



# Celtic Evensong and Communion

## The Last Sunday After Epiphany

### 15 February 2026 4:00 pm

*We come from many places to be together for a little while.  
Each of us brings our own experience and traditions to this gathering.*

*So here in this place, let us take time together to encounter the holy.  
Please remember to silence all devices.*

## The Opening Rite

### Opening Musical Meditation

### Opening Meditation

#### **Dazzling: A Blessing for Transfiguration Sunday**

Believe me, I know  
how tempting it is  
to remain inside this blessing,  
to linger where everything  
is dazzling  
and clear.

We could build walls  
around this blessing,  
put a roof over it.  
We could bring in  
a table, chairs,  
have the most amazing meals.  
We could make a home.  
We could stay.

But this blessing  
is built for leaving.  
This blessing  
is made for coming down  
the mountain.  
This blessing  
wants to be in motion,  
to travel with you  
as you return  
to level ground.

It will seem strange  
how quiet this blessing becomes

when it returns to earth.

It is not shy.

It is not afraid.

It simply knows  
how to bide its time,  
to watch and wait,  
to discern and pray

until the moment comes  
when it will reveal  
everything it knows,  
when it will shine forth  
with all that it has seen,  
when it will dazzle  
with the unforgettable light  
you have carried  
all this way.

~ Jan Richardson, from *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*

### A Prayer for the Turning of Hearts

**Most Holy God, in the midst of this season of new life, we confess:**

**We have resisted the light of your love;**  
**we have not fully shared the gifts entrusted to us;**  
**and we have not treasured the gifts of others around us.**  
**We stand in need of your love.**

**Holy Father, make us holy. Holy Jesus, make us holy. Holy Spirit, make us holy.**

**Holy God, make us whole. Amen.**

### The Invitatory and Psalter

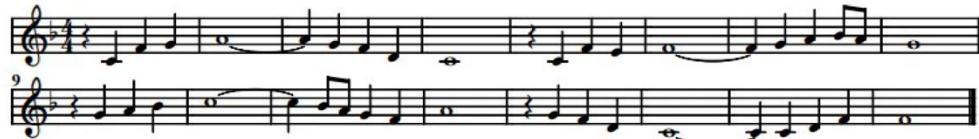
Arise, shine, for your light has come.

**And the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.**

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping;  
that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep  
we may rest in peace.

**Glory to the Source, Wisdom, and Breath of**  
**Creation, as it was in the beginning, is now and will**  
**be for ever. Amen.**

### Song to the Light



Light of the world, in grace and beauty,  
Mirror of God's eternal face,  
Transparent flame of love's free duty,  
You bring salvation to our race.

Now, as we see the lights of evening,  
We raise our voice in hymns of praise;  
Worthy are you of endless blessing,  
Sun of our night, lamp of our days.

## Psalm 2

- 1 Why are the nations in an uproar? \*  
Why do the peoples mutter empty threats?
- 2 Why do the kings of the earth rise up in revolt,  
and the princes plot together, \*  
against the LORD and against his Anointed?
- 3 "Let us break their yoke," they say; \*  
"let us cast off their bonds from us."
- 4 He whose throne is in heaven is laughing; \*  
the Lord has them in derision.
- 5 Then he speaks to them in his wrath, \*  
and his rage fills them with terror.
- 6 "I myself have set my king \*  
upon my holy hill of Zion."
- 7 Let me announce the decree of the LORD: \*  
he said to me, "You are my Son;  
this day have I begotten you.
- 8 Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance \*  
and the ends of the earth for your possession.
- 9 You shall crush them with an iron rod \*  
and shatter them like a piece of pottery."
- 10 And now, you kings, be wise; \*  
be warned, you rulers of the earth.
- 11 Submit to the LORD with fear, \*  
and with trembling bow before him;
- 12 Lest he be angry and you perish; \*  
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
- 13 Happy are they all \*  
who take refuge in him!

Glory to the Holy Trinity, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

## The Lessons and Reflection

Listen now to the Word of God

### The First Lesson

Exodus 24:12-18

The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them." Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

## Musical Response

### The Second Lesson

Matthew 17:1-9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, and for the Word of God within us,  
**Thanks be to God.**

### Reflection

Anna Wilcox

### Music after the Reflection

### Affirmation

As children of God, we affirm:

That God, who is Love, created all and called it good,  
that God is present with all of creation,  
and that, in darkness and in light, God is faithful;  
therefore we, too, seek to be faithful.

That Jesus came to show us Love with a human face,  
that he taught justice and reconciliation and suffered on our behalf,  
and that through his faithful example, he embodies hope;  
therefore we, too, seek to be people of justice, reconciliation, and hope.

That the Holy Spirit guides and accompanies us,  
that this same Spirit offers wisdom and discernment,  
and that, when we are open, the Spirit can always find a way;  
therefore we, seek to be people filled with God's Spirit:  
discerning, loving, and transforming our world. Amen.

## The Prayers

### Prayers for Ourselves and Others

Let us pray that all may live in unity, peace, and concord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Upon all who suffer from dissensions and quarrels,

**Christ, have mercy.**

That all leaders strive for justice and peace.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our deepest and most holy longings we pray:

**Renew us, O God.**

For all who wander, who hunger, who thirst:

**Renew us as people of service and compassion.**

For this planet, our home:

**Renew our will to be healers of creation.**

For this and every nation:

**Renew in all people the will for good and the longing for peace.**

For those whom we hold in our hearts:

*Here, the people may add their intercessions or thanksgivings either silently or aloud.*

Bless these and all creation with your goodness,

**and renew our trust in your love. Amen.**

### **The Collect of the Day**

O God, who before the passion of your only begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain:

Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **A Collect**

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **A Collect for Thomas Bray**

O God of compassion, who opened the heart of your servant Thomas Bray to answer the needs of the church in the New World: Make your church diligent at all times to propagate the Gospel, and to promote the spread of Christian knowledge; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Leader* Jesus says, “Come to me you who are troubled and I will give you rest.” So come, you who are broken in body or in spirit, you who are torn by relationships and doubt, you who feel deeply within yourselves the divisions of the world. Come, for Jesus invites us to bring our brokenness.

*From now until the end of the service, you are invited to come to the Lady Altar  
and light a candle and kneel at the rail for prayers.*

*There is a healing space at the back of the Lady Chapel for you.  
Please move about as the Spirit leads you.*

### **Music during Prayers**

### **Hymn**

### **The Grace**

O holy Wisdom: Fill us this day with joy, understanding, and grace, that we may tell out the wonder of your love; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

## The Holy Communion

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*Celebrant* It is our joy and delight to give you thanks and praise, Emmanuel, God with us. We give you thanks and praise for you hallowing of human flesh. We rejoice at your light which shines out of darkness and enlightens all who seek you. We praise you that you brought forth new life in the family of Mary and Joseph as you do today from all who faithfully await the fulfillment of your word. We praise you that you were known first by poor shepherds and wise seekers as you are known today by the poor and outcast. We rejoice with the angels at your promise of peace for those who trust in you. We rejoice that the extraordinary is given birth in the ordinary places of life.

So with the angels who sing “Glory” and with all the saints and ancestors who have known you to be with us, we sing together,

*All* **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

*Celebrant* We bless you for Jesus, born of the Spirit’s love and a woman’s body and blood. We bless you for Jesus who shows us how to live the fullness of our humanity and thus become one with you. We remember Jesus who laughed and wept and felt tiredness and fear; who praise Mary when she anointed him for death and blessed a woman of the city who washed his feet with tears. We remember Jesus who touched lepers and the sick and feasted with tax collectors and sinners. We remember Christ who lives on in all who courageously and faithfully bring forth the light of your love in earth’s darkest places.

We remember Jesus who, on the night before he died, shared a meal with his friends. He took bread, blessed it, and broke it and gave it to them saying:

*All* **“Take and eat. This is my own body given for you. Do this to remember me.”**

*Celebrant* After supper he took a cup of wine, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying:

*All* **“This is my life-blood, given for you. Do this to remember me.”**

*Celebrant* So we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*All* **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*Celebrant* O God who is known to us in human flesh, send your Holy Spirit on us and on these material things of bread and wine, that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ, and we may be the body of Christ, food and life for the world. We ask these things through Christ, with whom and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, be glory now and forever

*All* **Amen.**

### The Lord’s Prayer

### The Breaking of the Bread

## The Invitation

*Celebrant* This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord.  
It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more.  
So come, you who have much faith and you who have little,  
You who have been here often, and you who have not been here long,  
you who have tried to follow and you who have failed.  
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.  
It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

## Communion

### Concluding Prayer

**Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew us, and remake us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.**

### Blessing

May this new night of rest repair the wear of time, restore your vision of a deeper light, heal the wounds of disappointments, and restore youth of heart for the adventure that awaits you tomorrow. And may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

### Dismissal

May the Lord grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### Concluding Musical Meditation

## — Worship Leaders —

The Rev. Sarah A. Conner	<i>Presider</i>
Ryan Patten, Grayson Davison, Lisa Duffy	<i>Musicians</i>
Ryan Patten	<i>Opening</i>
Paul Massari	<i>Lector</i>
Anna Wilcox	<i>Reflection</i>
Kourtni Patten	<i>Prayers</i>
Katie Scott	<i>Usher</i>

### Our Prayers are offered for

Robert Borden, Linda Abbene, Deven Manthorne, Margaret Connor, Chuck Manck, Barbara Dwyer, Lilyann, John Gilbo, Vance Gilbert, Reny Sparapani, Laurel, Gary Young, Amy, Paul, Heather and Prescott, Ariana, Sheridan, Javy, Faith Aroko and Family, Jesse Hurst and Family, Maureen Joyce, Arthur, Deb Young, Cindy Rhodes, Ron, Allison Mascolo, Melissa Glassman, Max Joyce, Marc Britt, those battling cancer, Mel, Corey MacNeil, Dianne, Jenny, Loretta and Kris, Priscilla Lemons, Deb Papps, Derek Fuller and Family, for the peaceful repose of the soul of Smadar and all victims of war the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and their ministries; the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Salem, the Salem Public Schools and for an end to racism, war, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, gun violence and oppression. In thanksgiving, we pray for the ministry of The Reverend Debbie Phillips and her husband, Eric Wagner, this community of faith, for God's grace and forgiveness, for those with the courage to stand up to tyranny, for creation, for the diversity of people, and for all the blessings of this life.

If you have additions or deletions to the prayer list, please email [prayerlist@gracechurchsalem.org](mailto:prayerlist@gracechurchsalem.org) by Tuesday at noon for publication in that week's e-news. The Parish Prayer List is read aloud each Wednesday at Morning Prayer.

### **Permissions for livestreaming**

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## **Epiphany Gifts for Our Neighbors**

**Our church school children recognize that gifts appear in many different ways. Please help us collect any of the following items during the Epiphany season, to be given in love to our neighbors who are in great need, with the intention of giving the gift of comfort and joy.**



**Please bring any of these suggested gifts to church during Epiphany; they will then be donated to Lifebridge. The collection will conclude on Sunday, February 15th .**

**~ Melissa Barnes**

• Bar Soap	• Gloves	• Packets of Tuna
• Personal Wipes	• Hats	• Packets of Chicken
• Toothpaste	• Rain Ponchos	• Protein bars
• Toothbrushes	• New socks	• Fruit cups in juice
• Toothbrush covers	• New underwear	• Individual PB servings
• Dental floss		
• Hand cream		
• Chapstick		



## **Antiracism Team Forum**

### **TODAY at 5:30**

As the Antiracism Team of Grace Church, we seek a just society where all are unique and interconnected, one in Christ (Gal. 3: 28). As Dr. Martin Luther King said, “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.” Yet just one week prior to the Church’s celebration of Absalom Jones – the first Black priest in the Episcopal Church, ordained in 1802 – racist depictions of former President Obama and his wife, Michelle, were posted online. These stereotypes dehumanize Black people and tear at the fabric of our faith. For white Christians, it recalls our complicity in the racial structuring of our society, and we cannot “stand idly by” (Lev. 19:16).

**After the Celtic Service at 4:00 p.m. today, a Forum in the Common Room** will offer a discussion of this racist depiction, as well as the recent letter signed by 154 Episcopal bishops calling for immigration policies respecting the dignity of all. In addition, time will be set aside for the signing of postcards containing an inclusive message to House as well as Senate committee chairs.

The Forum is open to all. In true Anglican style there will be tea and biscuits. Join us for worship at 4:00 p.m. and the Forum to follow.

*~ Cliff Cutler, for the Antiracism Team: Kathy Baldwin, Maureen Bingham, Marianne Cannon, Kourtni Patten, Jane Thompson*



# Suggestions for Keeping a Holy Lent

## Pray

*Prayer is our conversation with God, spoken and unspoken; to pray is to place ourselves in God's presence. Some ways to pray:*

- Attend church each Sunday in Lent.
- Attend an Ash Wednesday service and as many of the Holy Week services as you can.
- Say grace before meals.
- Pray one of the Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families from the prayer book (these are shortened forms of the Daily Office; you can find them at [missionstclare.com](http://missionstclare.com)).
- Set aside 5-10 minutes each day to sit quietly in God's presence.
- 

## Fast

*To fast is to refrain from something for a time so that we clear space for a greater awareness of God. The absence of something can help us return our focus to God. Some ways to fast:*

- Refrain from – or reduce your consumption of – meat, sugar, or caffeine, etc. Then, at Easter, make a donation to The Salem Pantry or another local hunger-relief organization.
- Fast from noise; schedule some time for silence each day, preferably at the same time so it's part of your routine.

- Do a “digital fast” – schedule time in which you do not use your digital devices. You might commit to a digital fast each evening, or for a day or two each week, etc.

## Read

*Spiritual reading can help recenter us and return our attention to our spiritual life. It also gives us something to reflect on throughout the day. Here are some suggestions:*

- Read one of the gospels all the way through, a chapter each day. You might try reading Matthew’s gospel, since our Sunday gospel readings this year are mostly taken from Matthew.
- Read one or two psalms each day.
- Do some spiritual reading (e.g., a book of Lenten devotions; *Forward Day by Day*; a book on prayer or the spiritual life).
- Go to [episcopalrelief.org/lent](http://episcopalrelief.org/lent) and sign up to receive a daily Lenten email from Episcopal Relief & Development, focused on the holy habits of prayer, worship, and engagement with Scripture.
- Reading can include taking a class – consider attending one of the classes offered at Grace during Lent: “Journeying with the Mystics” and “Episcopal 101,” as well as the monthly forum offered by our antiracism team on March 15.
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## Serve

*Thomas Merton wrote, “Action is the stream, and contemplation is the spring.” Our life of prayer and worship flows naturally into service to others. Here are some ways to consider serving:*

- Spend some time reflecting on your gifts and skills, and who might need them.
- If you’re seeking ways to volunteer, consider a local organization that helps people in need, such as Lifebridge, The Salem Pantry, etc.
- Make a donation to our diocese’s [Immigrant Legal Emergency Fund](#).
- Explore [Episcopal City Mission’s Emergent Action Network](#) to find resources for immigration and racial justice.

# UPCOMING Events

**Ash Wednesday**  
**February 18th**



**Children's Service**  
**5:30 pm**

This brief 20-30 minute service is for children and their families. We'll learn about where the ashes come from, what the season of Lent is all about, and receive the imposition of ashes. Enter by the parish house door.

**Choral Holy Eucharist**  
**7:00 pm**

We will observe the Liturgy for Ash Wednesday with imposition of ashes, homily, and music sung by our choir.

SAVE THE DATES FOR  
**Lenten Learning**

*Details to come!*

**JOURNEYING WITH THE MYSTICS**



Five Thursdays starting February 26th  
In-person at Grace from 7:00p.m.–8:00 p.m.

Cliff Cutler will lead an exploration of the mystics to enhance each participant's capacity for their own spirituality, and to awaken wonder in daily life.

\* \* \* \* \*

**EPISCOPAL 101**



Four Tuesdays starting February 24th  
On Zoom from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
(with one in-person session after each service on Sunday, March 22nd )

Sarah Conner will lead an introduction to the Episcopal Church for those who are new to it or want to learn more. The class will also prepare adults for baptism, confirmation, or reception into the Episcopal Church.

Please let Sarah know in advance if you'd like to participate.

## This Week's Feast: Thomas Bray



*Engraving after an early portrait of Thomas Bray, early 18th century*

Thomas Bray was born at Marton, in Shropshire, England, in 1656. After graduating from Oxford and being ordained as a priest, he became a country parson in Warwickshire. In 1696 he was invited by the Bishop of London to be responsible for the oversight of church work in the colony of Maryland. Three years later, as the Bishop's Commissary, he sailed to the American colonies for his first, and only, visitation.

Though he spent only two and a half months in Maryland, Bray was deeply concerned about the neglected state of the American churches, and the great need for the education of clergy, laity, and children. At a general visitation of the clergy at Annapolis, before his return to England, he emphasized the need for the instruction of children, and insisted that no clergyman be given a charge unless he had a good report from the ship in which he crossed the Atlantic, "whether . . . he gave no matter of scandal, and whether he did constantly read prayers twice a day and catechize and preach on Sundays, which, notwithstanding the common excuses, I know can be done by a minister of any zeal for religion." His understanding of, and concern for, Native Americans and African Americans were far ahead of his time. He founded thirty-nine lending libraries in America, as well as numerous schools. He raised money for missionary work and influenced young English priests to go to America.

Bray tried hard to have a bishop consecrated for the American colonies, but failed. His greatest contributions were the founding of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, both of which are still effectively in operation after two and a half centuries of work all over the world.

From 1706 to 1730, Bray was the rector of St. Botolph Without Aldgate in London, where, until his death there on February 15, 1730, at the age of 72, he served with energy and devotion, while continuing his efforts on behalf of Black slaves in America and in the founding of parochial libraries.

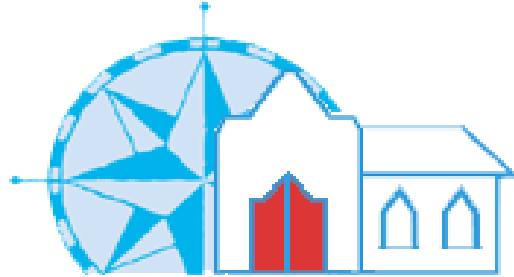
When the deplorable condition of English prisons was brought to Bray's attention, he set to work to influence public opinion and to raise funds to alleviate the misery of the inmates. He organized Sunday "Beef and Beer" dinners in prisons, and advanced proposals for prison reform. It was Thomas Bray who first suggested to General Oglethorpe the idea of founding a humanitarian colony for the relief of honest debtors, but he died before the Georgia colony became a reality. *From Lesser Feasts and Fasts, Church Publishing*



*Seal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, founded by Thomas Bray (1701), engraving dated 1704*



# Grace Episcopal Church



385 Essex Street  
Salem, Massachusetts 01970  
(978) 744-2796

E-mail: [office@gracechurchsalem.org](mailto:office@gracechurchsalem.org)  
Web: [www.gracechurchsalem.org](http://www.gracechurchsalem.org)

*The Mission of Grace Church is to unconditionally invite all people to join us in building a faithful Episcopal congregation that goes out into the community and through prayer, presence, and partnering improves the quality of life by bringing everyone closer to God.*

## — Grace Episcopal Church —

*A parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts*

The Most Reverend Sean Rowe

*Presiding Bishop*

The Right Reverend Julia Whitworth

*Bishop Diocesan*

The Reverend Sarah A. Conner

*Interim Priest*

The Reverend E. Clifford Cutler

*Assisting Clergy*

The Reverend Manny Faria

*Assisting Clergy*

Mark N. Peterson

*Music Director*

Tom and Karen Tucker

*Property Stewards*

## — Vestry —

Ryan Patten

*Senior Warden*

Lisa Duffy

*Junior Warden*

Joanna Troy

*Clerk*

Katie Scott

*Treasurer*

Javy Awan, Kai Freyleue, Christine Reichert,  
Susan Tweed, Caroline Watson-Felt, Holly Willis

*Members of Vestry*