessible altar rail and serve on a fully accessible chancel.



Generous parishioners caught the vision for a renovation of our chancel to make it more inclusive. The monies needed to pay for demolition and new construction were donated for the project. After almost three weeks of work, the space is now ready to receive us back for worship.

What a cause for gratitude and praise to God. God inspired the generosity of those among us who funded this project. God has given us grace for the challenges and inconveniences of worshiping in an alternative space during the past two weeks. God has sustained and protected those who worked tirelessly to complete this project on a short timeline. And now, God invites us together, to share Eucharist around one table, to be nourished by Christ, sent out



SUNDAY EVENINGS @ 5:30

CONNECTIONS

**LITURGIES TO INSPIRE
WORSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP**

VESPERS

Evening Prayer in contemporary language, lifting heartfelt prayers, readings, and music.
(First, Third & Fifth Sundays in the Church)

HOLY COMMUNION ON THE LABYRINTH

Eucharist on the Tree of Life Labyrinth, in a liturgy of movement & contemplation under majestic oak trees.
(Second Sundays in the Labyrinth Garden)

SAY GRACE: DINNER CHURCH

Eucharist, gathered around tables, sharing guided conversation, song, and a simple evening meal.
(Fourth Sundays in Parish Hall)

**BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 15 WITH
HOLY COMMUNION ON THE LABYRINTH**

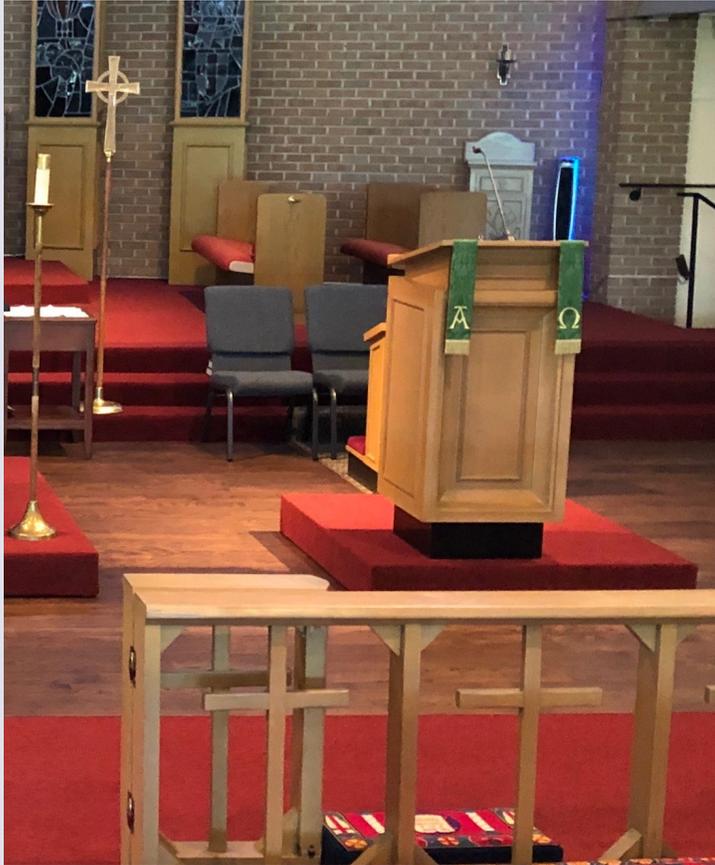


**GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
4040 WOODWIND DRIVE | HOUSTON, TEXAS 77025
GRACEINHOUSTON.ORG**

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from that place to nourish the world with goodness and grace.

Our church bears the name of God's economy—GRACE! Under God's reign, there is always room for everyone! What a witness to God's Spirit, alive and active among the people of Grace Episcopal Church!



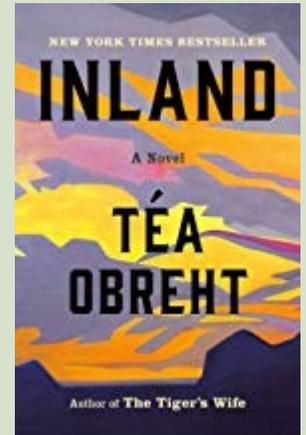
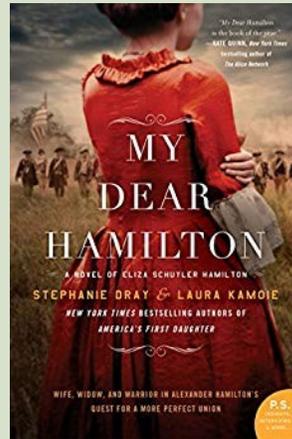
With you in Christ,

(Special Note: Some have asked about donating for new furnishings and appointments for our renovated chancel. In the coming days, we will share about specific opportunities to complete the project through special financial gifts. I know that the same God who inspired this project and brought the construction to completion will make a way for the space to be furnished appropriately for now and future generations.)

READING WITH GRACE BOOK GROUP

Thursday the 19th of September at 2 pm
In the Flex Room

There are two selections to choose from this month: *My Dear Hamilton* by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie, and *Inland* by Tea Obreht. Please join us. All are welcome.



TUE. SEPT. 10 2019 @ 12:30

GRACE GOES TO LUNCH

YAO Restaurant & Bar
9755 Westheimer @ Gessner
832-251-2588

FRIDAY - 9/27
7:00-9:00 PM
PARISH HALL

JAM NIGHT

- > BRING YOUR INSTRUMENT
- > BRING 1 OR 2 FAVORITE SONGS TO SHARE - ANY GENRE!
(COPIES OF SHEET MUSIC OR CHORD CHARTS FOR 6-10)
- > IF YOU DON'T PLAY, COME TO LISTEN OR SING ALONG
- > DRINKS AND LIGHT SNACKS WILL BE SERVED



the Cubicle

Elizabeth Martin

How Do I Get a Nametag?

We use nametags at Grace to help visitors feel welcome. When we wear our name tags it assists us in interacting with each other. Nametags are important for everybody to wear—those who have been around for just a little while and those who have been around for a long time!

At Grace the process for getting a nametag is to e-mail me, Elizabeth Martin, our amazing Office Assistant, with the correct name and spelling that you want people to use. The nametag is printed and put together in the office and then added to the ribbons inside the door of the Narthex. These name tags and ribbons have been organized in a loose alphabetical order, that way that you can place them back when you are finished wearing them. Even if you don't remember whose nametags were around yours, at least you can remember what color your ribbon is and know that your name tag will be where you left it.

If you need a name tag, I look forward to hearing from you, and making one just for you!



#1

SUPPORT GRACE SCHOOL

SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY/NIGHT

all day - breakfast, lunch & dinner
TELL THEM YOU'RE WITH GRACE.

#1

SEPTEMBER 19, 2019

Tapester's Grill
4520 Beechnut

#1

KICKING OFF
THE FALL PROGRAM YEAR WITH...

**BRING
EVERYBODY
SUNDAY
AND MINISTRY FAIR!**

SEPTEMBER 15, 2019 | 10:00 AM | CHURCH
MINISTRY FAIR FOLLOWING,
AT COFFEE HOUR IN PARISH HALL

Because CHURCH means CONNECTING!

Today's Work, Tomorrow's Blessing

By Colin Dunham,
Junior Warden



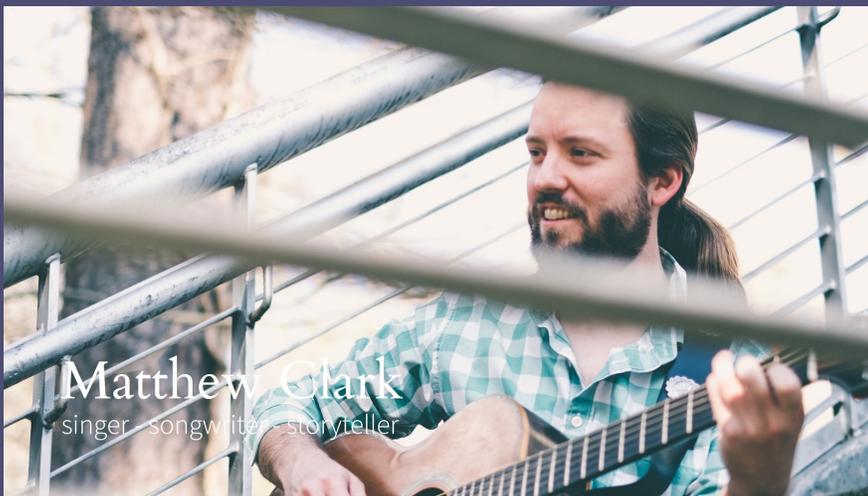
September brings with it moments of excitement and activity! For some, it is a return to school; for all, it is the beginning of the end of summer. As we turn towards the final months of the year, I'd like to reflect on some of the projects that have been completed at Grace these past eight months. Our Labyrinth Garden was refreshed with the help of many in our community. New crushed granite was added to cover the bare spots. Native Texas plants were planted in the beds, where they acclimated to the new soil and mulch that was laid down. Our narthex had the wallpaper taken down and paint added to brighten up the entrance to our church. Many of the lights have been replaced throughout the building, both in the nave and parish hall. Bathroom stalls have been fixed. New vents have been fitted so they do not blow straight down on us while we worship. The brush was cleared away from the cross on the hill to give it greater visibility as we continue efforts to restore it completely.

Finally, our chancel has been renovated, which will improve our worship experience by making the space more accessible to all.

For some, these changes will be insignificant or unnoticed. For others, these have been experienced as big changes or vast improvements in our shared spaces. As I meditate on these projects, I am thankful for our community and how generous we are with our time, energy, and finances. No single person could complete the endless amount of tasks around our campus, least of all your Junior Warden. Yet, I am reminded that this is one of the benefits of being in a community-- we need not go it alone. Even more so, when we work together in our church spaces, we are working together to make something sacred, something more than ourselves.

As you spend time at the Grace campus, I invite you to look around you at the physical spaces we utilize and enjoy in our surroundings. Know that you are sharing a space that has inspired thousands before you and will continue to encourage thousands more after you. Our goal is to continue good stewardship of our physical resources for the benefit of future generations. This is both a blessing for ourselves and future generations.

Matthew Clark in Concert at Grace
September 29, 6:00 PM (After Vespers)



Matthew Clark
singer-songwriter-storyteller

Inspirational Christian singer-songwriter Matthew Clark is coming to Grace on Sunday, September 29, at 6:00 pm! After our 5:30 PM Vespers service, we are in for a real treat in the parish hall. Suggested donation is \$10, if you are able. Otherwise, just come on! www.matthewclark.net

ADULT FORMATION & CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sundays @ 9:00 AM Adult Forum: Bible Study—Parables
Sundays @ 9:00 am Contemplative Prayer with Gospel Reading — Lectio Divina (Library)

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL

Sundays @ 10 am Children's Chapel is available each Sunday. The children exit the church following the cross before the first Lesson and return at the Peace.

**"For God alone,
my soul in silence waits..."**

**EUCCHARIST: 1ST AND 3RD WEDNESDAYS;
MORNING PRAYER: 2ND AND 4TH WEDNESDAYS**

**MIDWEEK
CONTEMPLATIVE
WORSHIP**

**Enter through the Weekday Entrance at
9939 Woodwind Drive | Ring bell for access**

Daughters of the King

The Saint Clare Chapter of the Daughters of the King invites all women of Grace to join us on our spiritual journey.

As Daughters, we are charged with daily prayer, service, evangelism and the strengthening of the spiritual life of the parish. We meet the first Saturday of each month at 10:00am in the Flex Room.

We would love to have you!



SECOND SATURDAY

MEN'S BREAKFAST

September 14 @ 8:00 am

Tamales Don Pepe
3816 Link Valley



All men are welcome to gather with us for breakfast and mutual encouragement.



Join us on Social Media:
Facebook /GraceinHouston
Twitter @GEpiscopal
Instagram @grace_in_houston

And on the Web at
graceinhouston.org

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