

Summer 2020




The ANGELUS

News of the Life of GRACE CHURCH

Over 150 Years in the Heart of White Plains



The Doors to Grace Church/La Gracia Will Reopen!



Everywhere we look, it is all about the coronavirus, or Covid-19 as we have now become accustomed. This virus has changed our lives and in so many ways. We cannot leave home. Most of us cannot work. Many are unemployed. Many have become ill. And some have died much too early. Covid-19 has become the enemy on every front. Therefore, it has made it difficult to see Jesus in all of this.

As I turn to the lectionary for Easter 3 in the Gospel of Luke, beginning in the 24th chapter, I begin to connect to Cleopas and companion as they encounter Jesus on their way to Emmaus, but initially not recognizing him. Similarly, during Covid-19, we find it difficult to recognize Jesus in our lives. Illness, unemployment, anger, depression, and death. It is hard to recognize Jesus in all of this.

I believe this Gospel lesson connects well with our current pandemic. We are literally walking on that road to Emmaus but not recognizing Jesus. How many times have we silently asked, where are you Jesus? And there seems to be no answer, but instead an empty feeling like throwing a stone down an endless hole and waiting to hear it hit..... but nothing, nothing at all. Where is Jesus?

How do we recognize Jesus during the Covid-19 pandemic? Well, we did not see Jesus during safe distancing – removing ourselves from any social contact, but we did see Jesus in the results of the safe distancing when the infection and death rate began to slow. We did not seem to see Jesus in our forced quarantine, but we did see Jesus in small ongoing celebrations including newborn babies, anniversaries, graduations, and birthdays such as the 100th birthday of our very own Elsie Adams.

We did not see Jesus in the 102-year-old French woman who was infected with coronavirus in March, but we did see Jesus when she miraculously recovered one month later. We haven't seen Jesus in the insurmountable economic downfall for businesses and churches throughout the US, but we have seen Jesus through new stimulus initiatives, people and churches around the world stepping up to help those in great need, and, for example, new ministries begun such as our new grocery distribution for those unemployed at Grace Church, each and every Thursday at noon.

My list of Good News and 'seeing Jesus' is not meant to trivialize the seriousness or tragedy of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is serious and it is devastating. At 58, I have never encountered anything like this. Never. But I do see Jesus, even during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please know that God through Jesus Christ is always with us whether we are in the middle of a pandemic or not.

Our Christian call is to recognize Jesus during all times, in those times of celebration and in those times without celebration, in those times of peace and joy and in those times of war. Especially, in those times of war. My dear friends, please know that Jesus loves you beyond our comprehension and beyond our wildest dreams. Know that Jesus Christ is and always will be there for us. Recognize him. Recognize him.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Rev. Dr. Chip Graves

Rector - Artículo Angelus Primavera 2020

El reverendo Dr. Chip Graves

Dondequiera que miramos, todo trata sobre el coronavirus o covid-19, como nos hemos acostumbrado. Este virus ha cambiado nuestras vidas de muchas maneras. No podemos salir de casa. La mayoría de nosotros no estamos trabajando. Muchos están desempleados. Muchos se han enfermado. Y algunos han muerto demasiado prematuro. Covid-19 se ha convertido en el enemigo en todos los frentes. Por lo tanto, ha dificultado ver a Jesús en todo esto.

Cuando me dirijo al leccionario de Pascua 3 en el Evangelio de Lucas, comenzando en el capítulo 24, comienzo a conectarme con Cleofás y su compañero cuando se encuentran con Jesús en su camino hacia Emaús, pero inicialmente no lo reconocen. Del mismo modo, durante covid-19, nos resulta difícil reconocer a Jesús en nuestras vidas. Enfermedad, desempleo, ira, depresión y muerte. Es difícil reconocer a Jesús en todo esto.

Creo que esta lectura del Evangelio se conecta bien con nuestra pandemia actual. Estamos literalmente caminando por ese camino a Emaús pero no reconocemos a Jesús. ¿Cuántas veces nos hemos preguntado en silencio, dónde estás Jesús? Y parece que no hay respuesta, sino una sensación de vacío como tirar una piedra por un agujero sin fin y esperar a que la golpee... pero nada, nada en absoluto. ¿Dónde está Jesús?

¿Cómo reconocemos a Jesús durante la pandemia de covid-19? Bueno, no vimos a Jesús durante el distanciamiento social, alejándonos de cualquier contacto social, pero sí vimos a Jesús en los resultados del distanciamiento seguro cuando la tasa de infección y la mortalidad comenzó a disminuir. No parecíamos ver a Jesús en nuestra cuarentena forzada, pero sí lo vimos en pequeñas celebraciones, incluidos bebés recién nacidos, aniversarios, graduaciones y cumpleaños, como el centenario de nuestra propia Elsie Adams.

No vimos a Jesús en la mujer francesa de 102 años que fue infectada con coronavirus en marzo; pero sí vimos a Jesús cuando se recuperó milagrosamente un mes después. No hemos visto a Jesús en la caída económica insuperable de empresas e iglesias en todo Estados Unidos, pero hemos visto a Jesús a través de nuevas iniciativas de estímulo, personas e iglesias de todo el mundo dando un paso adelante para ayudar a aquellos que lo necesitan; por ejemplo, comenzaron nuevos ministerios, como nuestra nueva distribución de alimentos para los desempleados en Grace/ La Gracia, todos los jueves al mediodía.

Mi lista de Buenas Nuevas y "ver a Jesús" no pretende trivializar la seriedad o la tragedia de la pandemia de covid-19. Es grave y es devastador. A los 58 años, nunca me he encontrado con algo así. Nunca. Pero sí veo a Jesús, incluso durante la pandemia del covid-19. Sepa que Dios a través de Jesucristo siempre está con nosotros, ya sea que estemos en medio de una pandemia o no.

Nuestro llamado como cristianos es reconocer a Jesús en todo momento, en esos tiempos de celebración y en aquellos tiempos sin celebración, en esos tiempos de paz y alegría y en esos tiempos de guerra. Especialmente, en esos tiempos de guerra. Mis queridos amigos, sepan que Jesús los ama más allá de nuestra comprensión y más allá de nuestros más grandes sueños. Sepa que Jesucristo está y siempre estará allí para nosotros. Lo reconoces. Lo reconoces.

En el nombre del Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo.
Amén.

***‘This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.’
-Psalm 118.24***


Grace Church,

Every now and then, we have a moment to celebrate. And this is one of those moments. I am incredibly happy to announce that Michael Heffner is now beginning a process of discernment for Holy Orders. What an exciting time for Grace La Gracia Episcopal Church! Michael is now setting out on an amazing journey. Over the past couple of months, Michael had discussed with me this new and exciting adventure. He will share more of his story in a future article.

Michael is an amazing candidate – smart, passionate, advocating, empathetic, well-spoken, and guided by a listening ear. Michael will be supported by us, his parish, Grace Episcopal Church, on this fantastic spiritual journey. He will begin by writing his theological biography and then segue into an 8 to 12-month discernment process with a Grace Church Committee led by George O’Hanlon. The other committee members include Walter Simon, Sam Brown, Mary Baker, Bill Biles, and the Rev. Marsha Bacon Glover.

Michael’s process begins here at Grace Church and then continues with diocesan interviews and an eventual meeting with our bishop. Assuming all things continue forward, Michael will attend a 3-year seminary education leading to ordination. This journey will be life-changing, amazingly spiritual, and not always easy. Therefore, he and his family





need to know that we are here for them. We will be his support through this time of discernment.

Therefore, I am asking all members to show support for Michael by praying for him and his discernment committee.

Michael, know that you are much appreciated. You are much admired. You are much loved here at Grace Episcopal Church – your home parish.

May God bless you on this amazing journey. We support you 100 %

God Bless,

Fr. Chip +

**"Este es el día que hizo el Señor; regocijémonos y alegrémonos en él".
-Salmo 118.24**

Iglesia Grace/ La Gracia,

De vez en cuando, tenemos un momento para celebrar. Y este es uno de esos momentos. Estoy increíblemente feliz de anunciar que Michael Heffner ahora está comenzando un proceso de discernimiento para las órdenes sagradas. ¡Qué momento tan emocionante para Grace La Gracia! Michael ahora está emprendiendo un viaje increíble. En los últimos meses, Michael había hablado conmigo esta nueva y emocionante aventura. Él compartirá más de su historia en un artículo futuro.

Michael es un candidato increíble: inteligente, apasionado, defensor, empático, bien hablado y guiado por un oído atento. Michael será apoyado por nosotros, su parroquia, Grace/ La Gracia, en este fantástico viaje espiritual. Comenzará escribiendo su biografía teológica y luego pasará a un proceso de discernimiento de 8 a 12 meses con un Comité de la Iglesia Grace dirigido por George O'Hanlon. Los otros miembros del comité incluyen a Walter Simon, Sam Brown, Mary Baker, Bill Biles y la Rev. Marsha Bacon Glover.

El proceso de Michael comienza aquí en Grace/ La Gracia y luego continúa con entrevistas diocesanas y una eventual reunión con nuestro obispo. Suponiendo que todas las cosas continúen adelante, Michael asistirá a un seminario de 3 años de educación que le llevara a la ordenación. Este viaje cambiará su vida, será increíblemente espiritual y no siempre será fácil. Por lo tanto, él y su familia necesitan saber que estamos aquí para ayudarlos. Seremos su apoyo durante este tiempo de discernimiento.

Por lo tanto, les pido a todos los miembros que muestren su apoyo a Michael al orar por él y su comité de discernimiento.

Michael, sé que eres muy apreciado. Eres muy admirado Eres muy querido aquí en Grace/ La Gracia, tu parroquia natal.

Que Dios te bendiga en este increíble viaje. Te apoyamos al 100%

Dios bendiga,

P. Chip +

Maria Campos' Retirement – Gratitude



Maria, we cannot thank you enough for all you have done for Grace La Gracia Episcopal Church. Your tireless work inspired, supported, and achieved. Your true value lay beyond the obvious day-to-day as the administrator for our parish.

It was perhaps the unseen that was perhaps so life-giving in your position – comforting our volunteers, reaching out to members, working outside the office before Covid-19, working late hours into the evening, and so much more. In 1 Thessalonians 5:18 it states, “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

In sum, we cannot thank you enough for the work and ministry you have done at Grace Church. We pray for you and Carl as you venture forward into your new life.

God Bless You.



CHALLENGING TIMES

By Rev. Adolfo Moronta

These are very challenging times; the Corona Virus pandemic (COVID 19) is changing our lives in ways we never could have imagined. It is a time we fear for our health, our loved ones, and our economic well-being. Yet, the pandemic is also a wake-up call for our faith in many ways that we may not have realized. For Christians, times like these offer unique opportunities for reflection, renewal, and action.

Humans crave community and relationships and there is a great sense of loss when we cannot worship in church or be a part of our faith community. Yet, we are discovering that we can be connected spiritually even though we are not connected physically. We are discovering new ways to be faithful through technology, by live streaming, and by checking on people through phone calls, Facebook, and Instagram.

As a pastor I suffer every time I have receive a phone call about a parishioner or a family that has been affected by the pandemic. I cry with those that have lost loved ones. Our faith community at La Gracia recently lost a dear one to the virus. She died on her sofa waiting for an ambulance to come and rescue her. We grieve for her and her family.

We must now deal with the grim realities of a pandemic, not just the deaths, but the funerals, the consolation of survivors, and the practical consequences when a family member dies. It can be very overwhelming but, in the midst of it all, the Lord is by our side. I know that because I see so many positive elements coming forth such as solidarity, mercy, generosity, a strong desire to get closer to God and to renew our faith.

Hard times require action. Thus, we see hunger and we respond with food assistance. We see pain, and we respond with consolation and aid. Together with Father Chip and Michael Heffner, we are finding ways to get help to our people in need.

We have opened a food bank so others might eat. Every Thursday afternoon, we give out groceries until we ran out of food. So far, we have given 405 bags of food. To meet the growing needs, we are searching for more food sources. While Father Chip is working with Feeding Westchester, I am currently working with Paul Feiner, the Greenburgh Town Supervisor, who has truly been a



blessing. Through him, I have been in contact with many who want to donate food and money to our food bank.

We see the poverty, and we search for assistance. Through our connections with the Hispanic Center of White Plains, four families in need have received checks to help ease their burdens. Last week we were blessed to receive a significant donation through a vestry member

enabling us to aid ten families with checks and gift cards.

We see a spiritual hunger and we respond with worship services for Grace/ La Gracia by livestreaming through Facebook reaching not only parishioners but also a wider audience. We remind our congregation that the Church needs our support during hard times. Bills keep coming even during a pandemic. Our live services encourage support of the church through pledging and other ways of giving.

Through all this, we realize that life invariably involve good times and hard times. God orders sunshine and sometimes He orders rain; sometimes He orders happiness and sometimes He allows pain. Like it or not, pain is often what it takes to get us to the right path. In times like this we need to embrace our faith. I am comforted by remembering God's promises found in in Isiah and Matthew: **Isiah 41:10: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."**

Matthew 28:20: "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Our faith will take us through these challenging times.

Grace/ La Gracia Food Bank, God in Action

By: Rev. Adolfo Moronta

The coronavirus pandemic has hit White Plains, and every part of our community is suffering. Many are out of work and are isolated in their homes. Others are sick and far too many are now going hungry.

Grace/La Gracia Episcopal Church has long been committed to fighting hunger in White Plains and surrounding areas. In response to the coronavirus, we have opened a food bank which we also call “God in action.” We distribute groceries every Thursday afternoon to anyone in need. Currently, over 200 are receiving food every week.

Our food bank has been blessed by the outpouring generosity of Feeding Westchester which provides fruits and vegetables, by many Grace/ La Gracia parishioners and now especially by a new partnership that has been developed with Paul Feiner, the Greenburgh Town Supervisor.



Volunteers with White Plains Mayor Tom Roach

Every day I receive countless emails from the Greenburgh area residents who personally have brought more than 150 bags of food. Clearly, the Lord is moving more than ever our hearts to go out and make a difference in the life of those who are in need.

Please keep the sick and hungry of our community in your prayers, and help us if you can.

Faithfully,

Rev. Adolfo Moronta

God in Action Food Alliance

Por: Rev. Adolfo Moronta


La pandemia de coronavirus ha afectado a White Plains, y cada parte de nuestra comunidad está sufriendo. Muchos están sin trabajo y están aislados en sus hogares. Otros están enfermos y muchos están pasando hambre.



La Iglesia Episcopal Grace / La Gracia lleva mucho tiempo comprometida con la lucha contra el hambre en White Plains y sus alrededores. En respuesta al coronavirus, hemos abierto un centro de distribución de alimentos que también llamamos "Dios en acción Alianza de Alimentos". Distribuimos comestibles todos los jueves por la tarde a cualquier persona que lo necesite. Actualmente, más de 200 reciben alimentos cada semana.

Nuestro centro de distribución de alimentos ha sido bendecido por la generosidad de Feeding Westchester que proporciona frutas y verduras, por muchos feligreses de Grace / La Gracia y ahora especialmente por una nueva asociación que se ha desarrollado con Paul Feiner, el Supervisor de la Ciudad de Greenburgh.

Todos los días recibo innumerables correos electrónicos de los residentes del área de Greenburgh que personalmente han traído más de 150 bolsas de comida. Claramente, el Señor está moviendo más que nunca nuestros corazones para salir y hacer una diferencia en la vida de los necesitados.



Mantenga a los enfermos y hambrientos de nuestra comunidad en sus oraciones y ayúdenos si puede.

Fielmente,


Rev. Adolfo Moronta

Summer Angelus Book Club Update

Reading During the Time of Corona

Without question, the coronavirus has unexpectedly upended every aspect of our lives from work to worship and everything in between, causing us to constantly pivot to find new ways of functioning and coping with a new “normal.” So, if you’re looking for an interesting escape, the Book Club has you covered. The Book Club has brought an unintentional and welcome break from all things corona that we could never have anticipated just a few short months ago. We also took the plunge into Zoom for our first virtual meeting on our usual meeting day and time (Tuesday, May 5, at 7 pm). Knowing that topics other than books were top of mind, we abandoned our usual meeting format in favor of an open discussion that ranged from how we’ve been coping, what we’ve been feeling and yes, we also touched briefly on books. We all agreed that Michelle Obama’s memoir **Becoming** had earned the rare unanimous 5 rating (ratings range from a low of 1 to a high of 5) If you read only one book during the pandemic lockdown, we recommend *Becoming*. Here are a few of our comments about why it was so meaningful to members:

“**Becoming** is a refreshing and uplifting story written in the authentic voice of our ever fierce former First Lady Michelle (Robinson) Obama. She bears her soul and shares memories, events, and her (and President Obama's) soul searching journey to being who she is and who they are today. Far from being a clichéd power couple, the Obamas are two people who stepped outside the ‘comfortable’ to effect change in a nation and will always be an inspiration to those of us who were present during their White House tenure as well as generations to come. I think there's inspiration, insight, and hopefulness for all no matter your race, socioeconomic background, religion, gender. I highly recommend reading or listening to it. It’s absolutely worth the time.”
Margaret Broomfield Parkinson



“Although **Becoming** was the Book Club’s March selection, several members also watched the Netflix documentary based on Michelle Obama’s **Becoming** book tour. The documentary not only focused on the tour, but it highlighted essential themes of the book (family, education, marriage, parenting, etc.). It was apparent that Michelle Obama wanted to use the book to invite others, especially young people, to examine their own lives and encourage them not to give up on their dreams or ambitions. The documentary was excellent and enhanced our understanding of the book and its author, Michelle Obama.”

Sylvia Simon

“To me, the sum total of all your experiences is what you are becoming. As I read **Becoming**, I could relate to certain parts more than others. I appreciated her holding onto the early principles her family instilled in her and despite many obstacles and challenges, prevailed as a strong woman. She has traveled a road none of us have traveled and has come out on the other side as the most recognized and admired woman in America. I had the good fortune of seeing her and President Obama at the Western Ball on Inaugural night. Since the election of an African American president was a first, no one knew what the future would bring. She weathered the highs and lows and in spite of it all, she prevailed. She is still in the process of becoming.

Irene Alves

“I’m happy that **Becoming** and **Where the Crawdads Sing** have been our selections during these dark times. Both are excellent books that lift one’s spirit and renew our faith in the resilience of strong people. In fact, all of the Book Club’s selections this year have been excellent and informative, evoking heartfelt reactions and discussions that have made the Book Club even stronger as a group.

Vilma France

“**Becoming** is one of the best memoirs I’ve ever read. Even before I finished reading Michelle Obama’s personal story, I put it on the Book Club’s best books list. It’s inspiring, insightful, enlightening, and filled with every emotion from humor to fear to deep sadness to pure joy. It reminds us that becoming who you are meant to be is a never-ending life-long journey and Michelle Obama bares all, giving a genuine, highly personal window into her life and the journey she took to become the person she is today. Her life story she so generously and intimately shares makes me admire her even more. Also, as a Chicago native, I had the added pleasure of relating to her from a different perspective—her relationship with the city of Chicago where she was born and grew up. I recognized every street name and address, every school, every restaurant, every landmark, every historic reference, and the politics and politicians that define Chicago’s past. Even her school experiences brought memories, both fond and difficult to revisit, making me feel like we were kindred spirits. Michele Obama’s distinctive authentic voice is refreshingly evident throughout and I’m grateful that she was willing to share so much of herself and her life.”

Karen Odom

“After reading Michelle Obama’s book, **Becoming**, I felt as though I could relate to her as I would a personal friend as well as a greatly admired woman of high achievement. After



finishing, I felt as though I would have been completely at ease sharing a cup of coffee with her around my kitchen table.”

Mary Baker

Other recommended reading during the pandemic

“One of the most delightful books I have read lately has an eerie resemblance to our own locked-down lives at the moment. In this book, **A Gentleman in Moscow** by Amor Towles, a Russian count is sentenced to live the rest of his life in his home quarters within a large metropolitan hotel. This sentence, intended as his punishment as a member of the aristocracy after the Russian Revolution, the Count goes on to live a full and complete life of friendship, compassion, service, and honor with those who surround him, all without once stepping outside. He is a man of charm, of dignity, humor, and high morals. This scenario did not seem like a probable source of reading enjoyment, and yet I came to love the man and every minute I spent with him in my own “lockdown.” Even the very last page held a wonderful surprise ending! It gives us hope for the ending of our own lockdown.

Mary Baker

We see more Zoom meetings in our quarantine future. For now, we’re reading **Where the Crawdads Sing** by Delia Owens, at once a heart-tugging coming of age story and murder mystery, that we invite you to join us in reading. And, if you’re interested in joining us for our next Zoom chat, contact Karen Odom at karenodom@yahoo.com.

Submitted by Karen Odom

PRISONERS OF HOPE


By Mary Baker

During Holy Week we read of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. He did not ride into the city as a warrior on a grand royal horse. Instead, he came as a humble king of peace riding on a gentle donkey.

This Holy Week scene of entry into Jerusalem was foreshadowed long before in Zechariah 9:10-12, where Zechariah is bolstering the spirits of the Jewish people who were eagerly looking forward to returning to their homeland in Jerusalem after their long exile. They were to be “prisoners of hope” returning to Jerusalem at long last.

Zechariah 9:10-12:

“I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the end of the earth. As for you, because of the blood of my covenant



with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you."

Of course, the Jews of Jesus' time eagerly hoped that Jesus would be the king who drove out the Romans. They quickly deserted him when they saw this was not the case.

Zechariah's people had every reason to feel despair instead of hope, given all their past years of oppression. Zechariah appeals to their reason for hope "because of the blood of my covenant" given first to Abraham. Despite all appearances, God's people were to be "prisoners of hope" that the God of Abraham would love, protect, and care for them because He is God the Savior, Deliverer, and King. He has promised, and He will be faithful in carrying out that promise.

Now those of us who have experienced the Easter celebration of resurrection can see these words in a new light. The "blood of the covenant" is now experienced as the blood of Christ on the cross. He has freed all prisoners from the "waterless pit," a dry place with no water.


There are many times of despair that arise in life. Perhaps we are now going through a world time of despair as we battle Covid-19. We feel like "prisoners" in a waterless pit. Like the Jews returning to Jerusalem, we feel exiled and alone, a long way from the world we used to know and experience. We can definitely experience fear, and despair, and may wonder when our mighty King will appear to save us.

We who live after the Cross are meant to recognize that we also can be freed from the "waterless pit." We have been freed from death to life. Despite our sufferings, we are called to be "prisoners of hope." Prisoners are bound with ropes. We should be bound by hope.

We know that God is loving, powerful, and good. He has promised us by the "blood of His (Good Friday) covenant" to always love us, care for us, and protect us. He is faithful and always keeps His word to us.

That is why, even now in our oppressed world, we are called to "Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope." (Zechariah 9:12)

*"The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
the righteous run to it and are safe."
Proverbs 18:10*



At this time, I can see myself sending out my “thoughts” every few weeks. They are likely to be wide-ranging, but will contain updates on the Vestry’s work within the church. I’m including the latest update below – and would like to add that Grace Episcopal Church has received 3 important grants. The Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program, Episcopal Charities and the Diocese of New York have all recognized Grace Church for our work – and our need during this challenging time. I am very pleased at this outcome and feel that it is truly a reflection of our position in the community.

Thoughts from the Senior Warden (May 18, 2020)

It’s hard to imagine that we will go through the months of May and June without recognizing the remarkable accomplishment of our graduating seniors (who are concluding their studies and receiving their diplomas from university and high school). That these young people worked so hard to accomplish this achievement is unquestionable. That a simple gesture of recognition will be absent is another one of the “unthinkables” that we’re dealing with as we navigate through these uncertain times. The collective gathering of family and friends to celebrate these milestones is likely the saddest part of what will go missing this year. I would offer that the commencement speech is another ceremonial part of the graduation process - an opportunity to inspire - that fortunately has been preserved. Public figures are being asked to share their wisdom and inspiration virtually. A celebrated commencement address took place this past Saturday with President Barack Obama taking over all of the national networks for a “prime time” presentation. He took a few digs and challenged our leaders (as is his right). But he also took the opportunity to elaborate on something that we should all be thinking about.

(This was the third “piece of advice” that the President used to conclude his speech)

...Build a community. No one does big things by themselves. Right now, when people are scared, it's easy to be cynical and say, "Let me just look out for myself or my family or people who look or think or pray like me." But if we're going to get through these difficult times, if we're going to create a world where everybody has opportunity to find a job and afford college, and we're going to save the environment and defeat future pandemics, then we're going to have to do it together. So be alive to one another's struggles. Stand up for one another's rights. Leave behind all the old ways of thinking, the bias, sexism, racial prejudice, status, greed, and set the world on a different path.

I’ve already seen a response at Grace/La Gracia in the actions of our young people who themselves are first responders, who are showing up every week to pack and distribute food to those dealing with food insecurity, are raising funds to provide meals for those providing the care, are canvassing their local communities to gather much needed supplies to be distributed through our food alliance program, who are using their technological skills to help us address our financial needs and countless other ways that will most assuredly set the world on a different path. You all inspire me. With your leadership I have no doubt that better days are in front of us.

I recognize that this is separate and apart from my responsibilities as senior warden, but I can't pass up the opportunity to thank all of you for your prayers and words of encouragement as I respond to God's call. The discernment committee held the first meeting in a long process this past Wednesday, and I take great comfort that the launching of this journey is in such capable hands. They represent each of you and will be reporting to the congregation on our progress. We will all walk this path together.

May God bless and keep you safe.

Michael Heffner
Grace Church/La Gracia
Senior Warden

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Grace Church Sunday school program was in full swing until mid-March, when the coronavirus halted our in-person activities. But we still want to celebrate those events in which we did participate, honor our rising Rite 13 Celebrities and High School and college graduates, and thank our teachers for their dedicated work.

Following their successful performance at our 2019 Christmas Pageant, Our Little Lambs (1st grade) spent the first three months of 2020 actively learning about the Church's teachings through a series of age appropriate readings, arts/crafts events and activities. While the coronavirus necessitated stopping classes in mid-March, we look forward to restarting classes as soon as possible.

The Intermediate Class (grades 3-6) remained focused on Jesus's teaching and healing as we approached the Easter season. We shared the stories



Our youth in service as acolytes

of Blind Bartimaeus, the cleansing of the 10 lepers, and the raising of Lazarus. Additionally, we covered the significance of the baptism of Jesus by his cousin John (the Baptist). "A dove gently descended upon his head. Then a voice like thunder said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with

whom I am well pleased.” It is our sincere hope that we can resume class (practicing safe distancing) before the



end of the school year in June.

Our Rite 13 Class (grades 7-8) spent much of February and March preparing for the scheduled March 15th Celebration of Adulthood. Our Celebrities for this year are Sebastian Maldonado, Cameron Owens, Gabrielle Parkinson, Harrison Richards and Eric Woodberry. The planning had gone well, and all was in order for the Ceremony. Unfortunately, the evening

Members of our Sunday school program helping with Grace's Kitchen

before the Ceremony, it was decided that we would not hold Church services that day due to concerns over the pandemic. And so the Celebration was postponed. But rest assured this is merely a postponement as opposed to a cancellation. We will hold the ceremony when it is deemed safe to do so. Meanwhile, please keep our to be Celebrities in your thoughts and prayers. Separately, Rite 13 and J2A did host a “game day” during the Church Annual meeting in late January, allowing the parents to attend the meeting while their children were entertained with the Rite 13 games. Candyland, Uno and Sequence Cats proved to be quite the entertainment for the day!

J2A (high school) decided upon a creative way to restructure its program for this year. Rather than meet weekly during the Church service, which was proving to be disruptive given acolyting and other responsibilities, the J2A leadership decided to meet once a month on Sunday afternoons/evenings for a longer class duration, which would include dinner. This proved quite successful and will be the format for the coming year as well. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we will not be able to honor our graduates as we normally do in a late June Church service. We do, however, want to recognize them in this column. They are Spencer Carden, Maya Daughtry, James Heffner, and Anahi Lozada-Perez.

- Spencer Carden will attend SUNY Polytechnic Institute at Utica this fall. He will be pursuing a BS in Interactive Media & Game Design
- Maya Daughtry will attend New York University's Tisch School where she will major in Film. Maya plans to become a filmmaker, bringing a rich diversity of stories to the big screen.
- James Heffner will graduate from Scarsdale High School at the end of June. He has committed to attend Binghamton University this Fall (with a focus on medicine and health services). James found his life's passion in serving his community as a junior. He joined both the Larchmont Ambulance Corps and the Mamaroneck Fire Department – serving as volunteer. He logged in more than 1000 hours as a VAC and will be completing an EMT certification course before the summer. He spent last summer (8 weeks) in the Valhalla Fire Dept. facility and has received multiple certifications as a fire fighter through this program. He expects to serve as an EMT at Binghamton's Harpur's Ferry Student Volunteer Ambulance Service when he begins his studies in August.
- As of press time we did not have a further update on Anahi Lozada-Perez, but nonetheless we congratulate her on her graduation and wish her every success as she starts a new chapter in her life.



Anahi Lozada-Perez

We will miss all of our high school graduates during our regular Church Services, but congratulate them on completing high school and wish them the best as they start their post-high school careers.

I am also pleased to report two college graduations. Alex Carden will graduate with a BA from Binghamton University in Graphic Design. Scott Louis will earn his doctorate in Physical Therapy from Northwestern University. Our hearty congratulations to Alex and Scott! We also want to extend a note of



Maya Daughtry



Spencer Carden

appreciation to our dedicated Sunday school teachers. Teaching our Little Lambs (1st grade) were Linda Gallo and Lyndsey Wall. Teaching our intermediate students (3rd through 6th grade) were Michael Heffner and Cynthia Sangurima-Brown. Donna Louis and George O'Hanlon taught our Rite-13 students. And Lauren Reid and Rudy Beech were our teachers for our J2A group. We particularly want to recognize Donna Louis, who has served as the Director of our Sunday Schools



James Heffner


for the past several years. Donna will be stepping down from this role at the end of the school year, and Linda Gallo will be taking over the role at this time. Many thanks to both of you for your service to the Church.

Submitted by George O'Hanlon

STEWARDSHIP IN THE TIME OF THE CORONAVIRUS

It's not easy talking about stewardship in this time of Coronavirus. Or is it? Once we remember that stewardship means the giving of time, talent and money it becomes easier. So many people have given all three of these in the last few months in an effort to make life better for our community.

Giving of time has included the making of calls to check on the welfare of each parishioner, collecting and delivering food to those in need, preparing letters to help our



parishioners stay informed, making a slot in our door for donations, and using social media to expand the audience for our sermons.

It takes a lot of talent to operate a church during a pandemic. Nobody anticipated nor prepared for this crisis. Father Chip and The Vestry have tried to be very transparent about the steps we have taken to cut expenses and secure additional income.

And then there is money. We do need your pledge money to continue operating the church. We know that the covid-19 virus has affected the way everyone handles their finances. We understand that in this crisis some people are unemployed or have reduced hours and may need financial assistance themselves. But those of you who are able to help are asked to continue paying your pledge to Grace/La Gracia. There are many ways that you can pay your pledge while the Grace/La Gracia Church building is closed:

- Write a check and mail it to Grace/La Gracia Church
- Write a check and put in thru the slot in the door of Grace/La Gracia Church
- Arrange for your bank to send a weekly/monthly amount to Grace/La Gracia Church
- Use PayPal or other electronic services to give to Grace/La Gracia church

The members of Grace/La Gracia Church are a family. We are in this crisis together. We must do everything we can to help each other. Let us remember that in the end it is all in God's hands. Let us continue to pray for a better tomorrow as we start anew.


MAYORDOMIA EN EL TIEMPO DEL CORONA VIRUS

No es fácil hablar de mayordomía en esta época de Coronavirus. ¿O es ? Una vez que recordamos que la mayordomía significa dar tiempo, talento y dinero, se hace más fácil. Muchas personas han dado los tres en los últimos meses en un esfuerzo por mejorar la vida de nuestra comunidad.

Dar tiempo ha incluido hacer llamadas para verificar el bienestar de cada feligrés, recolectar y entregar alimentos a los necesitados, preparar cartas para ayudar a nuestros feligreses a mantenerse informados, hacer un hueco en nuestra puerta para donaciones y usar las redes sociales para expandir la audiencia para nuestros sermones.

Se necesita mucho talento para operar una iglesia durante una pandemia. Nadie anticipó ni se preparó para esta crisis. El padre Chip y la Junta han tratado de ser muy transparentes sobre los pasos que hemos tomado para reducir gastos y asegurar ingresos adicionales.

Y luego está el dinero. Necesitamos su dinero de compromiso para continuar operando la iglesia. Sabemos que el virus covid-19 ha afectado la forma en que todos manejan sus finanzas. Entendemos que en esta crisis algunas personas están desempleadas o tienen un horario reducido y pueden necesitar asistencia financiera. Pero aquellos de ustedes que pueden ayudar se les pide que continúen pagando su promesa a Grace / La Gracia. Hay muchas maneras en que puede pagar su promesa mientras el edificio de la Iglesia Grace / LaGracia está cerrado:

- 
- Haga un cheque y envíelo por correo a Grace / La Gracia Church
 - Haga un cheque y póngalo a través de la ranura en la puerta de Grace/La Gracia Church
 - Haga arreglos para que su banco envíe una cantidad semanal / mensual a Grace / La Gracia Church
 - Use PayPal u otros servicios electrónicos para dar a la iglesia Grace / La Gracia
- Los miembros de la Iglesia Grace / La Gracia son una familia. Estamos en esta crisis juntos. Debemos hacer todo lo posible para ayudarnos mutuamente. Recordemos que al final todo está en manos de Dios. Sigamos orando por un mañana mejor mientras comenzamos de nuevo.
-

We never know how tall we are

Till we are called to rise;

And then, if we are true to plan,

Our stature touch the skies__

Emily Dickinson

The Angelus

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A GLIMPSE INTO PAST HISTORY
A VIEW OF THE WORLD DURING THE 1918 SPANISH FLU PANDEMIC
With a big thank you to Maria Lewis who submitted this bit of historical perspective



A Poem Written in 1919

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.



CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF KELOWNA

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that, in order to prevent the spread of Spanish Influenza, all Schools, public and private, Churches, Theatres, Moving Picture Halls, Pool Rooms and other places of amusement, and Lodge meetings, are to be closed until further notice.

All public gatherings consisting of ten or more are prohibited.

D. W. SUTHERLAND,
Mayor.

Kelowna, B.C.,
19th October, 1918.





Celebrating Music at Grace

Dear Grace Church family.

One of the strengths of Grace Church, White Plains is the diversity of music used to inspire and to aid in worship. From Gregorian chant and plainsong to African drumming, Mariachi, and contemporary songs of praise, Grace church is committed to illuminating and highlighting the Gospel through music.


Our Grace Church Choirs (adult, and the St. Nicholas children's choir) perform a wide variety of choral music including cathedral anthems, spirituals, folk songs, hymn anthems, Taize and Gregorian chants and contemporary praise songs. Services in Spanish incorporate contemporary praise music, Mariachi- styled music, and newly- composed works. These myriad musical styles merge at our Bi-Lingual services.

I am pleased to say that in addition to these styles of music a new genre will be introduced to our worship experience. Fr. Chip will be introducing a jazz service to the congregation in the near future. These services will be introduced during the ten o'clock services and subsequently offered throughout the year.

Grace Church is committed to spreading the Gospel with the spoken word and through the performing arts. It is our hope that music inspires the congregant and in turn helps spread the "Good News" upon which our faith is founded.

Peter Roberts

***The Deadline For The Summer Angelus
Is August 15th. As Always, Thank You For
Your Contributions!***



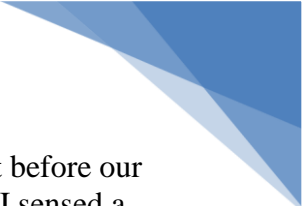
(A 3-part series of essays that I submitted to the Grace Episcopal Church Discernment Committee. I am grateful for the opportunity to share these personal reflections)

Spiritual Autobiography

Michael Heffner

As I unlocked the door on 33 Church Street, I was not surprised that no one else was around. It was just before 8 o'clock on a frigid Martin Luther King Jr. holiday morning and I was once again leading the volunteers in running the soup kitchen which operates out of Grace Church/La Gracia's parish hall. My arms were laden with the supplies that my son was going to use to make his signature macaroni and cheese dish. My hands were steady and I had no doubt about what was about to take place over the next 4 hours - and why I was there. We ended up feeding 117 guests that day (nearly running out of food in the process). I floated from position to position (job assigning, food preparation, table setting, serving, inventory management, entertainment, clean-up) with the 31 volunteers who had either agreed to come ahead of time, or just showed up. I found joy in my responsibility - and in the simple act of providing sustenance to those less fortunate. This was not dissimilar from the scores of times that I have led these holiday events (the staff gets the day off on 6 national holidays - volunteers are asked to manage the soup kitchen). What was different on January 20, 2020 was that I was preparing to share with Father Chip Graves the news that I would be seeking the sponsorship of Grace Church in my journey towards ordination to the priesthood. Many of my actions connected to church are now being done with the realization that I am going through a formation process that will fundamentally change who I am.


I was born and baptized in Dallas, Texas. My father was an Episcopal priest (whose first assignment was building missions on leper colonies in Japan after WWII). My family became members of Christ Church, Greenwich when we moved to Connecticut (from 1965 to 1974). I was a member of the Christ Church boys choir (a paid choir) and got my first sense that I might be drawn to the ministry performing at Christ Church (this was a touring choir - the National Cathedral, Trinity Church, Carnegie Hall - we had professional recordings made). My father was called to be the rector of St. Mark's Church, Mt. Kisco in 1974 after serving as the Asian Secretary (10 years) for the Presiding Bishop in Manhattan. As a member of St. Mark's Church, I was actively involved in the acolyte guild and directed the bell ringing teams (from my junior year in high school). I was a student at Georgetown University from 1981-85 and regularly attended the Roman Catholic evening mass. During my year abroad in Japan (1984), I found a church in the outskirts of Tokyo where the rector was a friend of the family - this service was conducted in Japanese (I got to play the part of the angel Gabriel in their Christmas pageant...). After graduation, I attended St. Mark's until my father passed away in 1986. I did not have a regular church that I attended until my wife Hyun and I were married. In 1991, we moved from New York City to Scarsdale and engaged in a search for a spiritual home. None of the churches in closer proximity to our location "connected" with us. A chance meeting with Boyd Johnson at a wedding of a mutual friend convinced us that we should look at Grace Church, White Plains. The reception that we received from the rector, Peter Larom, and the members of the congregation was very appealing. The tipping point was the level of community engagement



and outreach that Grace Church was involved with. My wife became a Christian just before our marriage – but I was from a family where active engagement was standard practice. I sensed a need for my talents at Grace and I welcomed the opportunity to engage. We have been members of Grace Church since 1991.

I'm entering this discernment process at a stage in life where most are thinking about running down the clock. I spent 25 years on Wall Street and was fortunate to have been deeply engaged during historic periods in the financial history of this country. My first day at PaineWebber (now UBS) was October 19, 1987. On that day, the major averages “crashed” and lost over 23% of their value. I consider myself lucky not to have been let go that day – and my career as an institutional equity salesman was launched (we were responsible for providing services to asset managers, pensions, insurance companies and hedge funds). My office at Merrill Lynch (I was recruited to join them in 1991) was right across the street from the World Trade Center. We witnessed the terrorist planes crashing into the towers on September 11, 2001 and had to literally run for our lives on that tragic day. I was responsible (as a producing manager) to help pick up the pieces of our business in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attack and had to daily walk past the wreckage after we were allowed to move back downtown. I was deeply involved in the creation of a new business at Merrill from the middle of the 1990's towards the end of the 2000's. It was painful to have been in the line of fire during the systemic crisis that nearly brought down the financial system in 2008 (Merrill was sold for a fraction of its value to Bank of America during this time). I have seen much, saved some and have an abundance of stories (I retired from the industry in 2011).

My initial call to the priesthood likely began with my family's move to Mt. Kisco in 1974 and was directly connected to my father's taking the position of rector at St. Mark's Church, Mt. Kisco. I had a chance to observe and be observed (we became the first family of St. Mark's) and gained insight into all that was involved in taking responsibility for a church. I saw my father preach on a regular basis, I saw how he interacted with the parishioners, I watched him manage “every member canvas” campaigns, I (with my brothers and sister) helped to host vestry parties at our home, I watched the joy my father had in forming new friendships and the challenges that he faced with difficult members. I took it all in – and decided that there was no way that I could do what my father did. His shoes were too big for me to fill. I knew that I would stay connected to the church but, I would become a lawyer or a financier. And that's what I did. God, in a way, gave me the latitude to live my life and gather stories. The call began to gather strength with the passing of my father at 61 (I was 23). My spiritual inner flame started to burn brighter as I worked through my grief and the heavy financial responsibilities of taking over much of what my father had done (paying the bills, managing the mortgage, monitoring the investments...). I drew on the lessons that we shared as a family and the knowledge that God was with me. Somehow, I knew that it would work out. From the time that I arrived at Grace Church, I could feel an increasing intensity to this call. Through my work (in no particular order) - on the vestry, stewardship, building and grounds, finance committee, on the usher guild, as a teacher, in advocacy, coordinating events for the soup kitchen, in my technology ministry, in the work with Lifting Up Westchester, as a trustee of Downtown Music at Grace - I have been given the “gift of preparation”. God has challenged me to be involved and rewarded me with rich experiences in each of these activities. The final call to action came through the “jolt” that my younger son



was ready to take flight (he starts college this fall). He is an extremely independent young man - self-sufficient with a good sense of what it will take to succeed in life. The realization that James was taking wing released me to fully open to God and respond to his call. Curiously, it was less a decision (like my “call” to go to Georgetown to study Japanese – or to work on Wall Street) and more of an awakening. The process of reflection on why it is God’s will that I enter the priesthood may not be fully completed as we work through this discernment process, but I am drawn. Through daily prayer, rigorous study and sharing I hope to grow in my capacity to live out God’s work.

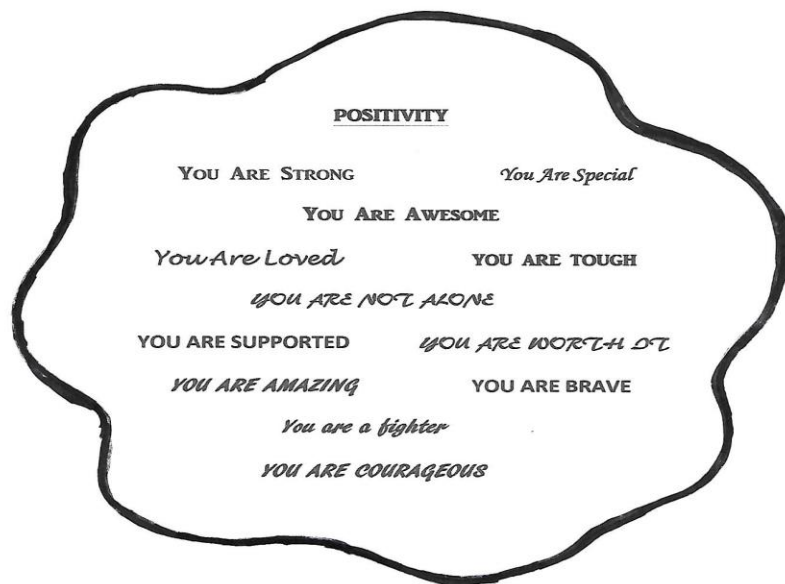
I am sometimes accused of being overly optimistic, a dreamer, too willing to believe that the Lord will provide. Accepted. The passage from Matthew (chapter 6, verses 25-33) has resonated with me since I was a young man and was first introduced to me by Sidney Poitier (in his 1963 academy award winning performance as a carpenter who helped a group of Austrian nuns build a chapel in the desert). I can say with some conviction that the world would be a better place if we all took the time to consider the lilies of the field and how they grow.

Matthew 6: 25-33

²⁵ “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one ^[a]cubit to his ^[b]stature?

²⁸ “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not ^[c]arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

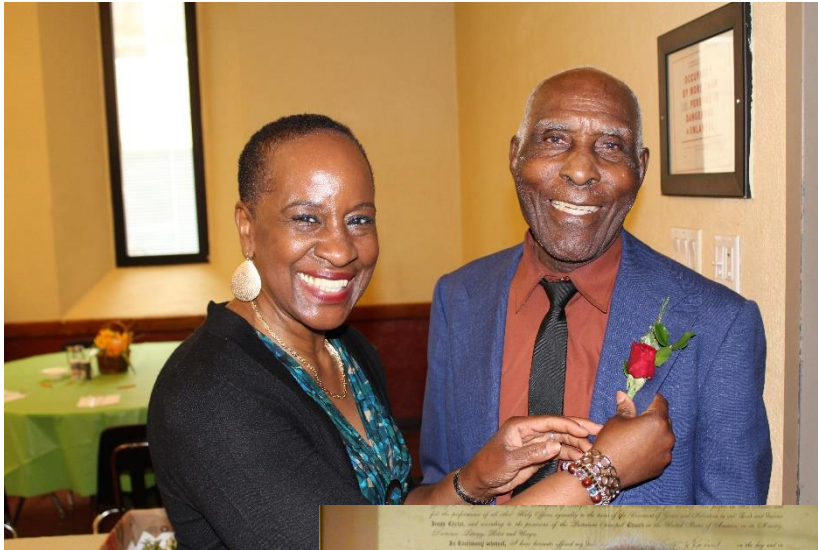
³¹ “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.



Chris Simoglou and Harrison watching Father Chip and Mother Lisa



Martha Jane Dunphy





Harvey Chambers

Rest in Peace