



PARISH PROFILE 2021

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF WEST FELICIANA

St. Francisville, Louisiana

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HELPFUL LINKS

- <https://youtu.be/wZ30-XXqwO4> (Aerial video of Grace Church)
- <https://www.facebook.com/GraceWFP/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/visitstfrancisville/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/wfptc/>



WELCOME

Greetings from Grace Episcopal Church of West Feliciana located in beautiful St. Francisville, LA. Organized in 1827, our congregation consists of 350 members of all ages. The timeless beauty of our 163 year old church building leaves a lasting impression on all who enter. Our cemetery, with its moss-draped oaks and antique iron work, contains graves pre-dating the Civil War. Grace Preschool continues to be a beloved part of our community since 1951. While our rich history and tradition are important to us, we also welcome new ideas and different viewpoints.



St. Francisville is perched above the Mississippi River approximately 30 miles north of Louisiana's capital city of Baton Rouge. Historic downtown St. Francisville is recognized on the Register of Historic Significant Sites. The wider West Feliciana Parish with its sandy creeks and bluffs set among rolling hills make its scenic landscape a favorite of many. Our parish's commitment to excellence and diversity in our school system consistently ranks it among the top five in Louisiana.

2020 presented many challenges for Grace, beginning with our 11 year rector accepting a call elsewhere. Thus began our search process. But soon thereafter, COVID-19 struck and a "new normal" that included online services, masks, Zoom meetings, etc. was established. Our staff and lay leadership have done an amazing job and we continue to walk this path of discovery in how to best serve our congregation.

This parish profile is compiled from focus group discussions and 138 member surveys. It is meant to show you who we are now, where we hope to go, and challenges we face.

Know that you are in our prayers as you discern whether God is calling you to this special place. Our hope lies in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and we are certain that the perfect priest has been ordained and is awaiting our selection.

Mission

The mission of Grace Episcopal Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. The Church pursues this mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.



OUR MINISTRY STRATEGY

- To build a youth culture where children and youth can come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ within a loving environment that encourages church involvement and the development of peer groups.
- To be a source of comfort and hope to our senior citizens through high quality fellowship, education, and pastoral care programs that build relationships and reduce isolation.
- To leverage our resources as a beautiful historic site and showcase our programs and ministries through beautiful and relevant printed materials, an interactive website, historically-sensitive signage, and intentional programs that showcase the beauty of our grounds and buildings, liturgy, traditions, historic organ, and cemetery.
- To provide high quality formation programs for all ages that include bible studies, spiritual formation programs, Preschool children's chapel, liturgical studies, preparation for the reception of sacraments, and newcomer instruction on the history, theology, and liturgy of the Episcopal Church.
- To promote and encourage the ministry of all believers in a creative way that connects people to existing and new ministries that answer the needs of our local and universal Church. Chief among this ministry is our mission to the least and the lost around our communities and throughout our state, country, and world.
- To encourage and promote biblical, Christ-centered preaching that reinforces our core beliefs in salvation by grace alone through faith.
- To be a source of hope and comfort to members who are dealing with illness, isolation, depression, incarceration, post-operative recovery, and other life conditions through high-quality pastoral care and visitation programs.
- To promote the growth of our congregation by training and supporting our members to be active in befriending the unchurched, inviting them to our congregation, and creating a welcoming, loving atmosphere where all visitors feel comfortable and accepted.
- To ensure the viability of our congregation through stewardship education programs and campaigns that build a connection between our faith and our financial support of God's church and that instill a deeper level of commitment in our parishioners.
- To be good stewards of the gifts God has given us by taking proper care of our grounds, buildings, and programs and by remaining committed to the well-being of Saint Francisville and West Feliciana Parish.





PARISH STATISTICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Parish statistics for the 2019 calendar year

- Communicants in good standing 347
- Total membership 354

Averages

- Sunday attendance 129
- 2019 Easter Sunday attendance 313
- Adult Formation 60
- Baptisms under 16 12
- Confirmations under 16 4
- Confirmations over 16 1
- Received by Bishop 3
- Number of marriages 3
- Number of burials 7



Demographics

The respondents to our parish survey reflected strong representation in the 50 and older age group. High percentages of our survey respondents (85%) are active in ministries at Grace. Respondents have attended Grace for more than 11 years were 69%, and 64% usually attend worship services at Grace three or more times per month. A large portion of the respondents were female (67%), and 24% have children between the age of pre-school through 12th grade. Participants were nearly evenly split between preference for Rite I and Rite II liturgy.

Survey respondents by age group

21-30	0%
31-40	15.33%
41-50	10.95%
51-60	14.60%
61-70	29.20%
71-80	23.36%
80+	6.57%



Ministries and Worship

Worship Services

- Sunday 7:30 and 10:00 a.m.
- Online worship via Facebook and Youtube.
- Wednesday Evening Prayer via Zoom at 5:15 p.m.
- Thursday Morning Prayer via Zoom at 9:15 a.m.
- Friday Morning Prayer via Zoom at 8:00 a.m.



MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Adult Christian Formation:

- Friday mornings: Lectionary Bible Study; Sunday Mornings: Bible Study
- All are welcome to join us on Sundays from 8:45-9:45 a.m. at the Rector's office for Bible study.
- First Wednesday of the month: Men's Breakfast and Bible Study at 9:00 a.m.
- Lenten programs and Advent studies
- Baptism preparation classes for all baptisms
- Confirmation preparation classes
- Marriage preparation course

Discernment and Seminary Support

- We have an ongoing commitment to support those who are discerning a call to the ministry and to provide support during seminary.

MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Children and Youth Ministries:

6th -12th Grade Youth

- Starting in October, confirmation classes are held every other Wednesday evening at Jackson Hall.
- The youth group hosts an Epiphany bonfire each year for the entire congregation.

Children's Church

- Offered at the 10:00 a.m. Sunday service. Young children go to Jackson Hall and are able to color or create crafts pertaining to that Sunday's scripture. They return to the congregation once the sermon has ended.



MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Outreach Support:

Grace Episcopal Church has had a historic relationship with the diocese. One example of this is the 2016 flood response. The “500-Year Flood” in Louisiana has been described as the largest natural disaster to strike our country since Hurricane Sandy.

Grace partnered with both Episcopal Relief and Development Fund and our Bishop’s Fund and took a very active role in helping affected victims at shelters in Baton Rouge. We also set up a supply distribution center in West Feliciana Parish. The church coordinated with other churches in town, in a truly ecumenical partnership, to gut large sections of homes in the neighborhood of Solitude.

Much of the diocesan initiative started here at Grace. None of the work we have done would have been possible without the help and love shown by our parishioners and friends.





MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Angel Tree Ministry

One of our largest outreach programs each year is the Christmas Angel Tree. Last year, we were able to supply Christmas gifts to 36 children from our local school district plus a few children from CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates). This would not be possible without the generosity and love of our Grace Church congregation.

Honduras Mission

We continued to be a missional church in 2019, partnering with the Diocese of Honduras to educate 21 students from the village of El Carmen, San Nicolas, providing water filtration systems for the same village and assisting throughout the year with various needs.

MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Grace Episcopal Church Nursing Home Team



After 9:15 Morning Prayer inside Grace Church, the Nursing Home team takes the Word of God, song, and fellowship to those able to join them at the Country Manor Nursing Home at 10:15. Morning Prayer is held there every Thursday of the month, excluding Thanksgiving and Christmas. On the 3rd Thursday of the month, we hold a Holy Communion service. Two gallons of ice cream are taken for their monthly birthday party, and we also distribute holiday cards for the nursing home residents. A team of 6 Lay Ministers performs services to those isolated in their homes who are unable to attend services each week.



MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Angola Prison Ministry

Grace Church and its members have been active participants in the Church of the Transfiguration since its beginnings at the Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) more than 25 years ago. The ministry seeks to support and encourage the men at Angola, both Episcopalians and other Christians. We welcome members from other denominations and hope to bring men to God. In addition to our monthly services, we support hospice work, Disciples of Christ In Community, inmate-led Bible studies, and individuals in their spiritual walk through fellowship and worship.

MINISTRIES AT GRACE

Local Involvement



- Scholarships for 2 students at our local elementary school, Bains Elementary, who distinguish themselves for literary and science excellence.
- Acolyte scholarships to two graduating seniors with a history of faithful service.
- Young Life scholarships for youth ministry within West Feliciana Parish.
- Involvement and funding for West Feliciana Food Pantry.
- Quarterly ECW Breakfast with local Baptist, Methodist, and Roman Catholic churches.
- Ecumenical Stations of the Cross performed in conjunction with the St. Francisville United Methodist Church and Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church. All three churches are centrally located in the Saint Francisville Historic District.



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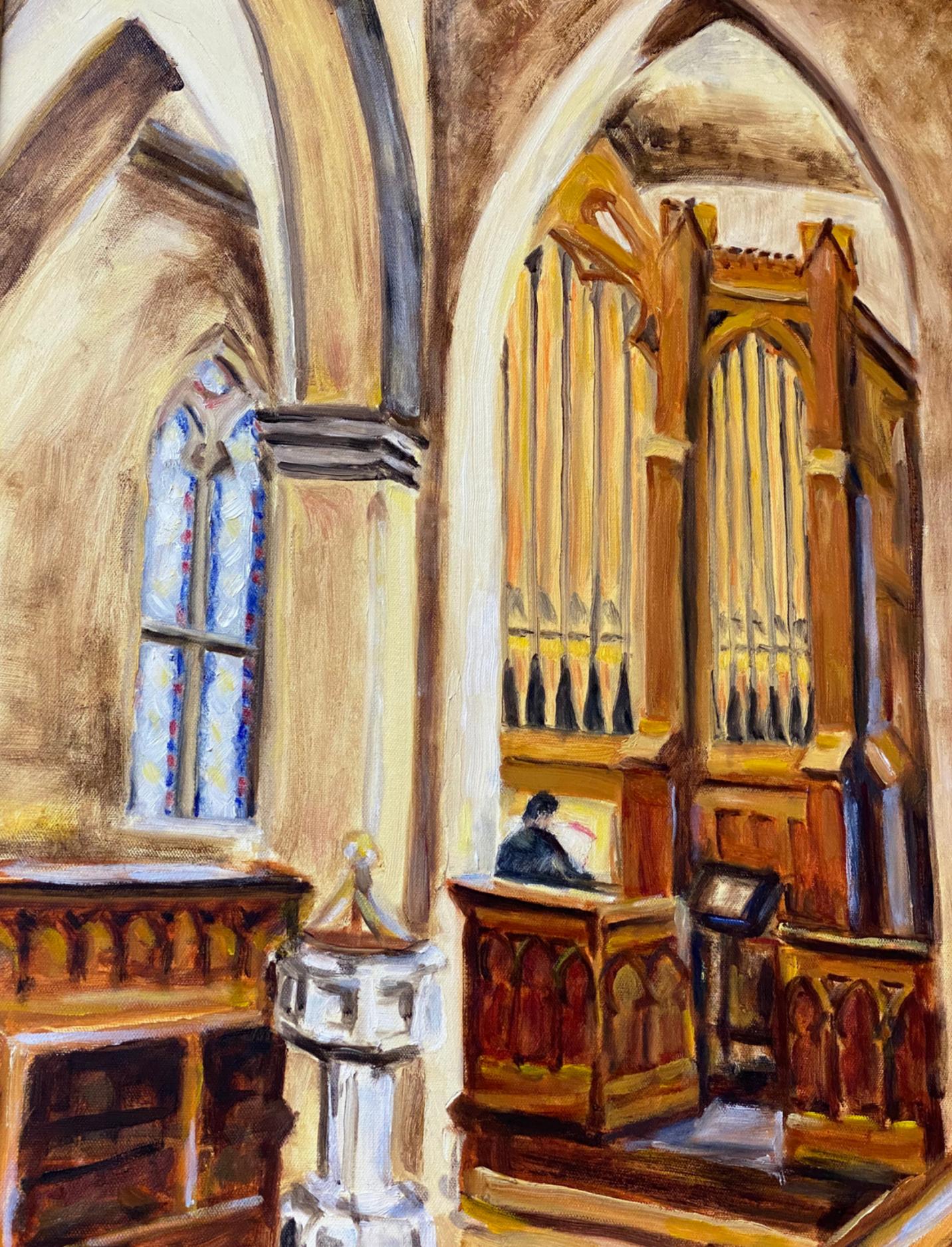


Grace Preschool

One of the outreach ministries of which Grace is most proud of is the preschool program that has served West Feliciana Parish since 1951. The preschool serves children three to four years old. 19 children are part of our Montessori-inspired program. The curriculum and structure seeks to provide comprehensive formation focusing on body, mind, and soul, complemented by Children's Chapel, an arts and music program, field trips, free and guided play, library days, and guest speakers. The school is self-supporting and recently updated its facilities.

Students work on name writing and recognition, colors, shapes, letter recognition, counting, and much more. The Lord's Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance are recited daily. Students participate in group activities, free choice centers, and outdoor play, and Bible stories are woven into activities. Working cooperatively with others, using manners, becoming independent, and following a routine are focuses of the children's first school experience as they become fully prepared for their next academic year.

God has blessed us with wonderful preschoolers and amazing support from their families! We hope to have these same continued blessings in the years to come.



Music

- Our music program is centered around mainline Episcopal hymnody and choral music.
- We highlight the parish's 1860 Pilcher organ.
- We strive to make Grace a place of musical excellence in the community.

The choir understands the integral role music has in liturgy. This work will certainly continue to evolve when we are able to gather and sing again.

The organ is a great source of pride at Grace. It is a special instrument and rare to find an instrument of its age still serving a congregation or to have a congregation willing to invest in caring for it. It is an unusual instrument compared to modern organs and takes a great deal of practice and sensitivity to play repertoire or service music with finesse. It is important to Grace Church parishioners that the organ be used as the primary instrument in liturgy. We have opened conversations with church musicians in the area and the Baton Rouge chapter of the American Guild of Organists to raise the profile and exposure of this instrument by offering recitals.



Grace has a lovely set of handbells in two octaves. We have played for the Bishop's annual visit and at Grace's Lessons and Carols services, as well as many other special seasons and services.

When it is safe to resume in-person activities, the Music Committee will meet and discuss the desires and dreams for the future of music at Grace.





What We Seek in a Rector

Experience

- Three years or more Parish experience as a Rector or Assisting Rector.

Preaching

- Make scripture relevant to people's lives through clarity in preaching.

Liturgy

- Provide a selection of service types respecting and valuing the liturgical styles of each.
- Provide a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

Worship

- Ability to plan and conduct worship as a central event of the congregation.

Spiritual Growth

- Ability to lead others in the information and development of a deeper spiritual life.



Pastoral Care

- Organization of program care to nurture people. Program should include hospital, nursing home, hospice, and home visitations.

Personal Theology

- Be able to relate the word of God to people of all backgrounds.
- Have a visible prayer life.

Church Growth and Development

- Ability to attract young families and youth.
- Improve our Christian Education.

Leadership

- Work collaboratively with vestry, lay leaders, and staff when making decisions.
- Be able to delegate tasks to vestry and lay teams.
- Help us grow Grace Church gracefully and thoughtfully, exhibiting strong pastoral abilities, the capacity to serve as a mediator, and active community involvement as the world changes around us.

GRACE CHURCH– NORMAL OPERATIONS

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Miscellaneous Income	40,045	39,955	38,091
Pledge Income	345,325	362,709	312,385
Contribution Income	89,652	83,895	86,669
Plate Income	6,729	7,230	2,477
Non-cash donation			
Total Income	481,751	493,788	439,622
Christian Formation	3,547	3,110	2,210
Diocese Giving	61,862	61,966	60,112
Facilities	34,450	35,749	40,266
Fellowship	2,990	4,560	3,125
Mission & Outreach	33,793	31,730	23,325
Parish Administration	42,844	30,933	33,328
Parish Life	27,078	21,035	15,729
Personnel	264,100	268,117	203,477
M&O		1,500	
Total Expenses	470,665	458,700	381,572
Net Ordinary Income	11,087	35,089	58,050

GRACE CHURCH—PRESCHOOL

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Preschool Income	131,365	101,753	83,096
Preschool Expenses	107,235	116,638	81,742
Net Ordinary Income	24,130	(14,885)	1,354

Staff



Margaret Kendrick
Parish Administrator



Carol Stamey
Secretary



Kristen Triche
Preschool Director



Austin Clark
Director of Music and
Communications

Vestry

Vestry members of Grace Church are elected every January at the Annual Meeting. The Vestry consists of the Rector, presiding member non-voting, and nine voting members. Each of the voting members serve three-year terms with three voting members rotating off the Vestry each January. Voting members cannot be elected to successive terms.

Grace Episcopal Church has no bylaws but is currently moving to create them. Traditionally the Rector has appointed both the Junior and Senior Wardens. Absent a rector, the Vestry votes to fill these positions. The remaining seven members of the Vestry take on specific responsibilities such as Stewardship, membership, buildings and grounds, etc. The Vestry meets monthly to conduct Parish business and holds other meetings as necessary.

The current Vestry consists of the following members:

Zed Howell, *Senior Warden*

Tommy Loyacono, *Junior Warden*

Ellen Williams, *Clerk*

Maria Gerry

Kathy Kane

Anne Klein

Christian Tregle

David Treppendahl

Hamilton Willis

Counsel

Stewart Hughes, *Chancellor*

Justin Penno, *Treasurer*

History and Facilities

The Grace Church campus contains the church building, parish hall, rectory, Golsan House, graveyard, and our mission church, St. John's.

In March of 1827, a building committee signed a contract to construct Grace Church. The original plot of ground, three hundred feet square, was acquired in 1827. The Parish of Grace Church, St. Francisville, is the second oldest in the Diocese of Louisiana.



GRACE CHURCH

The first church building was consecrated by Bishop Kemper in 1838. The Parish continued to acquire property for a larger churchyard and cemetery.

Construction was begun on the existing building in 1858. Bishop Leonidas K. Polk laid the cornerstone near the location of the first church building. The church building is an excellent example of mid nineteenth century Gothic Revival architecture. According to tradition, the stained glass above the altar and the rose window are European. The side windows are some of the first American attempts at stained glass.

The building was completed in 1860. Presents were made to the church, which included the Pilcher pipe organ and the chandelier. During the Civil War, the church was bombarded. One shell entered at the front corner of the building but did not detonate. The second shell passed through the organ.

The damage inflicted by the war could not be repaired for many years. Not until 1893 was the church restored, debt-free, and consecrated.

BISHOP JACKSON HALL

Bishop Jackson Hall (Parish Hall) was built in 1896 by the Bayou Sara Lodge of the Knights of Pythias, a fraternal and benevolent society. It was a large two-story building with a one-story annex. The lower floor was fitted to fulfill the requirements of a small-town opera house. The upper floor contained the “Castel Hall” of the Lodge. The building at one time was referred to as the “Opera House” because its stage was the scene for numerous musical and theatrical presentations.

Grace Church bought the building and surrounding property in 1938. The building was renamed Bishop Jackson Hall in honor of Bishop John Long Jackson who undertook to provide the kinds of ministry necessitated by World War II with special ministry to African Americans.

The hall was renovated in the early fifties due to structural problems. At that time four Sunday School rooms were added to the rear of the building, and a pre-school was begun for the youth of Grace. The parish hall was again renovated in 1989 and 2019.

Today, Bishop Jackson Hall continues to provide church offices, a preschool, and Sunday school rooms as well as the great hall with stage, kitchen, dining room, and parlor. The hall is used by the community for many events. Bishop Jackson Hall is one of the best tools Grace Church has for outreach. We are blessed to have it.



THE GRACE CHURCH CEMETERY

By 1838 town dwellers were numerous enough to require burial consideration. The Roman Catholic cemetery next door was used on limited basis but was not well maintained. Many people prior to that had been buried on their own land.

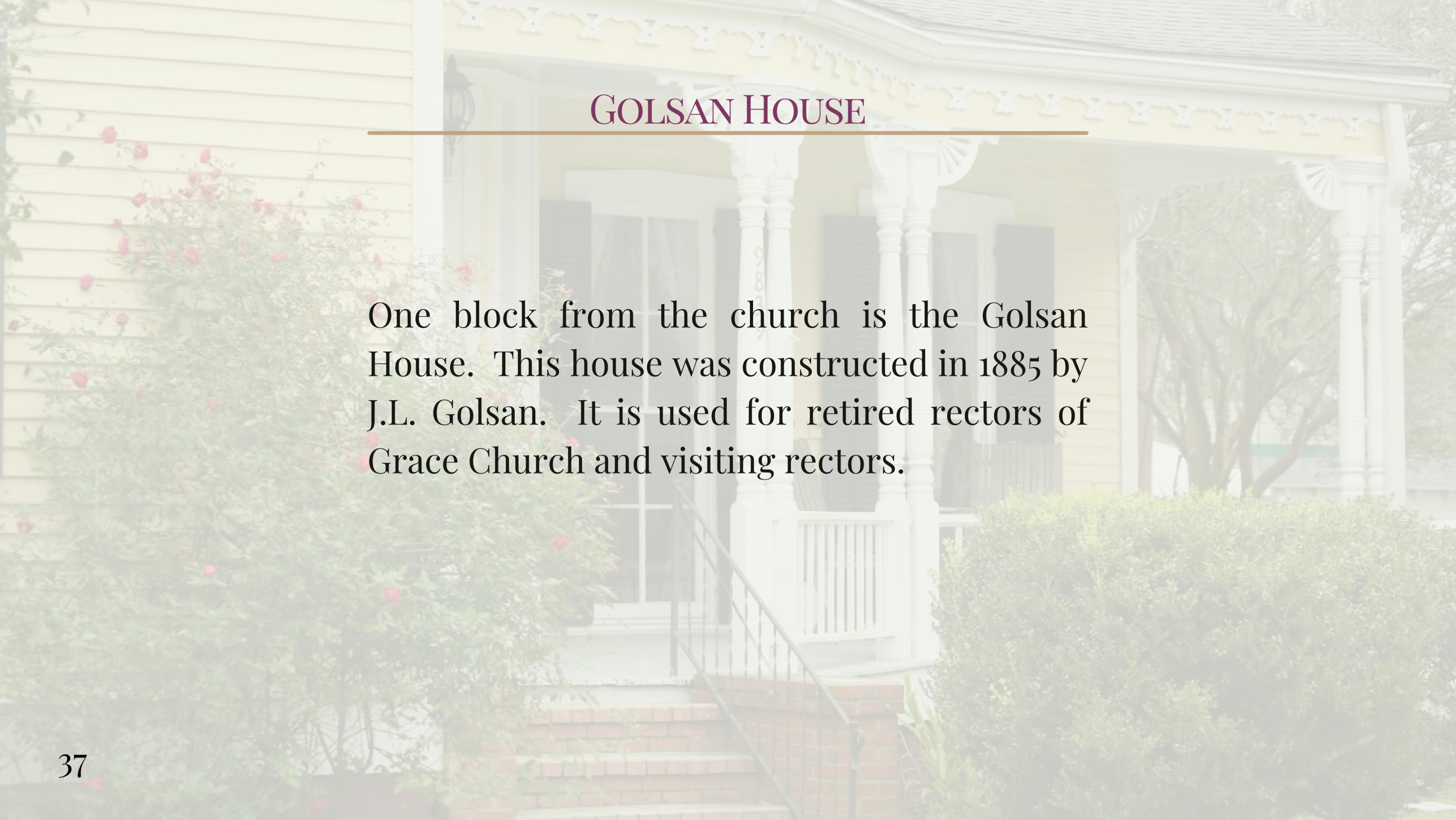


Cemeteries were becoming in vogue, and the notion of the park cemetery began to take root in St. Francisville. Grace Church acquired the remainder of the town squares on which the present church is located. In 1855, the fence around the entire site was erected, and the live oaks were planted from seedlings donated by parishioners.

THE GRACE CHURCH RECTORY

The Grace church Rectory is located next to Jackson Hall and was constructed as a home for Grace Church Rectors. It has been renovated several times and is currently being upgraded.





GOLSAN HOUSE

One block from the church is the Golsan House. This house was constructed in 1885 by J.L. Golsan. It is used for retired rectors of Grace Church and visiting rectors.

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. John's Episcopal Church is a historic church on Old Laurel Hill Road in Laurel Hill, Louisiana, 12 miles north of St. Francisville. It is maintained as a mission of Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._John%27s_Episcopal_Church_\(Laurel_Hill,_Louisiana\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._John%27s_Episcopal_Church_(Laurel_Hill,_Louisiana))

We are fortunate to have these lovely facilities. When you enter the grounds, you enter a place of meditation, contemplation, reflection, history, and beauty that is unmatched. Please come visit us.





Our Community

Located in the rolling hills of West Feliciana Parish, St. Francisville is the second oldest incorporated town in Louisiana. Part of Spanish West Florida in the early 1800's, it was home to early Anglo-American settlers from the eastern seaboard who planted vast acres of cotton, sugar cane and indigo.

Today, tourists regularly visit our picturesque downtown with its historic homes, shops, museums, restaurants, and a National Register Historic District of 146 structures. Tourism is an important element of our economy and an important means by which we get others to think about our town and parish as a place to visit, work, and live.

St. Francisville is the seat of government in West Feliciana Parish. The current population estimate in the town of St. Francisville is 1,627, while the total parish estimate is 15,568. Although small, it is very vibrant. The community has a strong and active commitment to priorities like education, health, and wellness.

<http://www.stfrancisville.net/>

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g40411-Activities-Saint_Francisville_Louisiana.html

West Feliciana Public Schools, which are strongly supported by our local community, consistently rank among the top five school districts in the state. Enrollment from K-12 is roughly 2,200 students. The West Feliciana Parish School District has numerous projects underway to improve our schools. Construction will soon begin on a new elementary school and a new freshman academy, career and tech center, and gym at West Feliciana High School.

<https://www.wfpsb.org/>

Our town library, built in 2014, has varied and extensive resources beyond books. Access to computer services, meeting rooms, research databases, career training, children's story-time readings, and more are offered.

In 2017, we made a leap ahead in the quality of care and comfort at West Feliciana Hospital with a brand new, state-of-the-art medical center. Doctors, high-tech imaging, lab work, emergency care, and hospitalization are all available in St. Francisville.

Recreational activities are also available year-round at West Feliciana Parish Sports Park. It is a multi-purpose park with more than 250 acres of recreational area and facilities, including soccer, baseball, and softball fields; basketball, tennis and pickle-ball courts; rodeo arena; a one-mile walking path; and over 6 miles of hiking/biking trails.

<https://www.wfprec.com/>

The hilly landscape provides the area's most beautiful terrain for outdoor activities, including the Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge, Tunica State Park, Audubon Historic Site, and the Port Hudson Civil War Battlefield. Hiking, bicycling, birding, and golf are popular recreational pastimes in the area. One of America's greatest 19th century naturalists and painters, John James Audubon, painted dozens of his Birds of America in West Feliciana in 1821. Artists, writers, and other visitors have found inspiration in the scenic, unspoiled spot.



Included among the many attractions of our area are historic homes and gardens, which draw tourists year-round. Numerous festivals and events that celebrate art, literature, music, history, and more are held in our area each year. Something exists for everyone to enjoy, from a prison rodeo to home and garden tours.





A MESSAGE TO OUR CANDIDATES

Thank you for your interest in the position of rector at Grace Episcopal Church of West Feliciana Parish. If you wish to apply for this position, please send the following documents in electronic form to The Reverend Canon Shannon Rogers Manning, The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana, at smanning@edola.org and to Bobby Wilson, Search Committee chairman, at robertwilson551@bellsouth.net

- Current Office of Transitions Ministry (OTM) portfolio. This is from the Episcopal Church website and must be completed in full.
- Resume.
- A one-page statement outlining your skills.
- A list of three references, at least two of which are to be lay people, one of whom must be related to your current place of ministry. Please add contact information for each.
- A one-paragraph statement as to why you are interested in leaving your current call.
- A one-paragraph statement as to why you are seeking a call in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana.
- A two-paragraph statement as to your understanding of priesthood in the Episcopal Church.

You are encouraged to contact the Search Committee Chairman, Bobby Wilson.

Bobby Wilson • robertwilson551@bellsouth.net • Mobile: +1 (225) 252-6484

The Diocese and/or Grace Search Committee will respond as quickly as possible to all communications.

The committee will begin reviewing and screening as soon as the candidate's materials are received. Zoom interviews will be scheduled after the screening process.

Thank you for your interest in Grace Episcopal Church. We are looking forward to getting to know you!

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bobby Wilson, *Chair*

Kathy Kane

David Beauchamp

Sara Klein

Betsy Daniel

Shannon Pollet

Peggy Gammill

Carly Whatley



Paintings of the 1860 Pilcher Organ and "Dancing St. Francis" by Joseph Savell

Photo Credit: Jeanne Hamey Morris