

Spring 2021

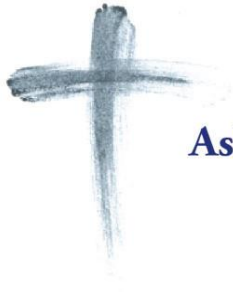


The
ANGELUS
News of the Life of GRACE CHURCH

Over 150 Years in the Heart of White Plains



The Youth of Grace Launching the Caring Cupboard on February 20 (with some special guests).



Ash Wednesday — Lent Begins

Grace Church,

The Lenten Season is upon us and we have many things to celebrate (I know, I said celebrate in Lent. Bad priest.) But we do have many things to celebrate

- **February 17th Ash Wednesday**
 - o We have our three Ash Wednesday Services. 7:30am in English. 12 Noon in English. 7:30am Bilingual service. All services are both in-person and online.
 - o Your Priests are once again outdoors to be with those passing by. Our diocese COVID-19 protocol disallows Ashes; therefore, we are sharing safe-distanced Prayers-to-Go in front of Grace and at the local Train Station.
- **Beginning February 24th 7PM Wednesday evening Lenten Bible Study for all**
 - o There will be a weekly Lenten Bible Study developed by the Episcopal Church. This will be a weekly Zoom meeting. Please respond to this email if you would like an invitation.
- **Stations of the Cross**
 - o As we approach Holy Week, Fr. Adolfo and I will provide an online Stations of the Cross for you to watch. More to Come.

Grace Church Members, I ask that you remember the power and sacred time spent during Lent. Remember that we are called as Episcopalians to be repentant and ever listening to God through Jesus Christ for where we have been and hope to become.

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

Amen.

Fr. Chip +

Making music with Peter Roberts at Grace Church

By Abigail Fischer

I was raised in the church, but as a young adult I enjoyed going to meditation retreats in different traditions, learning about how other religious traditions saw the world, even how other traditions honored Jesus' teachings. It was through the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda that I came back to read the Bible for myself again as a young adult. This lit up a fire in me that gave me the joy to share my music-making whole-heartedly with the church again.



Imagine what surprise I felt when a friend of mine, Celine Mogielnicki, recommended me to sing at Grace Church, and as I walked into the music room, the music director began with one minute of silent meditation! I was overjoyed to be singing

at a church where I felt understood in the complexity of my background by the music director. I learned over time that Peter had been exposed to the same meditation technique, universalist Vapassana meditation, that I was currently practicing, years earlier, this being the main technique that stabilized my sanity during the pandemic. Time went by, Celine moved to Berlin, I moved from singing alto to soprano, and Peter's and my conversations continued. I was always amazed at how Peter would listen to anyone with openness and patience, regardless of how emotional or demanding they themselves were being. Perhaps it was his exposure to meditation at an early age; perhaps it was his musicianship; perhaps it was his work teaching music to younger humans; or perhaps it was a combination of these three things plus his gentle personality that made him such an astute listener. He makes music in the same way he listens to others. He is always respectful, would never tell you flat out you were wrong, more like "let's try it again, I think I might have made a mistake here." Humility, respect, listening with openness, these are traits I look forward to when I come to church to sing.

Now let's discuss musicianship. What is there beyond those traits we can find in conversation that

contribute to musicianship? When I think back to the last two weeks, the first two weeks of February, singing spirituals with Peter, I remember time and dynamic flexibility, deep listening, humility and collective optimism, and making the most of the moment. This is what creates beautiful and meaningful music, draws in listeners, creates a full and potent moment. How can we all learn to deeply listen to each other, not thinking whether we are right, but instead deeply listening with humility, openness, and delight in the possibility of learning or hearing something new? I always learn something new from Peter each week, whether it's new music to listen to, or a new perspective on how to live. May we all learn to stay open and listen deeply with such delight.

News from La Gracia

By: Rev. Adolfo Moronta

As a church, our objective needs to be more than just simply helping people in their individual faith journeys. We are also meant to be a living faith community that helps people encounter the living God together and grow closer to Him.

There is an incredible group of lay leaders in La Gracia that have been working with me during these past four years. They continuously step up and serve this church giving of their time, talent and treasure. I believe that the School of Lay Leaders whose objective is to empower our lay members to assume leadership positions in the church has greatly contributed to the continuous involvement of our lay leaders in the life of the church.

I am pleased to present to you the La Gracia 2021 updated committee list. In all, La Gracia has 20 different committees where more than 50 of our Latino members serve this vibrant parish on a weekly basis. In the list below you will see the names of the different committees and the person in charge.



1. **Ushers :** Daisy Calderón
2. **Acolytes Group 1:** Daniel Corsanego
3. **Acolytes Group 2 :** Rosario Murillo
4. **Eucharistic Ministers:** Daisy Calderón
5. **Lectors:** Daniel Corsanego & Alicia Silva
6. **Altar Guild:** Aidee de León
7. **Pastoral Care:** Daniel Corsanego
8. **Liturgical Music:** Juan Carlos Abreu
9. **Bell:** Paz Torres
10. **Counters:** Daisy Calderón
11. **Livestreaming:** Daniel Corsanego
12. **Meetings and Communications:** Alicia Silva
13. **First Communion & Sunday School:** Claudia Reyes
14. **Prayer Group:** Rev. Adolfo Moronta

- 15. Stewardship:** Daisy Calderón & Rev. Adolfo Moronta
16. Activities & Fundraisers: Pablo Aguilar
17. 3 Kings Celebration: Daisy Calderón
18. Birthdays: Paz Torres
19. Lunch Ministry: Alba Juarez
20. Intercession & Prayer : Claudia Corsanego
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WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING

By Mary Baker

Do you enjoy celebrating St. Patrick's Day? Do you wear green? Do you have your annual corned beef and cabbage dinner? How much do you actually know about St. Patrick, Bishop and Missionary of Ireland, as he is listed in our Book of Common Prayer?

The man who later became St. Patrick was not Irish. He was born in Roman Britain in 385. His father was a priest. At the age of 16, young Patrick was kidnapped by Irish raiders and taken to Ireland, where he was forced to work. During that time, he has said that he "found God." He was able to flee his captors and he went back home to become a priest. He eventually returned to Ireland and spent his life evangelizing and converting thousands to Christianity. According to legend, St. Patrick used the green, three-leafed shamrock to explain the Trinity to his converts.

The date of his death, March 17, 461, is the date that we honor this great Bishop and Missionary.

Now, because of the large Irish diaspora, St. Patrick's Day is widely celebrated all around the world in many countries. On that date, the heritage and culture of Ireland figures prominently. As the saying goes, on March 17th, everyone is a little bit Irish!

This year, as you celebrate, you might like to make some Irish Soda Bread to have along with your corned beef. This is the recipe I make every year. My family loves it!

IRISH SODA BREAD

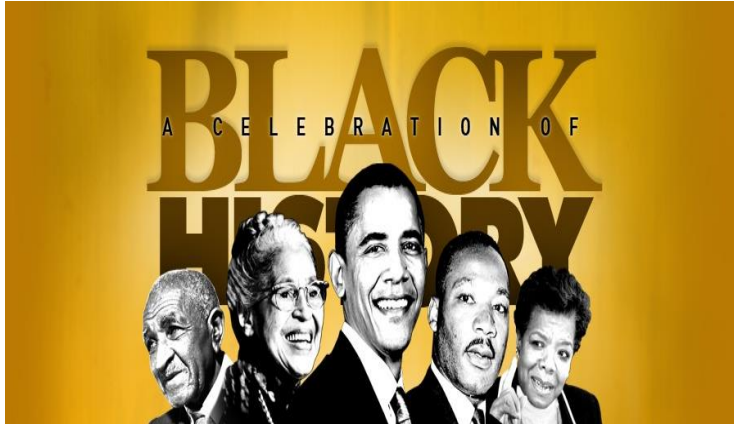
In a bowl, mix together: 4 cups of flour, 1 Tablespoon baking powder, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon baking soda.

Add: 1 cup raisins and 1 Tablespoon caraway seeds. Stir well.

Stir in: 2 cups of buttermilk to make a soft dough.

Flour your hands and knead the dough very lightly. Divide in half. Shape each half into a round loaf and place on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes or until golden

ENJOY!



Grace Family,

I believe we can do more to celebrate our Black Heritage at Grace Church - beyond MLK Day and Black History Month in February. This effort in no way diminishes or takes away from anyone or any group at Grace Church. It is my prayer that we can creatively/spiritually develop events that celebrate a significant body within our parish, through music, education, art, community events and beyond what we have done in the past.

In my past two years at Grace Church, I have been supporting various groups at Grace Church and love our uniqueness in Diversity. Therefore, my priority has been to listen, to listen to all voices. In the past 6 months, several long-time members have requested I support this new endeavor.

As a follow up, I am now in ongoing discussions with the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE.org) to better understand how we as a parish can work with and support their ministry - the celebration and declaration of black leadership in the Episcopal Church over the past 200 years.

This note is requesting that if you have interest in sharing ideas how we can develop this ministry at Grace Church to celebrate our Black Heritage throughout the year, please respond to this email and we will discuss further.

God Bless,

Chip +

STRESS – LAYING DOWN YOUR BURDENS

In our fall issue, we highlighted the toll that stress takes on our bodies and emotions when we hang on to it longer and longer. The longer we hold on to our stress, the more hurtful it becomes. This year has been the epitome of a stress-filled year! Here are a few pointers to avoid stress!

When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.

The second mouse gets the cheese.

You may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.

Annual Report January 2021

The Rector's Report

The Rev. Dr. Chip Graves

Good Morning members of Grace la Gracia. It is important that you know that you are loved by God almighty through the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, because this past year has not been easy. If nothing else, this past year 2020 has taught us to be tough, to be patient and to be resilient. This notion of resilience is echoed through the book of Joshua as it says, ***“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1.9***

I have now completed my second year as rector of Grace la Gracia Episcopal Church. My first year was focused on essential aspects shared by the Rector Search Committee including Worship, Pastoral Care, Administration, Joint la Gracia efforts and other. And then we transitioned into my second year focusing on Vision Planning, Black Lives Matter Advocacy, new adult forums/educational events, a new Sunday worship and other possibilities to strengthen and grow our parish. But everything came to a sudden stop with the onset of COVID 19. And our world turned upside down.

A few infections became hundreds of thousands of deaths in the U.S. and millions would die world-wide. Some of these statistics were close to home. And it hurt... Who would have prophesied that our daily regime would mandate face masks, social distancing, job loss, economic destruction, and mental depression like never seen? Therefore, we are called to a deeper, stronger, and more resilient faith in Jesus Christ.

Our parish has survived, and we stand strong. Despite this Pandemic, we continued worship, prayer, education, online gatherings, music, advocacy, and outreach to those in greatest need. Slow at first and then building. We are still not in full swing as we are having this, our annual meeting, hybrid style, both in person and online. And I believe this will be our new norm, even when we get beyond COVID. We may not be back to normal until 2022, waiting for the vaccination and a more comprehensive analysis of the new COVID strain, and other unknown variables. But we are headed in the right direction. We must continue our faith in Jesus Christ... My sharing this morning is about survival and resilience considering the Pandemic. Not even the Pandemic can stop this 200-year-old parish. Stopping is not an option; it is not going to happen. God through Jesus Christ will not stop, and we will not cease to praise Him. We are moving forward. Our new vestry will focus on new endeavors such as a new Sunday afternoon Contemplative Worship to attract newcomers and younger folks. We will delve into a Vision Planning process to ensure our parish has another 200 years. We will continue to grow our Food Alliance ministry with new partnerships to serve those in need. We will develop new Bible Studies and both Adult and Youth opportunities alike. We are marching forward in 2021.

Grace Episcopal Church will not only survive but thrive well into the future. But we need your help. We need your continued support with financial giving and time. We need you to give one hour. One hour per week. One hour every two weeks. Or one hour per month. It is up to you to fuel the engine of Grace la Gracia Episcopal Church. Some of you will want to work from home. That is great because we have many opportunities for you to help from your home. Some of you can come to the church. That is great because we have many opportunities for you as well. If you are currently not giving One Hour to Grace Church, then call the office. We need you.

One major challenge we must face is our financial deficit. Not insurmountable, but serious and needing attention right now. As you know, we are spending more than the revenue coming in. Our task is to align our expenses and revenue, cutting costs where able and bringing in new money to offset expenses. Our financial committee and vestry will be seriously contemplating large expense cuts in our church. Expense cuts that will change your church. Therefore, we need your financial support now more than ever. I am not here to cast a shadow of bad news or blame anyone. That is not the leadership I declare, nor is it beneficial. We cannot change the past. Instead, let us focus on the future. Let us face our reality and move forward in a direction that will allow us to do God's ministry right here in White Plains - to worship, to learn, to be in community, to advocate on behalf of others - all right here in this parish. Bottom line, we will make the necessary and difficult decisions to get us back to where we need to be.

Going forward, it is essential to mention our leaders and their contribution - the members of Grace Church that make things happen. I want to thank everyone here at Grace Church, every ministry leader from Brinda in Altar Guild to Sorraya in Advocacy, to Marie with SAGE, Linda, and the Youth Education, and so many others supporting/leading our Grace Church ministries. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you do... I would like to recognize someone incredibly special to Grace Church, a leader of our parish for many decades and in many roles - Walter Simon. Walter and Sylvia Simon, we cannot thank you enough for all that you have done. I want to thank our staff beginning with Fr. Adolfo, leading in both Grace and la Gracia's various ministries. No-one will ever understand the incredible amount of effort and passion you bring to our parish. I would like to thank Peter for our wonderful music, Suzan our administrator, Maria our bookkeeper, and Taurino our amazing Sexton. I want to remind everyone that we have precious little time with Taurino as he is retiring at the end of this August. We cannot thank him enough for his many years (days and nights) for all his work taking care of us, and our buildings and grounds. Furthermore, I want to thank all vestry members - Michael, Daisy, Hillary, Irene, Sorraya, Eileen, Mary, Daniel, Edythe, and Charlotte... I would like to recognize one that will be leaving us, Hillary Fleming, our treasurer. We cannot thank you enough for all that you have done as our treasurer, and for so many years. Someone once said that the treasurer's job is thankless because you cannot please everyone and certainly not all the time. This is true. Thank you for all your work.

I would like to thank our two wardens, Daisy our Junior Warden, and Michael our Senior Warden. Daisy, thank you so much for your overall leadership and your ability to link our Grace la Gracia communities together. Your leadership is wonderful and so necessary. As many know, we will be losing Michael, our senior warden, to seminary this summer as he begins a 3-year study at Yale Divinity School. It will be difficult to fill Michael's shoes as he leads in so many capacities at Grace Church - Senior Warden, videographer, Worship, Advocacy, Food Alliance, Downtown Music, Grant Writer, and so much more. Michael, we simply cannot thank you enough for all that you have done at Grace Church and for all that you will do as a future priest. As we look forward to this new Church Year, we as followers of the Jesus Movement, are called to maintain hope. As it says in **Isaiah 40**, ***"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk***

and not be faint.” *Grace Church*, we must be resilient in our hope. In this new year, we must have hope. We cannot just survive but thrive. We need your help. We need your time and your financial support. Your vestry and I are asking you to Pledge this new year one hour of your time. It could be one hour per week; one hour per two weeks or one hour per month according to your calendar. The one hour we request does not have to be in person. There are things you can do from home. Give us a call and we will discuss it. But get involved. Grace Church is a community, not a person or two. Not one group, but all of us. Make a commitment to get involved. You can do it in this new year.

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

God Bless You,

Fr. Chip +

EASTER – APRIL 4th

Or ???

By Mary Baker

A few years ago, I was shopping in my favorite Middle Eastern market for the fresh dates that they import from Israel. It was a few days before Easter, so I wished the proprietor a happy Easter. The response was “Thank you, but we don’t celebrate Easter until later in the month because we are Orthodox Christians.” While Grace/La Gracia celebrates Easter this year on April 4th, some of our Orthodox Christian neighbors will celebrate it on May 2nd. Are you wondering why there is a difference?

In 45 B.C., Julius Caesar designed a calendar (now called the Julian calendar) based on the time it takes for the earth to circle the sun each year. This was the calendar used by the early Christian church as they began to celebrate Easter as the Day of The Resurrection of our Lord. It was established that Easter would occur on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox. It is a bit more complicated than this, however, because there are somewhat different definitions of “vernal equinox” and “full moon,” etc., but you get the idea!

By the time of the Roman Catholic Pope Gregory in 1582, however, astronomy had become more accurate. The old Julian calendar was based on the miscalculations of the length of the solar year by 11 minutes so that, over the years, the calendar had fallen out of sync with the seasons. The Pope had a new calendar created to better align the calendar with the time of the earth’s actual trip each year around the sun. This calendar is the Gregorian calendar.

The Eastern Orthodox Christian Church continued to use the old Julian calendar, but the Roman Catholic Christian Church began following Pope Gregory’s calendar. This is true to this very day, resulting in two different dates for celebrating Easter.

Great Britain and all its colonies changed from using the old Julian calendar to the use of the Gregorian calendar in 1752. This was during the early years of America’s settlement. Perhaps you have heard the interesting observation that George Washington has two different birth dates. President Washington was born in Virginia on February 11, 1731, according to the Julian calendar, which was in use at that time. But in 1751 when Great Britain decided to change to the Gregorian calendar and also recognize January 1st as the beginning of the New Year, it meant that

Washington's date of birth was then recorded as February 22, 1732. George Washington does, indeed, have two registered birth dates!

There are many people in America whose background is from Greece, the Balkans, other former Soviet countries, and Middle Eastern countries, and they worship and celebrate Easter in American Orthodox Christian churches.

Other than the date, there are some differences, as well as similarities, in celebrating Orthodox Christian Easter, which is also called Pascha. Lent and fasting are a big part of both. However, Orthodox Christian Lent does not begin on Ash Wednesday. It begins on Clean Monday, as a cleansing from sinful attitudes.

Holy Week in the Orthodox Christian Church begins 8 days before Easter with Lazarus Saturday, commemorating Lazarus' resurrection from the dead by the miracle of his friend Jesus. Palm Sunday is then celebrated and also Good Friday. On the next day, Saturday, the biggest celebration is held. This is called Holy (Great) Saturday Night. The service begins at 11:00 p.m. with a darkened church. The priest lights a single candle, followed by the entire congregation lighting candles. They then process around the outside of the church, ending at the closed front door, which represents the tomb. The door opens, bells ring out, the people enter, and the great celebration of the Resurrection is held. Afterwards, a great feast is held as an end to Lenten penitential fasting. This feast often includes roasted lamb, because Christ is the Lamb of God, and a special Easter bread called tsoureki.

Although the rituals and customs, as well as the calendar dates, might be different, the central reason for the holy season and Lent, ending with Easter Sunday, is the same in both, which is to celebrate the glorious resurrection of Jesus. By His sacrificial death on the cross, we all can be redeemed from death and expect to live in eternal life with him.

**ALLELUIA. CHRIST IS RISEN. THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED.
ALLELUIA!**

CONFESSION OF SIN
For the Absalom Jones Service

Each year the Diocese holds a service celebrating Absalom Jones, the first African American priest in the U.S. This year, members of the Blessed Absalom Jones Service Committee asked Grace/ La Gracia's J2A group to create a modern Confession of Sin to be read at the service on February 20th. The Bishop felt that the group did a wonderful job of creating a powerful updated prayer, and we are very proud of their hard work and effort.

Lauren Reid and Ashley Elliott

Confession of Sin

Almighty God,

We acknowledge how we have sinned against you and willfully turned away from you.

We apologize for those acts we may have done in vain.

We are sorry for sinning against you,

in what we think, what we say, and what we do.

We're sorry for those times when we have seen something wrong, and haven't done anything to make it right.

We come to you humbly;

Please forgive us, for Jesus's sake, for our sins and the ungood we have done.

We promise to be better in the future, and to treat everybody the way we want to be treated, regardless of their differences.

Please forgive us so that we may move on and be the people you want us to be. through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Amen

Eric Woodberry, Priya Kumar, Sebastian Maldonado, Anna Kristina O'Hanlon, Vika O'Hanlon, Gabby Parkinson

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The winter has been a busy time for our Youth Education program, notwithstanding the covid situation. Our regular classes continued to meet via zoom. We are very proud that our youth are involved in a variety of service projects.

This year's Christmas Pageant was a highlight for our Youth Education Program. It was a unique (and hopefully) one of a kind lockdown-related experience. All levels of our Youth participated in a zoom version of our winter classic. We hope that you enjoyed it! If you have not had a chance to see it, you may do so on the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AvvvDeuBFjIRdII4ofduIPbuHmnUxUMh/view>

Several of our Rite 13 (7th and 8th Grade) and J2A (High School) members are actively involved in the "Caring Cupboard," which they will operate in conjunction with peers from other schools. The Caring Cupboard is literally a cupboard, which contains non-perishable foods for anyone who needs it. Our Youth have placed the cupboard in the Church vestibule. The slogan of "Solidarity, Not Charity" fully describes this project. Teaming with high schoolers and middle schoolers from other schools, our Rite 13/J2A members have decorated the cupboard and will work to keep it stocked. Our



involved youth include Vika, Nik and Anna O'Hanlon and Eric and Aaron Woodberry. Check out the cupboard the next time you visit Grace Church.

Similarly, our Youth are participating as readers and acolytes in the live services with Father Chip and Father Adolfo. Youth member participants have included the Richards, the O'Hanlons, the Kumars, Sebastian Lopes and Gabrielle Parkinson.

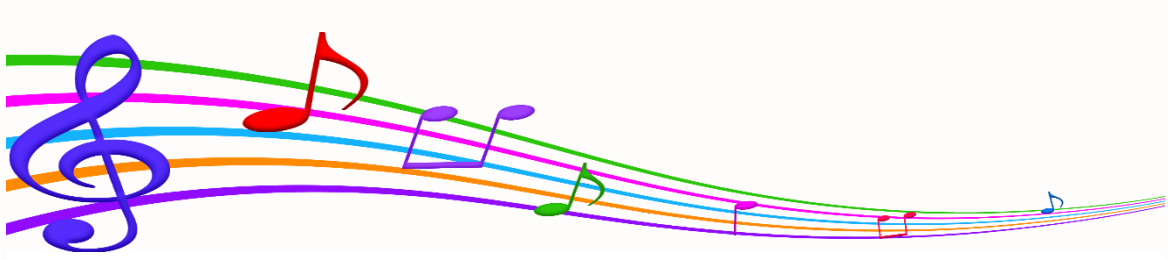
Rite 13 is fully engaged in the preparation for our coming Celebration of Manhood and Womanhood in the Grace Church sanctuary, which will take place on Sunday, March 21st. Our celebrities will be Eve Bradford, Rohan Kumar, and Ivanna Richards. This is a very important ceremony for our Youth, and we hope you will support them in this effort. Independent of the Celebration planning, Rite 13 has been focused on the Study of "The Image of God" and "In the Image of God." The former involved study of our perception of God and the role God plays in our lives; the latter reminds us that all of us are in God's image, and that God loves us as one of his. Both studies fit nicely into the Celebration topic, particularly since the Celebrities will jointly read Psalm 139 during the Celebration, which addresses how God looks over us.

J2A has similarly met regularly by zoom. In addition to discussing how the group can best participate in the Caring Cupboard and their roles as acolytes and readers, the group discussions have focused on topics relating to our Christian beliefs as they relate to the lives of our High Schoolers.

Our primary class (elementary age) has similarly been active. In addition to participation in this year's virtual Christmas Pageant, the class has been meeting regularly (taking just the 3rd Sunday of the month off). The attendance has been steady and the students are actively engaged. We started covering "parables" (stories with a deeper meaning) from the beginning of the year – the parable of the sower, the building on a rock, the vineyard workers ("the last shall be first" – one of my personal favorites). Looking forward to getting ready for Lent and making preparations for Easter. Sebastian Lopes and Savannah MacLeish have both been involved in food distribution.

With thanks for your continued support to our Youth Education Program.

George O'Hanlon



Grace Family,

I don't need to tell you how much we love music at Grace Church. And we must continue this wonderful tradition at our parish, but we need your help.

In order to better align our annual budget, we've reduced our Music Budget, allowing one soloist per Sunday, but only for a limited number of Sunday's. I believe that having at least one soloist per Sunday worship s essential and therefore I invite you to underwrite a particular Sunday service by **donating \$175 for that service.**

In total, we are approximately \$5,000 short of having at least one soloist per Sunday throughout this year. Therefore, for every \$175 you donate to Grace Church, you will be given a Sunday to honor someone special in your life - your children, a spouse, someone special to you. They will be named in the bulletin for that Sunday.

To support this effort, please send a check with 'Grace Music' inserted in the memo line and let us know the name(s) of those you want celebrated in the bulletin.

For questions, please respond to this email.

Music is essential at Grace Church. Please pray about this and donate if able.

May God Bless You,

Fr. Chip +

Dear Grace Church Family

The Stewardship Committee and the Vestry would like to thank you for your generous pledge. We know that these are very difficult times for all of us. Many people are struggling to meet their financial obligations; others are dealing with emotional and stressful situations during this pandemic. But we are working together to ensure the future of Grace LaGracia.

If you are not attending our services in person, you can mail your pledge offering to Grace, or you can deposit it through the front door. Those who prefer to give on line are encouraged to continue using this convenient way of giving. In all cases, please write your envelope number on the check and/or envelope.

This year we are living with a new normal. Our budget was made to reflect the decrease in income we received in 2020 and expect to receive in 2021. The budget for the stewardship committee and all other committees of the church was decreased (cut). We decided to eliminate the most expensive item in our budget—the printed envelopes. So we are asking you to either use your own envelope or pick up one or more envelopes from the back of the church. Please keep a record of each check (cash) along with the date you gave it. When you receive your quarterly statements, please check them carefully. We encourage you to try to stay current in your pledge.

We appreciate your generosity.

The Stewardship Committee

Keeping Track Of Your Pledge

Charlotte Roberson

We are all praying for a healthier and happier year. It is the blessing of the Lord that has helped Grace/ LaGracia get to where we are today. Your Vestry thanks you for your 2021 pledge. Let us begin 2021 with some thoughts on how to keep track of how much you have pledged and how much is left on your pledge. First of all, you need to know that because of the expense, there are no pledge envelopes this year. Your pledge number stays the same. We can provide you with a white envelope at Grace/LaGracia or you can use one of your own. Please write your pledge number on your checks and your envelopes. If you give cash please be sure to write your name on the envelope. You can also give electronically.

- Please write down the amount you have pledged on a calendar (January 1, 2021).
- If you give weekly, monthly or quarterly please write each amount on your calendar.
- At the end of each quarter please open your statement from Grace/ La Gracia and subtract what you have given from one quarter (1/4) of your pledge. That is the amount left on your pledge for the quarter (April, June, September, and December).
- In June please do the same thing and decide whether you have fulfilled half (1/2) of your pledge. Likewise in September three quarters (3/4) of your pledge and by the end of December your full pledge.
- If you miss a week or month please remember to make up the amount as soon as you are able.

We understand that the Covid pandemic has affected all of our lives. It takes extra thought and preparation to keep track of your expenses and budget. We ask that you follow the above steps so that Grace/ LaGracia is also able to balance its budget during the year.

DANDO SEGUIMIENTO A SU PROMESA

Todos oramos por un año más saludable y feliz. Es la bendición del Señor lo que ha ayudado a Grace / La Gracia a llegar a donde estamos hoy. El Vestry le agradece su promesa para el 2021. Comencemos el 2021 con algunas ideas sobre cómo llevar un registro de cuánto ha prometido y cuánto queda en su promesa. En primer lugar, debe saber que debido al gasto no hay sobres de promesas este año. Su número de promesa sigue siendo el mismo. Podemos proporcionarle un

sobre blanco en Grace / La Gracia o puede usar uno propio. Por favor escriba su número de promesa en sus cheques y sobres. Si da dinero en efectivo, asegúrese de escribir su nombre en el sobre. También puede donar electrónicamente.

- Escriba la cantidad que ha prometido en un calendario (1 de enero de 2021).
- Si dona semanalmente, mensualmente o trimestralmente, escriba cada monto en su calendario.
- Al final de cada trimestre, abra su estado de cuenta de Grace / La Gracia y reste lo que ha dado de un cuarto (1/4) de su promesa. Esa es la cantidad restante en su promesa para el trimestre (abril, junio, septiembre y diciembre).

• En junio, haga lo mismo y decida si ha cumplido la mitad (1/2) de su promesa. Asimismo, en septiembre, tres cuartas partes (3/4) de su promesa y, a finales de diciembre, su promesa total.

- Si se pierde una semana o un mes, recuerde recuperar la cantidad tan pronto como pueda.

Entendemos que la pandemia el Covid ha afectado a todas nuestras vidas. Se necesita más reflexión y preparación para realizar un seguimiento de sus gastos y presupuesto. Le pedimos que siga los pasos anteriores para que Grace / La Gracia también pueda equilibrar su presupuesto durante el año.

Book Club Update

Caste: An Essential Read, a Powerful Eye-opener

Knowledge is power. We're all familiar with that term. In her latest book, **Caste**, award-winning author and journalist Isabel Wilkerson, gives us the chance to put the term into action. **Caste** is a powerful read that increases our knowledge and thus, potentially increase our power. Wilkerson powerfully tackles a difficult and painful subject—the existence and persistence of the Caste system that continues to thrive in the U.S. while cloaked in an illusion of equality. Book Club members believe **Caste** to be an essential read and urges parishioners to not only tackle reading it, but also joining us in our next Zoom meeting when we will discuss **Caste** on Tuesday, March 9, at 7 pm. The Zoom link will be shared by e-mail. We look forward to sharing the insights we have gained, some of which are shared in the comments below:

“After watching the second impeachment trial of the former U.S. President, I remembered the early pages of **Caste** by Isabel Wilkerson. I went back to page 4 that read, ‘it was common to hear in certain circles the disbelieving cries, ‘This is not America,’ or ‘I don’t recognize my country,’ or ‘This is not who we are.’ Except that this *was* and *is* our country and this *was* and *is* who we are, whether we have recognized it or not.’ The book was copyrighted in 2020. The trial continued through February 13, 2021.”

Irene Alves

“**Caste** is a painful book to read—it does not shy away from describing the horrifying atrocities committed in our own country by Americans against fellow black American citizens. It shows clearly how Nazi Germany used America's Jim Crow system as a pattern for their own efforts to "cleans" Germany. But, more importantly, it also describes how post-World War Germany has made efforts to make amends for their actions that contrasts sharply with our own country at the present time. Every American should be required to read this book.”

Mary Baker

“Black Americans have long known that our country has and continues to operate under a well-planned, intractable Caste system—we live with the demeaning, dehumanizing results every day of our lives. We just didn’t know what to call it. Beyond giving the American system of hierarchy a name, Isabel Wilkerson connects the dots to illustrate how our Caste system was created and what keeps it thriving at the expense of an entire group of people based on skin color. **Caste** should be a required read by every U.S. citizen to understand our past and help redirect an inevitable painful future.”

Karen Odom

“Isabel Wilkerson has described a hard and fixed American system that goes beyond racism. I think she explains a phenomenon that so many of us have experienced, but not known how to readily define. **Caste** was not easy to read for several reasons, but it clarified and affirmed a number of issues for me.”

Monica Scantlebury

“The novels **The Tattooist of Auschwitz** and **Caste** explore what happens when groups of people are defined as "the other." **The Tattooist of Auschwitz**, the memoir of a man who was a prisoner at Auschwitz, is also a story of love and resilience during imprisonment. **Caste** explores how skin color has been used to also define groups of people in society as "the other." Isabel Wilkerson explores how this system has operated in India and in the United States. By doing so, both countries have used melanin to marginalize an entire group of people. Both books are timely because our country is once again confronted with the issues of race and White privilege in our society. Will we deal with it honestly or will we become mired in hatred and conflict? I pray for the sake of my grandchildren, we will address it honestly.”

Sylvia Simon

Submitted by Karen Odom

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Daylight Savings Time Begins – March 14, at 12 a.m.

Spring Begins – March 20

Easter – April 4

Earth Day – April 22

Mothers’ Day – May 9

Memorial Day – May 31

A Sign from God...

Approximately twenty years ago Verna was in Chicago for her sorority's convention and during that time Verna ran into a former student that she taught. Yvette was then a teacher in Chicago



with two children and she was trying to make a decision about going to law school. As she said in the letter seeing Verna was a sign from God that she should pursue her dream. Yvette is now a lawyer in Chicago, I called her to let her know that Verna is dead. Yvette told me that Verna had tremendous effect on her life and she will always be grateful.

Joe Brown

1/2/21

Mrs. Brown,

Happy New Year. It has been over 20 years since I saw you at the King Library in Chicago. I yet reflect on the fact that God heard and answered the unspoken prayer of my heart when we met that day. God continues to reveal his faithfulness and love to us and for that I am ever grateful.

You have been on my mind and I finally stopped to drop you a note. I pray that you and your family are well.

Please know that you will ever remain in my thoughts and prayers. God blessed me with a wonderful teacher.

Thank you again!

Yvette

Charlie

I have a friend. Let's call him Charlie, a man without a home, living on the street, in-between shelters, and wherever he is able. Charlie's cognition is different from many, unable to sequence thoughts and focus, but he has become our friend.

Yesterday, Ash Wednesday, Charlie attended our three Mass worship services. I'd be lying if his attendance was beyond our sheltered protection from the outside elements, but Charlie and I would chat in-between.

Rambling, Charlie would share vignettes about his past, with intervening current notions. And then, suddenly, give thanks for our hospitality. Unbelievable, that a man in his condition was able to think beyond himself and his survival to give thanks.

Morning, noon and evening we fed Charlie with nutrition and worship. And I believe he enjoyed both. So, what is the point of this story beyond a church doing what it is called to do? Just that, while we journey through the eye of a Pandemic, the Church remains our home, a safe haven, an icon for enduring faith and healing during our most troubling obstacles.

It is my prayer that we seek a place of worship, support it, and become the Church.

Amen.

The Rev. Dr. Chip Graves



LINDA GALLO – Senior Warden

For those of you who do not know me, I would like to introduce myself as well as my accomplishments at Grace Episcopal Church as well as my other endeavors.

I have been a member of Grace church for 30 years. I guess I'm still a "newbie" compared to our many illustrious long-term members. I came to Grace Church to find a place of not only worship but of spiritual fellowship. I recently had moved from New Jersey and was not fulfilled with other churches I had attended in the White Plains area. I had passed the church and its landmark red doors many times prior to venturing inside. It had called to me. Once I entered, I immediately felt as if I had found my spiritual home. The genuine warmth and welcoming were astounding. I never left.

As I acclimated, I found I needed to be a full participant in fellowship. I volunteered to teach Sunday School (now known as Youth Christian Education) to a new group of students-what we now call the Lambs. It was exhilarating! I also volunteered for the Welcoming Committee as I knew firsthand how important is it to welcome those who

join us for worship. I also became Chair of the Stewardship Committee. While serving in this capacity, we successfully increased pledging. In the interim, I also chaired the Nominating Committee. Eventually, I was asked to stand for the Vestry. I served for two terms. I was then asked to stand for junior Warden. The next year, I was nominated and elected to serve as Senior Warden for two terms. Although it was a challenge as Grace Church was transitioning to a new rector, it was a fulfilling to witness the growth in Grace Church and its building relationship with our La Gracia congregants. After my Vestry service, I returned to teaching our Lambs. I continue to do so at present. In the last year, I was asked and accepted the position of Youth Christian Education Chair. We are continuing on regardless of the challenges of church closure because of Covid-19. I am currently a member of the Book Club. I also serve as a Lay Reader, which I have done for many years.

During our next Rector transition bringing Fr. Chip Graves to us, I served on the Search Committee, quite an honor and satisfying.

I have recently completed nine years as a member of the Board of Directors of Lifting Up Westchester. I have been the liaison between the LUW and Grace Church. I am proud to say that under my leadership, Grace Church has continued its long association with LUW in supporting its work. We have over many years supported the Christmas gift cards as well as contributing to providing swimsuits to the Summer Camp.

I am honored to be the Senior Warden because I believe in the vitality and growth of our church. Because of my continued active participation, I believe that I still have much to contribute to the life and vibrancy of Grace/La Gracia.

Daisy Calderon - Jr. Warden



I am looking forward to serving as the Vestry's Junior Warden. I am a pledging member of Grace Church, with over 5 years of dedicated service to this parish. I am presently a vestry member, and also served as a member of The Rector Search Committee that blessed our parish with the selection of Reverend Chip Graves. I firmly believe that my dedication, commitment, involvement and leadership have contributed positively to the stability and wellbeing of the La Gracia family. I look forward to working closely with all parishioners, and to continue contributing not only to the continuous growth of our parish but to strengthening bonds within our parish community as a whole. I work closely with Father Moronta organizing activities such as our yearly fundraiser, Retreats, The Guadalupe celebration, Joint Easter activities with the Latin Parishes of Westchester and all other activities organized by La Gracia, including the Grace/La Gracia Toy drive, which has successfully distributed over 400 Toys to the children of our parish during the last 2 years. All of these activities have been a success in terms of the number of participants and have contributed to the gradual expansion of our parish community. My participation in these activities and Father Adolfo's guidance have fulfilled me personally and have motivated me to continue in this Journey of Spiritual growth.

I find it fulfilling to give of myself, not only at Grace, my spiritual refuge, but also externally. At a personal level, I am a founding member of a non-profit entity helping disadvantaged children in the northern indigenous communities of Honduras. For the last 13 years, we have provided scholarships, supplies, and also impart seminars to parents and students, in an effort to improve their chances to become intellectually stronger communities.

At a professional Level, I am a Vice-president at the International Banking Division of a Global Financial institution in New York City.

I am thankful for the opportunity to serve our church community and look forward to serving Grace/LaGracia.

Lisa A. Daley



- Member of grace church for approximately 14 years
- Usher, Lay Reader and Eucharistic Minister
- Attorney
- Registered Nurse
- Track and Field Athlete

Given the state of our country, community and church I am stepping up to serve on the Vestry because we have to come up with a plan to preserve our church (and by extension our community) and I want to be a part of that vestry team. I am looking forward to rolling up my sleeves, using my education and skills to collaborate with members of our congregation and community to ensure that Grace Church remains the beacon of hope that it currently is.



Kevin Richards has been a member of Grace church for 20 years. He has served the Church in a number of capacities including as a member of the search committee, Finance Committee and Vestry. He is a CPA and Partner at Deloitte and Touche LLP and real estate audit and advisory services practice leader. He lives in Yorktown NY with his wife Ingrid and three children, Harrison (14), Ivana (13) and Joel (7)

Dr. Andrea Hamilton-Singh



Hello Grace Church
Family,

My name is Dr. Andrea Hamilton-Singh and I was born, raised, and currently reside in White Plains. I was baptized here at Grace Church as a baby, and my grandparents had been a part of this church community until they were no longer able to attend services in the final stages of their life before going to be with the lord.

As a child, I attended Sunday School and served as an acolyte. As an adult, I have continued to serve the church as an active pledging steward and most recently served as a member of the search committee for our new rector in addition to a lector reader, and coffee hour host

serve in a greater capacity.

I am a woman grounded in faith and I feel that I have an obligation to continue to serve my church community in any way I can. There is no question that given our current circumstances our church community needs more support now more than *ever*, and I have been called to

This decision to serve on the vestry was certainly not without prayer and I am simply living by faith knowing that I love this church and I want to continue to be a part of the fabric for years to come.

Serving as a vestry member is a commitment that requires a clear understanding of the needs of the church community and the willingness to serve and continue to support the needs and vision of the church.

I have had the opportunity to serve on several boards, most recently I was the past President of the Lower Hudson Council of Administrative Women in Education (LHCAWE) and the Past President of the Regional Association of Supervisors and Administrators (RASA).

In those roles, I demonstrated my capacity to lead with patience, and prayers to meet and exceed shared vision through communication, collaboration, and continuing to build community.

Professionally, I am a proud educator in the business of nurturing minds and taking care of hearts as the Principal at Mice E. Grady Elementary School.

In my role, I am doing God's work by planting seeds of promise in the lives of children, in addition to championing others to support those in need.

My motto, which hangs in my office for all to see is, "Grateful and blessed with abundance and grace".

I look forward to continuing to serve and answer the call to serve on the Vestry here at Grace Church.

Sylvia Simon



I have been a parishioner for almost forty-one years. During that time, I was active in several activities of Grace/la Garcia and Grace Church Community Center (LUW).

- A volunteer neighbor in the original Neighbors program.
- Member of the Vestry
- Sunday School Teacher
- Previous Judge for LUW essay contest
- Chairperson of the Welcome Committee
- Book Club
- Consistently reached out to the sick and home bound members of the parish and those reaching mile stones in their lives.
- Active parishioner who over the years consistently volunteered for a variety of parish

Personal

As a long time parishoner of Grace church, I feel compelled to serve on the vestry during this very perilous time. It is apparent that the church must adjust to the challenging and everchanging needs of those we serve and support. Hopefully, with God's help, we will persevere.

Civic Volunteer Activities (past and present)

- Engagement Committee, Central 7 School System
- Interview Committees for teachers and administrators for Central 7
- Member of the Juniper Hill Civic Association
- Volunteer for the Winding Ridge Condo Board

Professional Experience

An experienced educator with varied instructional expertise on all levels of the educational spectrum. Educator and/or Administrator from the elementary school to the graduate school level.

Education

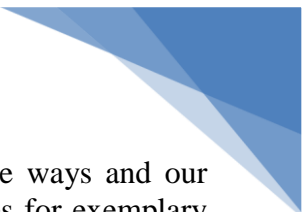
College of New Rochelle, MA, School Administration
City College of New York, MA Reading
City College of New York, B.A in Education

VIEWS FROM THE PEWS

Thriving in the Midst of a Pandemic by Sylvia Simon

These have been challenging times for all parishioners. We have been living with the impact of the virus on every aspect of our daily lives. Yet, the most amazing thing is that our young people are not only adapting, but thriving, in every area of their lives despite the challenges.

The educational landscape keeps changing. Some schools began with in-person instruction, others began with virtual instruction. Still other schools have a hybrid combination. Unfortunately, the structures are



not always consistent because Covid19 strikes at unpredictable times in unpredictable ways and our schools and the students must adapt. All seem to be doing well. Some have won prizes for exemplary work. Some of our young people have transitioned into college. They have had to adjust to college. However, as they adapt to a new environment, they must submit to regular COVID tests, practice safe distancing as well as complete course requirements.

One of the most amazing aspects of these young people is their ability to make the adjustments enjoyable. For example, Sunday school leaders Linda Gallo, George O'Hanlon and Michael Heffner assisted them in presenting a wonderful inventive Virtual Christmas Pageant. In addition, some of the young people created a prayer for the Absalom Jones celebration. They have become more involved as lay readers during our virtual Sunday services.

Finally, they have found the time to give back to the community such as the Giving Cupboard, Food distribution to families, and meals to frontline workers in our hospitals.

Kudos to all of them!

Now in college: Sam Brown, Kaylee Owens, Spencer Carden, Maya Daughtry, James Heffner, and Anahi Lozada-Perez.

Aaron Bradford III, a senior at Ardsley High School, was named a Regeneron Scholar this month, placing in the top 300 entrants in the Regeneron Science Talent Search for 2021. The 300 scholars were chosen from more than 1,750 high school seniors worldwide. Each student receives \$2,000 and their school also receives \$2,000 to use toward STEM related activities.

Shane Daughtry, a Fordham Preparatory School junior, along with two friends, formed a non-profit called Friends4Frontliners to help support frontline workers during the Covid 19 crisis. They raised \$11,000 and delivered 2,000 meals to frontline and night-shift workers at Westchester hospitals. He also was recently named a member of the New York State Youth Advisory Council.

KUDOS ALSO TO GRACE CHURCH YOUTH GROUP ALUMNI, some of whom we have heard from lately. They “grew up” at Grace Church, were active in the youth group, and served as acolytes.

Matt Jackson, son of Dorothy Jackson, is the president of a movie studio and the producer of the award-winning movie Trial of the Chicago 7 on Netflix.

Ian Estepan, son of Dr. Jean Chambers, has been appointed Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Sarepta Therapeutics.

Dr. Jean Marie Bradford, daughter of Irene Alves, has been appointed by the Columbia University Department of Psychiatry to be the Director of their inaugural Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Marissa Boylan, daughter of Joanne Boylan and granddaughter of Shirley Spencer, is an Adjunct Professor at Long Island University and Coordinator with the Long Island Liberty Partnership Program.

Scott Louis, son of Paxton and Donna Louis, graduated from Northeastern University with a bachelor's degree in rehabilitation science and a minor in psychology. He went on there to receive his Ph.D. in Physical Therapy in 2020 and is currently affiliated with Spear Physical and Occupational Therapy.

We are always pleased and happy to acknowledge such accomplishments and we welcome hearing of many others in the future.

KUDOS TO KAREN ODOM, whose letter to Kamala Harris has been included in a recently published book that includes 100 such letters written by women in and outside our country expressing their support for our new Vice President. The book is entitled “Dear Kamala Harris” by Peggy Brooks-Bertram. It is available in book stores and through Amazon.



Remembering Cecil

By Nell Plaine

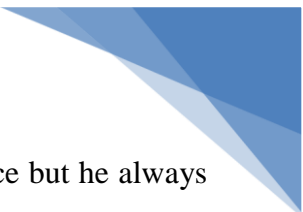
I didn't grow up going to church on Sunday on a regular basis and never got into that habit, but I have always liked to sit in churches. I find them very calming and a great stress reliever. So – when I worked in lower Manhattan I started stopping into Trinity Wall Street every Wednesday for the noon service. Trinity is big and they have around 4 services per day – a noon service every day. The noon service there usually has about 40 congregants in attendance. I would slip in and sit in the back and follow along with the service.

When I retired, I lived in the White Plains/Greenburgh area and I would go to Grace Church in White Plains on special Sundays. I knew they had a weekday service twice a week so I thought I could continue my weekday attendance at Grace/La Gracia.

But – the first Tuesday when I stopped in at noon, I was surprised to see no one in the church! I wasn't sure if they were actually going to have a service and I thought about leaving – but then suddenly, out of nowhere, a man appeared – it was Cecil! He approached me and in that unmistakable voice said “are you here for the mass?” and directed me to the little side chapel. At that point I still wasn't actually sure if I would stay – but he didn't really give me the option to leave. He showed me where to sit and then the rest of the (very) small group filtered in. This was not Trinity Wall Street – no sitting in the back – at Grace for a weekday service you are in the mix.

That was over 12 years ago and the weekday service became a regular part of my schedule.

During most of that time, the one constant each Tuesday or Thursday was Cecil. He was always there – before everyone else – including whichever priest was officiating. He would walk from his house to the



church – over a mile. Carolyn Rogers would often give him a ride home after the service but he always got there on his own two feet!

The only times I remember Cecil not being there were the few days where the weather was really bad, when his wife died, and the rare occasion when he was sick. Since Cecil would always arrive early and set everything up, on those rare days when he wasn't there, everyone would have to scramble to get things together for the service.

Cecil loved the service and participated with incredible joy. He responded and sang in his strong gravelly voice even as his hearing was failing and it was more difficult for him to follow along.

In many ways the weekday service belonged to Cecil. He directed everyone to a seat – and as time went on, he would move you if you were sitting in someone else's usual spot! People coming for the first time would occasionally get a little miffed at that – but the regulars all knew that Cecil was keeping things steady. He liked it to be familiar to him and to everyone else. He would shush you if you were talking when you should have been listening – and he often would tell people who wandered into the church during the service to be respectful or come and join in.

With Cecil, the Peace wasn't just a handshake and "Peace be with you" It was a big hug and often a kiss on both cheeks. Whenever I had been away traveling, on my return he would always welcome me back with a huge smile and a hug. I would sometimes be concerned about that for him during flu season but he never held back his affection for people.

Cecil was so full of life and spirit. He was proud of his age and if someone mentioned that he was 99 after his 100th birthday, he would be sure to correct them. I think he continued that after he turned 101. He was a sweet man who loved cookies and treats. He was always active and always involved. When he wasn't at Grace, he would volunteer to work with "the elderly". He was proudly independent and always full of life. I don't think I ever saw him when he couldn't come up with a big smile.

Some of us went to see Cecil after he moved from White Plains to live with his family. It was great to see him. He was still full of life and looked decades younger than his age. He was flourishing in the heart of his family and that was great to see. We visited after a weekday service and because we were seeing Cecil, we "went to church" for the second time that day. It was so appropriate. Grace Church meant a lot to Cecil and it was obviously an important part of his life and I will always think of him on a Tuesday or Thursday at noon – in the church, running the show, right where he belongs.



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EARTH DAY – APRIL 22nd

By Mary Baker

“May there be only peaceful and cheerful Earth Days to come for our beautiful Spaceship Earth as it continues to spin and circle in frigid space with its warm and fragile cargo of animate life.”

This is the Proclamation signed by Secretary General U Thant in 1969 when the first Earth Day was proposed at a UNESCO conference. The idea for such a conference was brought up by John McConnell, a peace activist, who thought that there should be a day to honor the earth and the concept of peace. The first day of spring in March, 1970, was the day established.

In addition, in our own country, Senator Gaylord Nelson proposed holding a national environmental teach-in on April 22, 1970, and calling it Earth Day. He was greatly helped in this endeavor by the United Auto Workers. In honor of his historic idea, he was later awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This initial Earth Day has evolved into the Earth Day celebrations held each year on April 22nd in more than 192 countries in support of environmental protection.



It was on Earth Day in 1970 that 120 countries, including the United States, signed the Paris Climate Agreement and which our country has once again joined. This year President Biden has said he will convene a global climate summit on Earth Day, April 22, 2021.

We all live on this planet and our very lives depend on its protection and bounty. This year, to celebrate it, you might find it worthwhile for you and your family to test your knowledge about our planet. You will find a quiz that you can take by going to [Earthday.org](https://earthday.org) and scrolling down to test what you know about:

Whales Environment
Protection of Species
Deforestation and Biodiversity
Oceans Clean Energy
Climate Change

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

Scenes and Faces of Grace





Prayer for Earth Day

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

Creator God,
You have called us to be keepers of your Earth;
Through greed, we have established an economy that
destroys the web of life. We have changed our climate and
drown in despair.
Let oceans of justice flow,
May we learn to sustain and renew the life of our Mother,
Earth
We pray for our leaders, custodians of Mother Earth;
as they gather at climate talks
May they negotiate with wisdom and fairness,
May they act with compassion and courage,
and lead us in the path of justice for the sake of our
children and our children's children.

Amen.

Rest in Peace

Lawrence Otis Graham

