



Grace Presbyterian Church

To see Long Island awakened to the glory of Jesus Christ

Update from Pastor Mark Middlekauff

Last week was one of the best weeks of my life. Considering that the week prior I was sunning and surfing in Mexico, that is saying a lot. The three days leading up to Thanksgiving, though hectic, were immensely satisfying: a men's Bible study full of men of all ages who are committed to growing in godliness; a great staff meeting with the world's best church staff; lunch with a Christian counseling executive where we discussed a counseling center on the East End; hours of poring over financial statements and next year's budget (which reminded me of how faithful God is to provide for Grace Church); and a Session meeting that demonstrated what a fantastic group of elders that serve here.

Then came Thanksgiving Day and the joy of opening our home and of experiencing the gift of community. And then of course, a hurried day and a half of sermon prep that left me completely dependent upon the Lord, which of course is how it always should be. :) Finally, on Saturday Grace Church rallied to throw a wedding for a young couple who greatly wanted to get married but didn't have the resources just yet. Members of Grace Presbyterian Church stepped up to organize the wedding, which included a beautiful wedding dress, decorations, and music. The bride looked stunning as the groom eagerly watched her walk down the aisle. What a day. What a week!

As I look back upon last week and farther back through the past year or two, it is abundantly clear to me that God loves Grace Presbyterian Church, and he loves the East End of Long Island. The Holy Spirit is powerfully at work in us. He is transforming us individually, and he is transforming us collectively as the body of Christ. At Grace Church, people are regularly coming to faith in Christ, growing in that faith, and using their gifts to serve in the church and in our community.

Looking forward into 2018 and beyond, there is a lot to pray about; we have some big, exciting plans for the coming year that will no doubt stretch us. We begin in earnest two Vision Goals that we have had since we launched Grace Presbyterian Church over 10 years ago. One is our first church plant. The other is a counseling center on the East End.

The new church we are planting is in Stony Brook, NY. We have already gathered about 20 people in the community and we have begun looking for a church planting pastor to begin the work. It is possible that by the fall of 2018 a pastor and his family will have moved to Stony Brook with all the funds raised. Once on the ground, he will gather and lead a team to launch the new church. What a joyful occasion that will be!

A counseling center on the East End has been a long time coming, too. Local, trustworthy, God-honoring counseling is desperately needed in the Hamptons as I regularly refer people to counselors in the city. So I am glad to share that I am devising a game plan with some leaders in the counseling world to launch a wonderful counseling center on the East End in the next 12-18 months!

Both of these Vision Goals are big undertakings. They will stretch us in many ways. But the people of God have always been called upon to attempt great things for God. And when we allow God to stretch us, we experience his presence and his power made perfect in us. And we experience the joy of a life lived for God's glory.

In light of all that God has done, is doing, and will do, I ask that you pray for Grace Presbyterian Church in the weeks ahead and all throughout 2018.



Carpet Renovation



New Members

Adriana Pariz

Maureen's Haven

The SERVE Team has been partnering with organizations in our community to assist those in need. This year we decided to focus on three organizations in order to deepen our relationship and be more effective in our efforts: The Retreat, which provides safety, shelter and support for victims of domestic abuse; Heart of the Hamptons, which serves Southampton Town by providing clothing, assistance, and a food pantry; and Maureen's Haven, which provides shelter, supportive services, and care for those in need. Each month we focus on a different organization and creatively serve the community with them.

In the month of October, we partnered with Maureen's Haven by transforming their office! The SERVE Team, along with other Grace Church members, moved furniture, rewired computers, phones, and fax machines in order to make their offices more efficient and attractive. Here is what the director of Maureen's Haven had to say:

"Thank you so much for bringing order, peace, and beauty to Maureen's Haven and - more importantly - affirming the dignity of everyone who walks through our doors (including me). So much grace...and such an incredible witness to me and everyone else who will see it. The hard work and fruit of each and every one of you moved us deeply and it will continue to move us. Thank you all for your yes to 'Him' which as you know, has generated me and so many countless others! With deep affection, friendship and gratitude." - Maryann, Director



We are so thrilled to be a part of such beautiful work that is being done on the East End. May God's grace continue to abound!

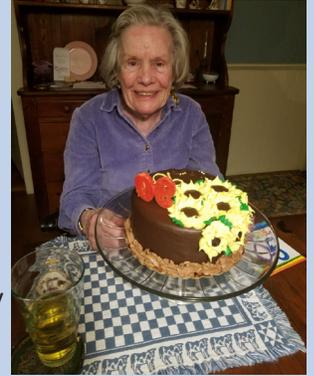
Adriana Pariz

Meet Barbara Albright

Barbara Albright is mother to six children, grandmother to six grandchildren, and great-grandmother to one great-grandchild. Her family has been in the same house in Sagaponack for 325 years, so, needless to say, she is well known and knows many people in the community! Barbara began visiting Grace Presbyterian Church when it moved to its current location because it was close to her home and she knew some other attenders.

When Barbara first visited Grace Church, she primarily appreciated that the gospel was preached. She comes from a long line of strong Christians and has always been passionate about the gospel's being proclaimed on the East End. She also liked that Grace Church was reaching out to the community in unique ways with programs like Second Saturdays Out and International Dinners. She appreciated that the church was preaching to skeptics, since there are many who live on the East End, and that some were coming to know the Lord. She also met and became quick friends with Lesley Middlekauff, who had a very similar background, having grown up in a strong Christian family. Barbara joined Grace Presbyterian Church because it was not a "country club" for church members, but rather it reached out to everyone in the community! At the time that she began attending Grace Church, everyone was in their thirties and she was the oldest member. Over the years, she has watched the church grow, and now there are people from all walks of life.

She is thankful for the work God is doing on the East End through Grace Presbyterian Church. Every morning when she wakes up, she sits by her bedroom window and thanks God for all his blessings in her life. She also prays for her church family as well as all the people that He has placed in her life, remembering that for 325 years many prayers have been spoken near that very window to our Heavenly Father!



Mark Middlekauff

Budget Update

Building Fund

We are getting VERY close to paying off the short-term loan for our Building Grace capital campaign, which ends this year. We owe \$450,000, and we have \$452,000 in outstanding pledges. If you have an outstanding pledge, please prayerfully consider fulfilling it before the end of the year. If you don't have a pledge but would like to contribute to our building fund, please mark your year-end gift with the words "Building Fund".

General Fund

The General Fund is where your normal church giving goes, and all of Grace Church's ministries are funded from this account. Our 2017 budget for the General Fund is a little over \$500,000, which includes \$40,000 to set aside for our church plant and counseling center. We are pleased to say we are entering into the last month of the year on strong financial footing. Thank you! We are just a few thousand dollars behind. With a strong finish to the year we can make up the shortfall and end with a solid foundation for 2018. So please make a year-end gift to support all the ministries of Grace Presbyterian Church.

Important Initiatives for the New Year:

We are committed to two HUGE initiatives for 2018, with a possible third.

1. **Stony Brook Church Plant.** We have begun laying the foundation for a brand-new church in the Stony Brook, NY area. This is wonderful news. Pastor Mark Middlekauff is leading a team with the goal of finding a church planting pastor and raising approximately \$400k to launch the new church ASAP.
2. **Counseling Center.** In addition to the church plant, we are making significant headway with regards to opening a Christian counseling center in the Hamptons. Talk about an answer to prayer! This, too, is a heavy lift. In addition to the funds we have set aside this year, we will set aside \$20,000 next year and will likely need to raise more once the plans are in place.
3. **Campus ministry at Stony Brook University.** We may also launch a campus ministry called RUF (Reformed University Fellowship) at Stony Brook University alongside the church plant. Wow. What wonderful news! Stay tuned.

If you are looking to make a big impact for Christ and his kingdom through financial means, then please consider giving to Grace Presbyterian Church. We will steward your gifts well as we seek to honor God in all we do. Thank you.

To give...

- by check please mail your check to Grace Presbyterian Church, 1225 Montauk Highway, Water Mill, NY 11976. Make sure it is postmarked by Dec. 31st.
- online visit our giving page: <http://gracehamptons.org/giving>
- by text just text the dollar amount (e.g. "100") to 631-405-4483.
- stocks or other assets please e-mail or call the office for details.

The Mission of Grace Presbyterian Church is to REACH the Lost, BUILD Community, GROW Disciples, SERVE our Neighbors, and in all things WORSHIP God.

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