



GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Who We Are

Grace Church is a welcoming community of worship and service, a group of all ages. Grace Church is a family. We belong to each other and pray together. We come from different backgrounds and differing views with love and respect for one another.

Our Sunday service is currently at 9 a.m. and the average Sunday attendance is 35 people. We have a corps of dedicated lay ministers assisting on Sunday and special services in a wide variety of ways. Our laity has a long record of strong parish administration.

Our committed vestry has always enjoyed an excellent working relationship with our rector. Parishioners are committed to our common goals of worship, evangelism and outreach.

Our Town

Norwood, Massachusetts is a town of over 31,000 people and is located 14 miles from Boston, MA and 30 miles from Providence, RI. It is connected to both cities by commuter rail as well as the highway. Norwood is an ethnically diverse family-friendly community and has a great public school system including a new middle school that will be finishing construction in Fall 2025. Norwood has a beautiful bustling downtown that includes a public library, shops, restaurants and our Town Square where many Community sponsored activities take place. More can be found at www.norwoodma.gov.



Community volunteers performing spring clean up ▶
Pictured on top of the next page is the Grace Church alter

Our Vision

A tenet of Grace Church is to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ that involves creating a welcoming environment where individuals are encouraged to pursue intimacy with God.

Worship: We look to develop spiritually through meaningful worship. We worship in both contemporary and traditional styles and through music seek to touch the heart of the individual. We seek to be inspired to hear God’s message in the context of our daily lives- through messages heard in the pulpit, during educational programs, and in prayer.

Growth: We are dedicated to growing while still retaining the closeness that we share as a smaller parish. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to evolve our delivery of services, including streaming Sunday services. We are committed to re-establishing the growth we experienced pre-COVID as we drew new community members and young families to our worship and programs. We seek to establish a wider base to help us accomplish our mission and our financial goals.

Youth: We hope to expand our Sunday School program, which gathers weekly during our 9 am service. The students are led through the Godly Play curriculum in our newly renovated Children’s Chapel. As these children grow and we welcome new families, we look to rebuild our Youth Ministry.

Our Grounds

Grace Church is a beautiful fieldstone building, constructed in 1961, with a large (3 acres) well-kept property that overlooks Veteran’s Memorial Park. The property features a 1100+ sq. ft rectory with new roof, appli-

ances, and beautiful landscaping. We have a historic sunken garden and an adjoining Memorial Garden. Recently, we have added a Community Contemplative Orchard which includes heritage fruit trees that will provide fresh fruit for the Food pantry and a place for visitors to reflect.

Our Finances

Grace Church's annual budget is supported by pledges, special offerings and other income including investment distributions, rent and fundraising (our annual Christmas Tree Sales). Income received for the year 2023 was \$151,784. We ended 2023 in the black. We have a balanced budget for 2024. Grace continues to be in solid financial condition with cash in the bank of \$133,762 and investments of \$175,689.

The Diocese of Massachusetts

We are 180 congregations in eastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod and the islands. We seek to be Christ's presence in the world as we answer God's urgent call together. Our congregations make up our diocese, and our diocese is part of the wider Episcopal Church, which in turn is part of a larger, global community of Anglican Christians. More information about the diocese is available at www.diomass.org.

Diocesan Mission Strategy

Our yearnings to be disciples of Jesus, seekers of justice and protectors of creation provide the foundation for us to do our shared work together. We will only reach these goals by becoming more completely the people Jesus calls us to be through the power of the Spirit.

First, last and always, we pray. We ask for God's abiding presence with us and we allow the love of Jesus to transform us. From this place of unconditional grace, mercy, and love, we can trust in God's abundance, knowing we will have everything we need. We receive the courage to be agents of reconciliation and justice.

Devotion to the way of love demands vigilance, as the evil powers working to destroy the creatures of God remain unyielding in their attempts to distract us from our relationship with the Almighty. We must address the history and persistent reality of injustice in our church with honesty and humility. We must pray, learn, act and advocate for the world we want to create.

We must be bold. We must be hopeful. We are committed to the tasks being given to us by the Spirit. We trust that



God is with us in the joys and challenges of this moment. We dedicate ourselves once again as the Body of Christ in this place and time to work for the glorious reign of Jesus.

Commitment to Community

Grace Church has always had a strong mission of outreach, both locally and beyond. While the pandemic has changed how we manage this, we remain committed to caring for those in need. The Ecumenical Food Pantry of Norwood has been providing food at Grace Church since 1989. They serve a variety of non-perishable foods, fresh milk, eggs and cheese as well as meats, fruits and vegetables. Annie's

Closet started in 2023 and provides donated clothing, shoes and baby supplies free of charge. Once a year, our Bomba's sock grant enables us to provide 3,000 pairs of socks to the Episcopal ministries (serving the unhoused) in Boston.

We also provide daily meeting space for AA, and on Sunday afternoons, Sathya Sai Baba brings their community together in our meeting hall. In addition, one of our local Boy Scout troops began using Grace Church as their home base, where they have meetings, events and celebrations on a weekly basis. In turn, they help maintain our lawns and other jobs that are "scouting" related. Finally, we also collaborate with our Lutheran neighbors for Easter Vigil and services in the park. We look forward to expanding our Outreach as we continue to grow.

The Rector We Seek

Grace Church seeks as its part-time rector, a warm and caring pastor who:

- Is compassionate and approachable, relates well to people of all ages and embraces pastoral care
- Has a heart for children and who will support and grow our youth programs
- Is comfortable delegating administrative duties so that they may spend time with the people of the parish and the wider Norwood community
- Has a demonstrated ability to help a parish grow, is comfortable evangelizing and is gifted at teaching others how to do the same
- Is an energetic and inspired leader who can help us time our activities and missions together
- Is an engaging preacher and teacher able to communicate the Word of God to the people of the parish



◀ Young Parish volunteers helping to raise money at our annual Christmas Tree Sale