

Reserve space now at Grace Church's Fall Retreat! Friday - Saturday, December 9-10 2016 at Bon Secours Retreat Center

There are many reasons why we make Grace Church our parish home. Grace offers us a loving community, inspired guidance to God's word, and a place to worship and to help others. And perhaps most important, we feel drawn here as a way to answer God's call, both as individuals and as a community. God's call can be different for each of us, but Grace Church gives us hope of finding and living out that purpose in our life.

For many of us, spiritual progress can feel neglected in the face of busy schedules and all the distractions of daily living. For the seventh straight year, Grace Church offers some extra help on your Christian journey. This fall, we invite you to set aside time – a Friday afternoon and a Saturday – to explore this crucial part of your life. By planning now, you might discover something you've always wanted to know about yourself and your relationship with God.

From Friday afternoon, December 9, through Saturday, December 10, Grace Church will host a spiritual retreat for parishioners. We've reserved limited space at the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours in Marriottsville, Maryland, a beautiful facility less than 60 miles from D.C. The Center sits atop 300 acres of pasture and woodland near Patapsco State Park. For more information on Bon Secours, please visit <http://rccbonssecours.com/home.html>. This year, Rev. Dr. Robert Martin, Dean of the Wesley Theological Seminary and professor of Christian formation, will be facilitating the retreat and leading us to reflect on spiritual development, both individual and communal, by examining our current spiritual practices and areas for growth. See the other side of this sheet for an outline of the retreat provided by Dr. Martin.

Our vestry has once again generously included funds in our 2016 budget to allow participants to attend for only \$90 per person, a more than 40 percent discount from the facility's \$154 fee. This covers all meals, lodging, and expenses. Sign up now—and let us know if you'd like to help plan the retreat or if you have any special ideas for this wonderful event. We'll see you at Bon Secours in December!

To confirm your space, complete the following and return it to the church office with a check for \$90 to "Grace Church", with "Fall Retreat" noted in the memo line. If you have any questions, please contact Mystelle Ruble, rubleM@gmail.com.

Name(s) _____ Number attending _____

Phone _____ Address _____

Any special needs (transportation needs, disabilities) _____

Able to drive others? _____

What attracted you to this retreat? _____

What do you want to achieve or hope to be different after the retreat? _____

Note: For the benefit of guests seeking quiet reflection and prayer, Bon Secours Spiritual Center is designated as an adult facility and cannot accommodate children under age 18.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES AND PRACTICES
REV. DR. ROBERT MARTIN, WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANNUAL RETREAT, DECEMBER 9 AND 10, 2016

Each session will include time for small group conversation.

Friday evening, Session 1

- *Locating ourselves in Spiritual Practice*

We will begin with exercises that assist participants in locating themselves spiritually by identifying the activities that are currently spiritually energizing for them. This is accomplished by means of a Spiritual Practices Survey in which participants identify which spiritual activities are most and least enriching. Small and large group discussions will follow. This is a relatively easy and low-intensity activity, and usually generates a lot of conversation and insight. I will record some of the main insights of the group discussion, and will pull together various themes in order to come up with a working definition of spirituality and spiritual formation that will be useful in the morning sessions.

Saturday morning, Session 2

- *Discovering our Spiritual Types*

This session revolves around a Spiritual Types survey. Drawing upon the insights generated the night before, we take a short questionnaire that reveals (unscientifically!) a typology of Spirituality that has 4 quadrants. The suggestive power of this tool evokes reflection on the type(s) of spirituality the participants prefer currently and helps them think about how to deepen and expand their spirituality, especially given the activities/practices discussed the night before.

Saturday morning, Session 3

- *Developing a Rule of Life*

This session builds on the awareness cultivated in the previous sessions and draws upon the practice of developing a Rule of Life, for a more intentional approach to spiritual development. I will offer some materials for their use regarding the a) nature and process of developing a spiritual Rule, and b) the covenantal context within which a spiritual Rule is supported, nourished, and accountable.

Saturday afternoon, Session 4

- *Loose Ends from Earlier Sessions*

- *Covenanting with Others for Spiritual Discipline and Growth*

The group will examine several models for covenantal spirituality.

By the end of the retreat, participants will have been asked to a) individually imagine the next steps to their spiritual growth, b) collectively imagine how they might join together for intentional spiritual growth.