

St. John's-Grace, Buffalo

What makes your church unique in the region and the diocese?

We are a landmark church in our neighborhood with a visible presence on Colonial Circle, surrounded by the Elmwood Village and Grant St. We have offered an Ecumenical Service on Good Friday, from 12:00-3:00 pm, featuring the Last Three Words of Jesus for many years. This service includes clergy from our surrounding parishes, who join us to reflect on Gospel readings. This time becomes very solemn and moving for those attending. Every Memorial Day in May, our church offers our Interfaith Service, which is a tribute and honor to our veterans and fallen heroes. We have also sponsored a Porch Fest event in the neighborhood with afternoon music and refreshments. We also engage with vendors from the Elmwood area to share our church space for their creative and unique wares with us and the surrounding neighborhood.



What are the most vibrant ministries or strengths of your parish today?

A primary goal for our church is to be a diverse, open-minded and supportive space for all those who come through our doors. All are welcome at Jesus' table! We are particularly fond and embrace our ministry with Friends of Night People (FONP) in Buffalo. We make a special noise in church through our Noisy Collection where a bucket with bells is passed around for donations to the pantry. As soon as we hear the bells, we are eagerly pulling out our coins we have saved up for this ministry. We also support FONP with our annual Jeans Drive in November which also includes winter gear – warm socks, gloves and hats. We also are known for our annual Spaghetti Dinner that takes place in our church hall in February. It's a nice diversion from the busy holidays and brings together folks from different facets of our community. It grows bigger each year.

How does your church engage with the local neighborhood, the civic life of your community, or diocesan and/or Episcopal Church-wide initiatives?

We open our doors to several community organizations, such as Jesus the Liberator Seminary, Nusantara Arts, 12-Step and Self-Help groups, Yoga and Dance, and Violin instruction. We also offer our sanctuary and church hall for weddings and funerals. We truly enjoy and nourish our community connection. During the Lenten season, we share our soup, salad and reflection with our surrounding church partners, which has proven to be a new and engaging experience for everyone attending.

