

*Welcome, we are  
excited to meet you!*



**GRACE  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH**

**of Muskogee, Oklahoma**

**+ HOLY + HOLY + HOLY**

**2025 PARISH PROFILE**  
*Summary*

To Bring People Together in Loving Relationship with God and Each Other in Christ.





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To Bring People Together in Loving Relationship with God and Each Other in Christ. [OFFICE@GRACEMUSKOGEE.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@GRACEMUSKOGEE.ORG)



# OUR CHURCH FAMILY



At Grace Episcopal you will find a warm, open, welcoming parish with an inclusive atmosphere for all who walk through our red doors.

Grace has a multi-generational and diverse congregation who come together each week in faith, fellowship and service.

"All are welcome" at Grace.



## Leadership

Our lay leadership is strong and engaged, guiding our congregation on a positive trajectory for the future. Everyone is excited to find our new spiritual leader.

## Our Challenges

Like many churches in the United States, we are constantly working to innovate & develop new approaches to address our aging congregation by attracting younger people. We are always seeking growth and welcome new members.

We love our beautiful historic buildings, but they present a significant yearly financial investment to maintain, repair and improve.



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# OUR CHURCH



## Sunday

9:30 am Bible Study in the Parlor

10:15 am Godly Play for children

10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II in the Sanctuary

Coffee Hour immediately after morning worship in the parish hall.

Visiting Priests and Parishioners are currently leading Sunday Morning Worship as we search for our new Rector.

## Wednesday

6:30 pm Evening Prayer Service in Grace's Bixby Chapel.

7:00 pm Book Club in the parlor

Evening Prayer Services are currently being led by Parishioner and valued Vestry Member, Joshua Chapman, who is engaged in the discernment process for becoming a Deacon.

## Worship

Worship is at the center of all that we do. We value powerful liturgy rooted in Episcopal tradition, preaching that brings God's Word alive with clarity and conviction, with exceptional music. Our worship is centered on celebrating Holy Communion and Holy Scripture. All are welcome!



**Formation.** Due to the dedication of our Parishioners and the availability of our Education Wing, Grace has always taken pride in offering Christian Formation opportunities to our members and the community at large. Those opportunities are diverse and are planned to accommodate the many different schedules of interested individuals and families.

**Godly Play** is always a special treat for the youth of Grace Episcopal Church. While regular Sunday Services are taking place in the Sanctuary, our youth meet in the Education Wing to enjoy lessons, crafts, and treats. The program is led by coordinator Pamela Lipscomb and presenter Patrick Shea with a host of other volunteers that enjoy bringing special treats or assisting in the development of innovative approaches to keep our young people interested, engaged, and happy to enjoy the opportunity to further their own development.

**EFM** is based out of the School of Theology at the University of the South at Sewanee. It is a unique four-year small group formation program based on study and practice in theological reflection. We have had learners participating at Grace Episcopal Church for the last 20 years!

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**Book Club** provides an opportunity for fellowship while discussing insights and reflections about the selected work. Participants are committed to learning from each other's diverse perspectives and strengthening relationships through shared understanding.

**Music** is an integral part of worship at Grace Episcopal Church. Grace is blessed to have an assortment of talented musicians within our Parish, many of which possess exceptional skills on their instrument of choice.



**Top Left:** Talented members perform a duet accompanied by guitar and keyboard.

**Top Right:** Member & cellist, Kaia Holder.

**Middle Left:** The Muskogee Recorder Consort, a musical group, perform.

**Middle Right:** A special musical performance by the Grace Youth.

**Bottom Left:** The Grace Choir

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# OUR MINISTRIES

Our Mission is *To Bring People Together in Loving Relationship with God and Each Other in Christ*. Our diverse array of ministries is intended to provide opportunities for fellowship and outreach in an effort to accomplish our mission. The dedication of our members, provides a strong foundation, which supports our ministries. Each ministry is important to our community. The leaders of each ministry would love to share the intimate details of the programs and demonstrate the impact to our community.

## **Ministries:**

**Meal on Wings**

**Acolytes**

**Quilters**

**Counting Ministry**

**Faithful Innovation**

**Alter Guild**

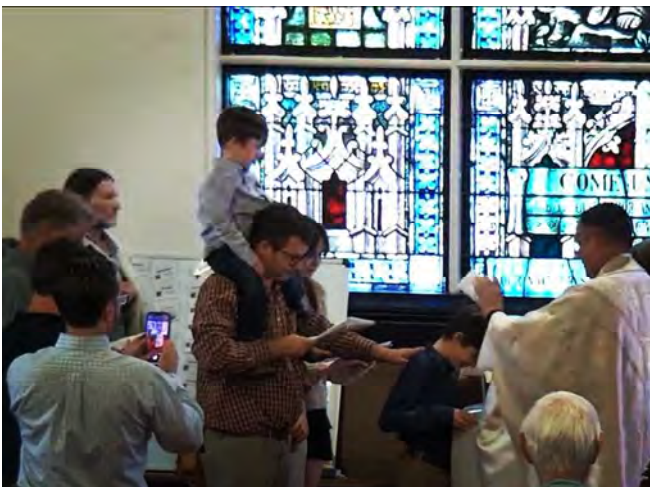
**Office Volunteers**

**Vacation Bible School**

**Jingle Jam**

**Angel Tree**

**Grace Heritage Society**



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Grace Episcopal's **Scouting America Troop** is an impressive bunch that holds their regular meetings in the Parish Hall. They are involved in the youth activities at Grace, and also are regularly seen volunteering for community events in Muskogee.



Grace has a traditional **Property Committee**, which organizes events such as **Saturday Sextons**.

Grace also has programs that support training and recruiting **Lectors, Oblationers, Greeters, Ushers, Eucharistic** and **Lay Ministries**; in addition to unique programs like Parish Field Trips and Fellowship Dinners.





# OUR CAMPUS

The campus is a short walk to the Muskogee Civic Center, Arrowhead Mall, the Muskogee County District Court, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, the Three Rivers Museum, the Muskogee Swim & Fitness Center, the Martin Luther King Community Center, and a number of other unique businesses and restaurants. We are truly a “downtown” church.

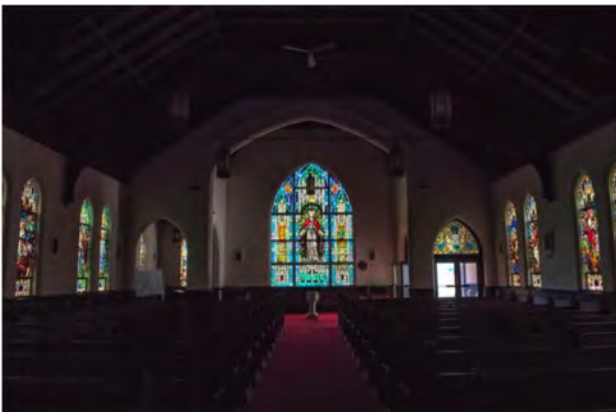
## The Sanctuary



**The familiar red doors mark the entrance to Grace's Sanctuary.**



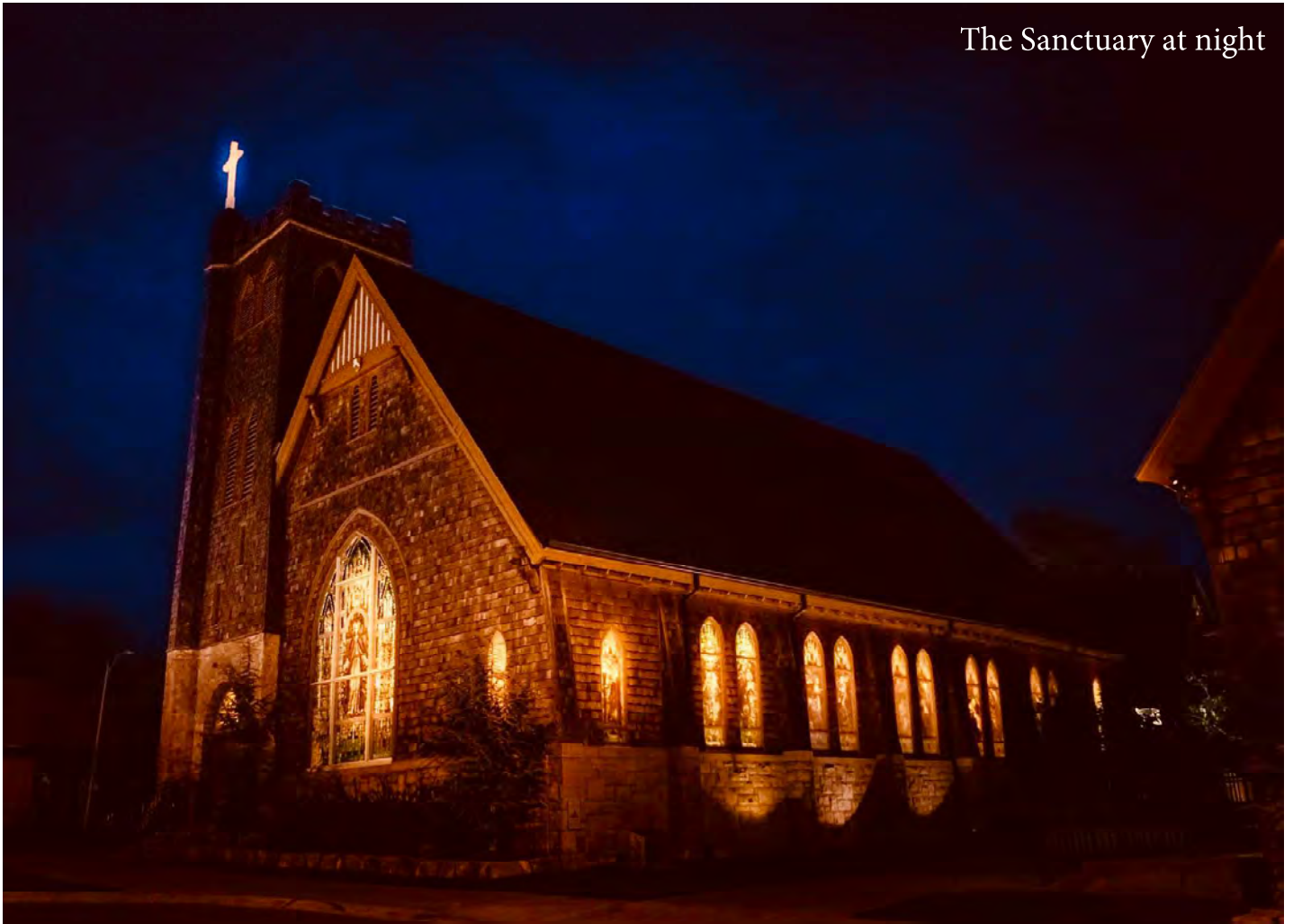
Our stained-glass windows honor our faith and many give tribute to the individuals that contributed to the growth and development of **Grace Episcopal Church** in the past.



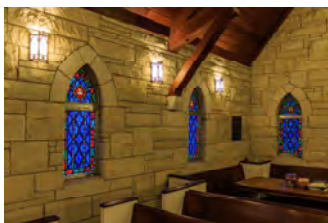
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The Sanctuary at night



**The Bixby Memorial Chapel** a treasured gem of the Grace congregation. The construction was completed in 1960. It was funded by the Bixby Family to memorialize members of the Bixby family and to benefit Grace's mission.



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# Our Community



**Grace Episcopal Church** is located in the historic downtown district of Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Muskogee is a diverse community with small town charm, a close proximity to larger cities, and immediately surrounded by small towns. It is the perfect place for you to grow and flourish, with endless opportunities for outreach.

In addition to being one of the most affordable cities in the country to live, Muskogee has wonderful neighborhoods, both historic and new, a national blue ribbon school, a new high school sports complex, tennis & pickleball courts, a golf club, a new hospital, a veteran's hospital, Indian resources & health clinics, scenic parks, a butterfly house, museums, music hall of fame, a winery, splash pads, a water park, and numerous nearby rivers and lakes.

In 2024, Muskogee secured the top position in Oklahoma for capital investment, raking #1 in the state with over 4.1 billion in announced projects.



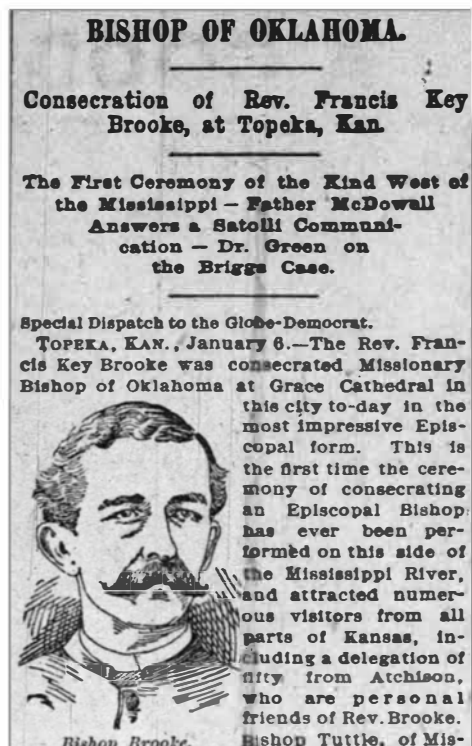
For more information on  
Muskogee visit:  
[muskogeechamber.org](http://muskogeechamber.org)  
and  
[MuskogeeMeansMore.com](http://MuskogeeMeansMore.com)



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## The First Episcopal Church in Oklahoma Indian Territory



# OUR HISTORY

Grace Episcopal Church has served the Muskogee community for over 130 years. Beginning with the first service on February 23, 1893, Grace has been dedicated *to bringing people together in a loving relationship with God and each other in Christ.*



Grace's first, small church on South Fourth Street opened for services April 14, 1895.

The original Sanctuary constructed in 1905 could not accommodate the growing membership. In 1922, the Sanctuary - the structure itself - was moved to the corner of Sixth and Court Streets, and it was expanded.

Since 1922, our Sanctuary has continued to expand into our present-day "campus." In the decades that followed, Grace's leadership would continue to acquire, construct, and renovate adjacent and various other nearby properties that now constitute the Grace Campus.



Grace Postcard c. 1930



Sanctuary Interior c. 1925

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# OUR STABILITY

## Grace Heritage Society

The Grace Heritage Society was started in 2023 during the celebration of the 130th anniversary of our Church's founding. Grace's thorough and extensive record-keeping enabled us to identify those who had included our Church and its mission in their estate planning throughout our long history. We then shared their stories and their impact on our church to encourage current members to consider incorporating Grace into their own estate planning. The response was incredible with 25 new members added to date.

To honor the past, present, and future members who have made such an extraordinary commitment, we formed the Grace Heritage Society, which is celebrated annually on All Saints Sunday with the induction of new members along with a tribute to existing members.

### Signed Pledges

43

### Total Amount Pledged

\$227,361

### Income from Endowment

Account \$32,000

### Other Income

\$45,700

non-pledge, plate, interest

### 2025 Budgeted Income

\$305,061

### 2025 Budgeted Expenses

\$308,415

### Net Difference

-\$3,354

This endowment fund is invested in the Common Investment Fund of the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma.

- **Estimated current balance: \$633,000.00**

- **All funds are unrestricted**

- **100% unspent to date**

- **Funds allocated to the operating fund in 2025 = 5% (\$32,000.00)**

# OUR FINANCIALS

## Debt Free

Grace recovered well following the pandemic and is financially sound.

Pledging and attendance have increased significantly even in the absence of a priest on staff.

Budgeted Expenses for 2025 include salaries for a 3/4th time Priest and an Organist.



# OUR HOPES

Church members have committed to having a full-time priest. To support this, our income needs to increase by \$65k annually for three years. Ongoing fund-raising has to date received commitments for \$57k annually for three years. This drive will continue and should easily raise \$70-\$75k by the end of the drive, allowing the hiring of a full-time priest. Grace has faith that an enthusiastic priest will help us bring the Word of God and Christ's Love into our community, which will bring more people into our church.

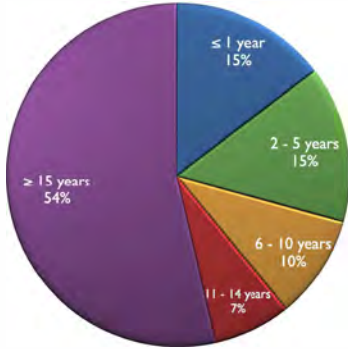
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# OUR FUTURE

In preparing to conduct a search for a new Rector, our Vestry developed a survey that was distributed to members of our Parish to obtain their input on our strengths, our weaknesses, our past, our present, and most importantly, *our future*. The results encompass Grace Episcopal Church as it exists today.

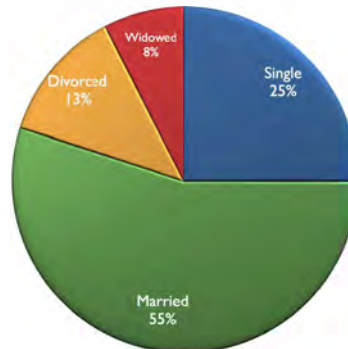
How long have you attended Grace?



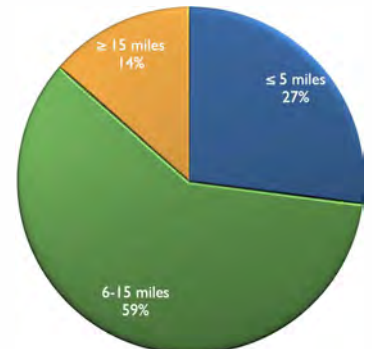
What is your age?



What is your marital status?



How far do you travel to Grace?



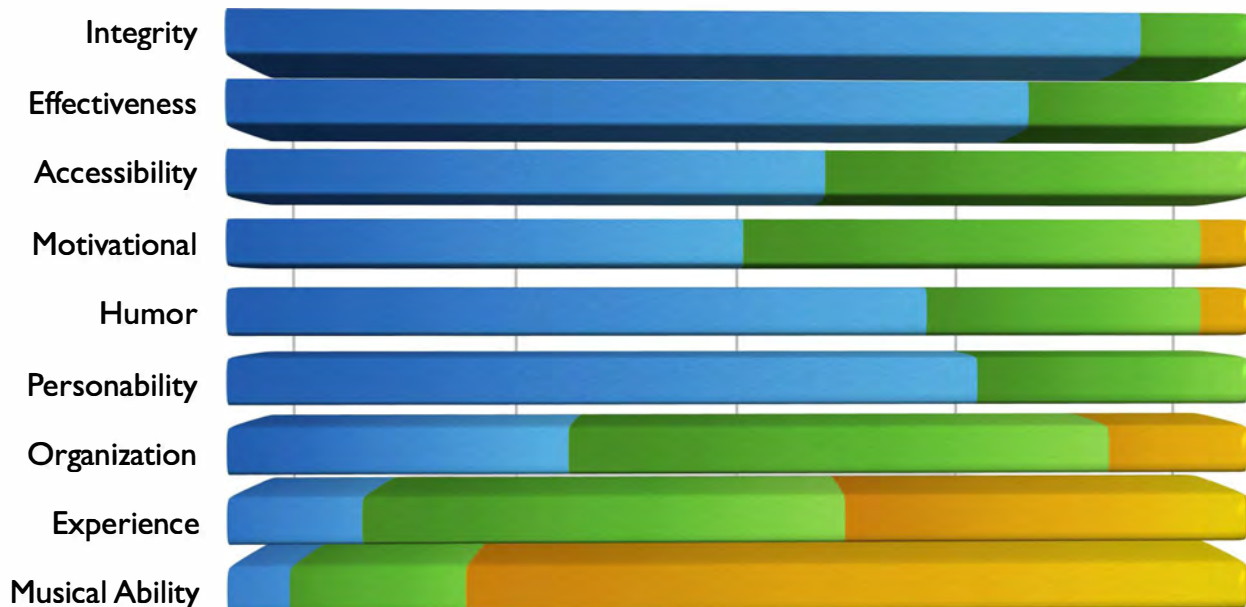
## How would you like to see Grace impact our community in 5-10 years?

- be a stronghold in our urban presence
- partnerships with schools/after school programs
- show ourselves off to the community
- more young people involved with the church

## What are the most important issues or challenges facing Grace?

- attracting younger generations
- encouraging growth and giving to preserve financial security
- utilizing our strengths
- preserving and improving building and grounds

## QUALITIES SOUGHT IN A RECTOR



% of Respondents Identifying Quality as:

Very Important Important Less Important

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## Ranking the importance of particular qualities in Grace's future Priest...



Our hope is that this Parish Profile Summary stirs your heart and sparks your imagination to consider Grace Episcopal in Muskogee, Oklahoma as your next home for your personal ministry and life adventure.

Grace Episcopal Church is a community of faith always looking forward, striving to make our parish better today, tomorrow, and beyond. It is our heritage, our legacy, and our challenge.

If this is where the Holy Spirit leads you, we pray you will join Grace Episcopal's parish family. We will be waiting with open arms.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*The Grace Episcopal Rector Search Committee.*

### **Our Staff**

Parish Administer/Youth & Children's Director: Nancy Scott

### **Our Vestry**

Senior Warden: Katherine Coburn  
Junior Warden: BJ Charbonneau  
Treasurer: Van Odom  
Secretary: Lora Sellers

Stephen Bradley  
Laura Burchfiel  
Joshua Chapman  
Pam Lipscomb

Tyler Martin  
Alison Miller  
Kelin Stratton  
David Wilcox

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*If you wish to be considered for this calling, please forward the following information to:*

The Rev. Canon Betsy Randall, Canon to the Ordinary

Email: [canonbetsy@epiok.org](mailto:canonbetsy@epiok.org)

\*Resume/Curriculum Vitae

\*A copy of your updated OTM profile

\*A "Letter of Interest" that highlights why you believe you may be called to serve as Rector of Grace Episcopal Church, Muskogee, OK.

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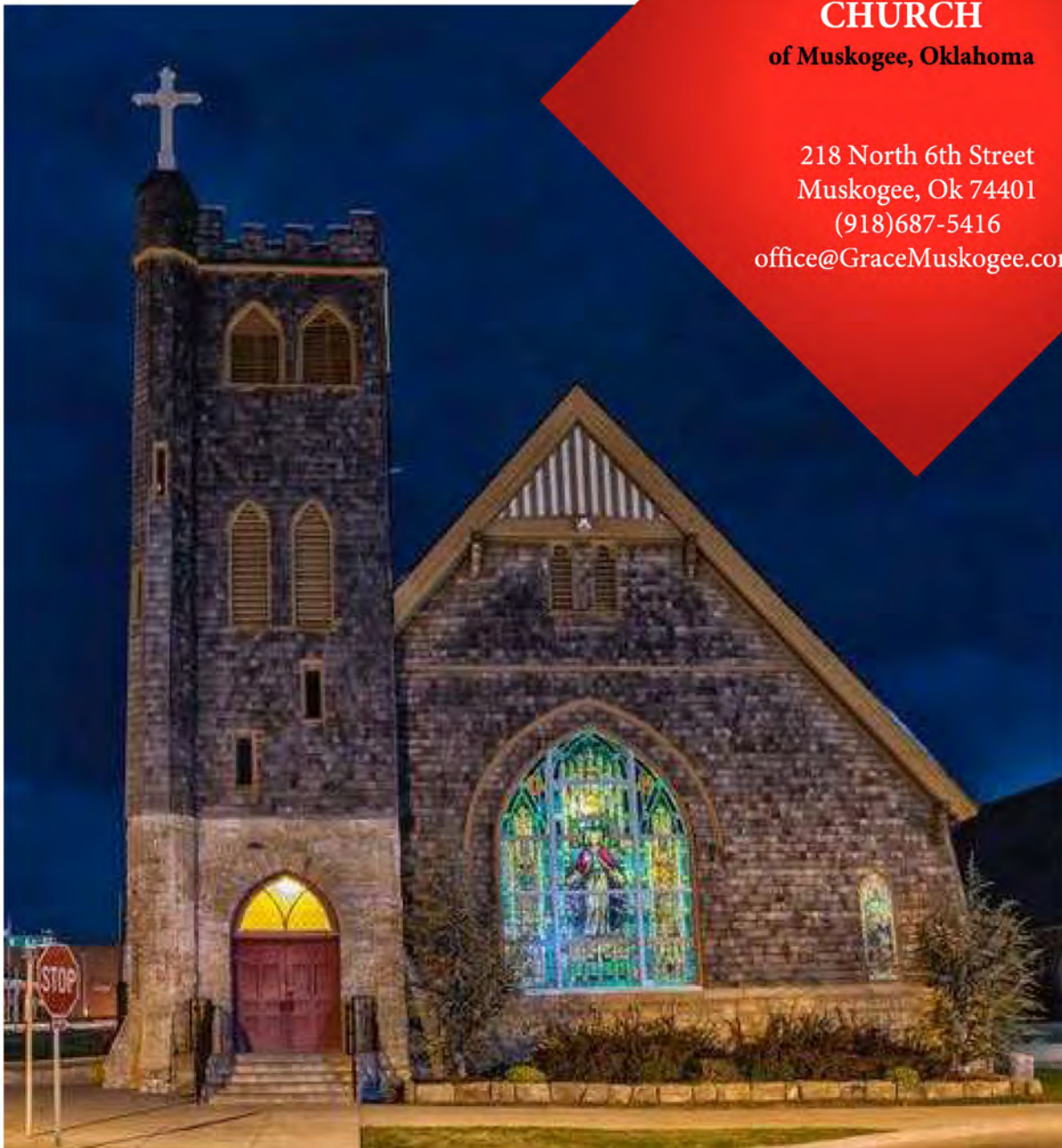
**of Muskogee, Oklahoma**

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*Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life and bring us all to be of one heart and mind, especially as we go through our search process. Guide us to the priest that you want us to have; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

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