

2018 Parish Profile

Grace Church/La Gracia



33 Church Street
White Plains, NY 10601

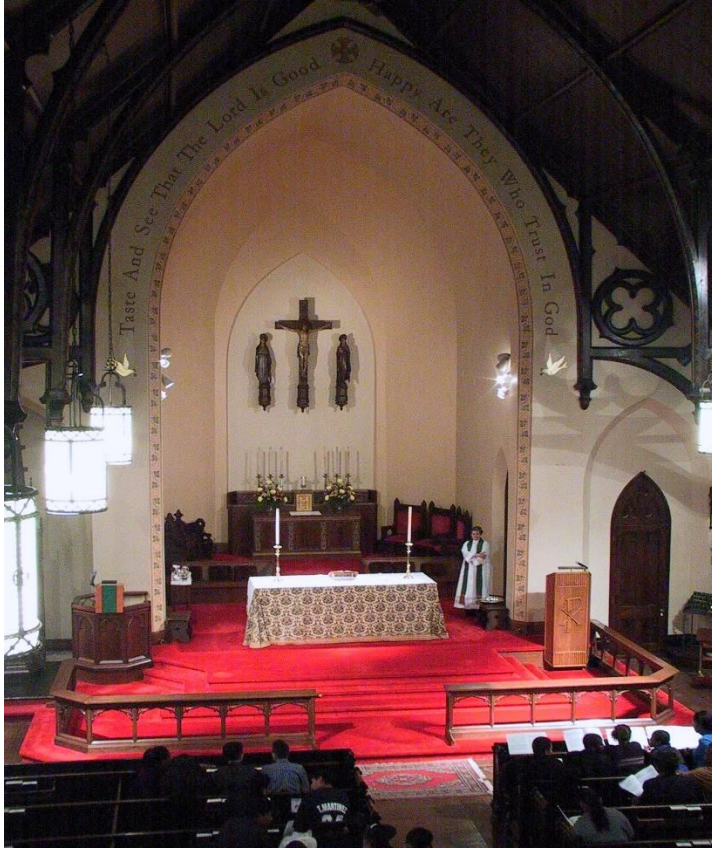
Grace Church is a diverse congregation committed to a common life sustained by worship. We bear witness to God's love in Christ through our life together and our service to the wider community. All are Welcome!

www.gracewhiteplains.org

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Introduction to Grace/La Gracia



Grace/La Gracia is a diverse, multicultural urban church located 25 miles from Grand Central Station, within one hour of some of the nation's finest universities, hospitals, museums and research institutions. After nearly 200 years of evolution in White Plains, Grace/La Gracia blends its traditional Anglican roots with the Afro and Latino roots of many current parishioners. We observe a high church liturgical practice and tradition.

Our vision for the next five years is to create a larger, younger, more cohesive church that is financially secure, while maintaining our broad diversity, service to our parishioners and partnership

with the local community. We are seeking a Rector with the pastoral, preaching and management skills to join the Wardens and Vestry in leading us to achieve these goals.

The diversity of Grace/La Gracia extends across ethnic, racial, social and economic demographics which we believe enhances all aspects of our worship and parish life. We place considerable emphasis on the importance of worship, opportunities for spiritual growth, and preaching. Everyone is encouraged to participate fully in multi-generational parish life events, social advocacy, pastoral care and community outreach.

Future challenges include membership growth, expanding the shared ministries of the English and Spanish speaking congregations to youth and young adults, increasing stewardship, and continuing development of new income streams, while maintaining and improving our rectory and Church properties. In other words, we seek to continue to grow as a single multicultural faith community that worships in distinct languages and traditions.

Applicants should submit resumés, OTM Portfolio, audiofiles and any other relevant material to: gracechurchwpsearchcommittee@gmail.com.

Parish Membership



The membership of Grace/La Gracia clearly reflects the concept of "cultural diversity." On entering the church on a Sunday morning, one is immediately impressed by worshippers raising their voices in praise to Almighty God, portraying Christ's "one people."

The fabric of Grace/La Gracia is woven in a harmonious mixing of all the parishioners, regardless of socioeconomic status, age, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation (the means of livelihood of these families covers a wide range of occupations, from professionals to the unemployed). Our young people participate in all areas of church activities and community, displaying the same unity and commitment possessed by adults. The combined membership of Grace/La Gracia includes about 295 families with attendance on an average Sunday at all three Services of approximately 300 worshippers.

La Gracia

La Gracia is a spiritual pillar for the Latin American community of Westchester County, and particularly the city of White Plains. It has served this community for over 30 years. La Gracia has a vibrant and growing Latino ministry with many opportunities for spiritual growth and discipleship among our Spanish-speaking parishioners. This church community fully displays the diversity and richness of its culture, not only during our Sunday Services, but also during special celebrations and other activities which take place in or outside the church, and in the presence of families, such as our weekly prayer group meetings where congregants meet to give praise, worship and honor to God and to build up the body of Christ.



The vibrancy of La Gracia is manifested through the faith of its members, the music and the cultural diversity. This is evidenced during Sunday services which are held at 12:30PM, characterized as spiritual and lively.

La Gracia enjoys a diverse and rich liturgical life which is further enriched with the religious customs of Latin America. Among the festivities that we celebrate are: Fiesta de La Divina Misericordia (Divine Mercy), Santa Catalina, Guadalupe, and Copacabana. Additionally, during December 16-24, we have the "Posadas," consisting of nine days of prayers and Christmas caroling, commemorating the Journey of Mary and Joseph in their search for a safe refuge for Mary to give birth. We gather at a different home each night. The celebration of these religious traditions is vital to the spiritual growth of this community. In 2016, we were fortunate, with the assistance of a grant from the Diocese,

to hire a full time bi-lingual Associate Priest who ministers to both Spanish and English-speaking parishioners.

The goals of the La Gracia ministry are: 1) to increase the Spanish-speaking membership with parishioners fully invested in our faith community irrespective of language and heritage; 2) to provide training of both Spanish and English-speaking members in ministries including Acolytes, Altar Guild, Christian Education, Eucharistic ministers and Lectors; 3) to develop leadership and enhance spiritual growth as well as stewardship; and 4) to increase shared ministry between Spanish and English-speaking parishioners.

Father Adolfo Moronta strives to build on the momentum of rising attendance to further penetrate the Spanish speaking community while engaging new and existing congregants in activities that provide spiritual healing and continued spiritual growth. An item of utmost importance to his ministry is his continued emphasis on stewardship and empowering the members to be active leaders of the parish.

Father Moronta is an American citizen of Dominican descent. He was born in New York and has lived in both the United States and the Dominican Republic. From the age of 10 he felt the call to serve in the Church of Christ, a mission that culminated in his ordination to the priesthood in February 2011 in the Diocese of the Dominican Republic. He is a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, where he received a Masters degree in Theology. He holds other academic degrees including a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, and a Bachelor of Arts in Theology. He has served in The **Diocese of the Dominican Republic**, the **Diocese of Virginia** and he currently is canonically resident in the **Diocese of New York**.

Liturgical Traditions and Worship

The Grace/La Gracia Church congregation gathers to share a welcoming, intimate and inclusive spiritual experience. All baptized Christians may receive communion, and all may receive a personal blessing.

Our principal Sunday worship at 10:00AM, is a Sung Rite II Eucharist with incense. We also offer a Said Rite II Eucharist on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with special prayers for healing on Thursdays. Noonday services are held on most feast days.

There are three services of Holy Eucharist each Sunday.

The 8:00AM Said Eucharist, Rite II, and a 10:00AM. Sung Eucharist, Rite II, with full choir. Both are in English, September through June. During July and August, we have a single Rite II Eucharist in English with hymns at 9:00AM. Prayers for healing with laying on of hands are included in the 10AM service once a month.

The 12:30PM Santa Eucharista is celebrated in Spanish with music.

On special occasions throughout the year, we share a bilingual service of Holy Eucharist, and we recently started a monthly Saturday evening service of holy Eucharist.

Advent and Christmas traditions include the Festival of Lessons and Carols.

On Christmas Eve we hold three services of Holy Eucharist: a family service with a Christmas pageant; a service in Spanish; and Solemn High Eucharist in English.

Each Eucharist includes readings from the Old Testament, a Psalm, an Epistle and the Gospel. The sermon typically draws from a reading's historical setting and its guidance for our daily lives, inviting those who join us in worship to find their own spiritual experience.

Three well-attended services are offered on Ash Wednesday, in addition to "Ashes to Go" throughout the day. Stations of the Cross are said on Wednesday evenings during Lent. During Holy Week, services are offered on Maundy Thursday, a Good Friday service with Solemn Collects and a Great Vigil of Easter. Easter morning is celebrated with festive music and a Sung Eucharist.

Many members of the parish are trained liturgically to participate in the liturgy as acolytes, thurifers, lay readers, intercessors and ushers.

We have a long tradition of excellent music and music is regarded as integral to our worship. The church has an exceptional 42 stop tracker action pipe organ built and installed by Guibault-Therien of Canada in 1989.

Christian Formation

Baptism

The administration of Baptism is a joyful occasion in the life of our parish. Baptism is full incorporation into the Christian community and typically is celebrated on the following Feasts (in addition to other Sundays as applicable): *The Great Vigil of Easter; Pentecost; All Saints' Day The Feast of the Baptism of our Lord; and The Bishop's visitation.* These celebrations take place within the principal Eucharist of the day so that



our members may welcome the newly baptized into Christ's body and into our midst. Baptism is not an end in itself. It is the beginning of a faith journey which lasts a lifetime and is lived out in the context of a worshipping community. It is therefore important that

parents and/or custodial adults presenting their children for Baptism be active members of this parish or the parish in their hometown.

The clergy (and occasionally parish members) help prepare adults wishing to have their children baptized. Young children are prepared in ways appropriate to their age level. We also prepare adults who desire to be baptized. Baptism of adults usually is reserved for the Great Vigil of Easter.

The parish also prepares for the Baptism of new members by holding baptismal candidates in our Prayers and by our encouragement and example of faithful witness. We strive to make each occasion for Baptism a festival of worship and celebration as we honor those who have died and now live in Christ.

Holy Communion

As Baptism is full incorporation into the Christian life and community, all baptized persons, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion. It is our practice to incorporate infants & children on the day of their Baptism, as receiving communion is part of the Baptismal Liturgy.

Nursery

Nursery care is available on the first floor of the parish building for infants and toddlers each Sunday. Children can be escorted to the nursery and remain there from 9:45AM until the Peace, when they join the congregation in worship, or they may be cared for until the end of the service.

Sunday School (PreK- 6)

All children from three years old to those in the sixth grade are welcome to join Sunday School classes beginning at 9:50AM. They join the congregation for the Holy Communion at the Peace. Our Sunday school ministry provides Christian nurture for children using a variety of activities (art, music, and learning games) to help them grow



in faith and with the sure knowledge of their belonging in Christ to the people of God. Our classes are conducted by teams of faithful adult members of Grace Church. On the third Sunday of each month we have a "Family Service" at 10AM, when our youth take leadership roles in the Liturgy, our St. Nicholas Choir sings, and the homily centers on our children.

Rite 13

Rite 13 is a faith formation program for young people aged 12 to 14 as they take the first steps of passage away from their families and into their own lives. We liturgically recognize these young people in the **Celebration of Womanhood and Manhood**. During the next two years, the parish community acknowledges the gift of gender, celebrates the amazing creative power of our young people, and helps to create a safe place for them to explore new ideas, new interests and new abilities. The Rite 13 class meets Sundays after the 10AM Eucharist.



Journey To Adulthood (ages 15 - 18)

The parish family at Grace has been excited about incorporating *Journey to Adulthood* into the life of our youth. It is a six-year program of spiritual formation for our young people. The program endeavors to nourish our young people spiritually, while

helping them to encounter and explore four main areas of personal development: self, spirituality, sexuality and society. The program assists in enabling our young people to discover and experience the love of God in their relationships with each other and in the world around them. All of this is happening at a time in their lives when so much of their world (physical, emotional, and social) is changing and transforming at an amazing rate.

Special Activities

Every year, seasonal special activities are planned: All Saints Group activity; Christmas Pageant; Palm Sunday program ushering us into the mystery and power of Holy Week and Easter; Stations of the Cross for children on Good Friday; and more.



Adult Christian Education

Bible Study is held at the Church Wednesday evenings in English and Friday evenings in Spanish, and focusing on a theological theme or the examination of a particular book of the Bible.

Sunday Forums are offered periodically during the coffee hour following the 10AM service. These Forums focus on timely topics in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, special guests, parish ministry and mission themes or matters concerning the wider community. They are held throughout Lent on Wednesday evenings following Stations of the Cross.

Lenten Study, sometimes including a pot luck supper, is held throughout Lent on Wednesday evenings following Stations of the Cross. The Stations are conducted in Spanish and English, led by the clergy and members of Grace/La Gracia.

Inquirer's Class / Adult Confirmation classes generally are held as often as needed for adults wishing to renew their Baptismal Vows, prepare for Reception or Confirmation or to review the history and policy of the Episcopal Church. These half-hour classes are generally held on Sunday mornings at 9:00AM for eight weeks.

Lifting up Westchester

As of 2015, Grace Church Community Center (GCCC), a non-sectarian, community-based 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to assist Westchester County's neediest and most at-risk residents, especially those who are under-served by other resources, rebranded its name to Lifting Up Westchester (LUW). The organization's board traditionally has included the Rector and Wardens of Grace/La Gracia, with the Rector serving as Chair of the organization, having special approval rights over certain key decisions of the organization. In October 2017, the by-laws of the independent 501(c)3 were revised in accordance with the State of New York's Revitalization Act. Hence, the special approval rights of the Rector and Wardens were eliminated. However, to honor the historical roots of the organization, three permanent seats on the Board are reserved for designees of Grace/La Gracia. It no longer will be mandatory for the Rector and Wardens to be members of the Board of Directors of LUW. Individually, each of the positions will have the right of first refusal to be members of this board. Any member of Grace/La Gracia will have the opportunity to serve on the board so long as each is approved first by the Vestry and then by the LUW Board of Directors.



To understand the current LUW structure, it is important to know how this separate organization came into its own. Beginning in the 1960's, and formalized in the 1980's (refer to the "History" later in this Profile), Grace Church increasingly dedicated itself to serving the homeless and disadvantaged population in White Plains and the surrounding community, including a shelter for domestically abused women and children. In addition, parishioners of Grace Church in White Plains recognized that many of our neighbors were in need of food, and they began to provide soup and sandwiches for members of the local community from their Parish Hall. Later, they expanded this outreach to include day care and summer camp for low-income neighborhood families and an emergency shelter. By 1979, these programs had expanded so substantially that it became advisable to incorporate Grace Church Community Center as an independent 501(c)(3) organization with permanent staff and its own governing structure and an independent Board of Directors.

LUW now is one of the largest social service agencies in Westchester County and has been providing shelter and support for individuals and families for over 27 years. The Agency continues to rent space for LUW Grace's Kitchen and Samaritan House, and operates many critical community programs, including:

- Services for the Homeless and the Hungry (men's and women's shelters and housing services)
- Services for Children and Youth (Summer Day Camp for homeless and disadvantaged children, Year-round Tutoring and Mentoring Program for homeless and disadvantaged children, Scholarship Assistance for post high school education)
- Services for the Elderly and Disabled (home healthcare for the elderly and homebound, Rainbow drop-In services for developmentally disabled adults)

Without LUW's programs, many individuals in our community would lack the most basic of necessities, and others would have to sacrifice their ability to maintain their housing and well-being. Last year, over 3,000 individuals received assistance from LUW. This assistance included almost 100,000 meals provided through Grace's Kitchen and other programs.

The agency has distinguished itself by directly providing services as well as by coordinating programs with other agencies, making it possible for individuals to receive comprehensive support and direction.

The total casework-management approach to individuals and families with multiple problems has earned LUW a well-deserved reputation as a service leader.

Downtown Music at Grace

Downtown Music at Grace, a separate not-for-profit performing arts organization,



has served as the cultural hub of downtown White Plains since 1988. Grace Church has always served as the venue for Downtown Music. This organization delights audiences with professional performances of a wide variety of music in a beautiful setting. Timothy Lewis, Grace Church's former Musical Director, is the Founding Artistic Director of Downtown Music at Grace and remains in that capacity. Several members of Grace Church serve on the Downtown Music Board of Directors.

Downtown Music at Grace provides forty-five minute Wednesday noontime concerts from September through May. Each year, more than 2,500 people take inspiration from these musical interludes. Five to six times a year, Downtown Music at Grace offers special afternoon and evening concerts featuring internationally recognized artists. These musicians are often paired with Downtown Music's own resident ensembles which have included: Downtown Sinfonetta, the Downtown Music Chorus and the West Point Brass Ensemble. These special concerts welcome audiences averaging between 200 and 300 people. This is a major outreach to the community and represents one the ways in which Grace/La Gracia sets itself apart from other churches.

Parish Programs

Grace/La Gracia is an extremely active community with many programs that sustain and support membership as well as programs that reach out into the community. Many outreach programs are carried out in partnership with *Lifting Up Westchester*.

Vestry: The governing body of the Parish is comprised of two Church Wardens, - a Senior Warden and Junior Warden- plus at least nine and no more than twelve Vestry Members elected by the parish. The following standing committees report to the Vestry: Executive, Buildings and Grounds, Finance and La Gracia Planning.



Music: Music is very important to mission and worship at Grace/La Gracia. There are two choirs: **Adult Choir**, whose members are volunteers led by four professional section leaders who sing at the 10:00AM. service each Sunday from September through June and all other major Feast Days and celebrations;



and St. Nicholas Choir, consisting of children age 7 and older, who sing once each month at the 10:00 AM service.

12:30PM

services feature lively and spiritual music, enhanced by musical instruments that invite the community to worship.



Episcopal Church Women: ECW meets monthly and all women of the church are invited to attend. ECW holds fundraisers and sponsors events such as the Samaritan House Holiday Party, Easter Basket Raffle, Egg Hunt, and Father's Day Breakfast. ECW



also donates to Graduate Recognition Day and to the Church as well as mission and outreach efforts of various diocesan and national church groups.

Men of Grace: (Brotherhood of Saint Andrew). This is an International Ministry of men and youth in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. It is open to all men of the church. This ministry is dedicated to spreading Christ's Kingdom here on earth by means of the Brotherhood's disciplines of ***Prayer, Study and Service***. They sponsor an annual Mother's Day breakfast and assist with the Church's annual Homecoming/Stewardship Sunday. They also award crosses to deserving high school graduates for service to the Church.

Graduate Recognition Program: High school and college graduates are honored during this program every year in June. The graduates are asked to complete a profile and submit a short essay detailing their post-graduation plans. Each graduate receives a gift. The high school graduates also are given cash stipends.

Acolytes, Lay Readers and Chalice Bearers: Acolytes and Chalice Bearers assist the clergy and congregation in prayer, praise and worship at all services, funerals and weddings. This ministry is open to all members of the congregation from age seven to adulthood.

Altar Guild: Members of the Altar Guild assist in coordinating the placement of altar furnishings, fabric and supplies for all services. Altar Guild members are organized in teams, working together, taking inventory, maintaining and repairing vestments, and refurbishing items needed to enhance liturgical celebrations aside from the usual daily preparation. The members work creatively to defray the cost of altar preparations.

Ushers: Men, women and youth serve as greeters at the church entrances, distribute bulletins, seat worshippers at appropriate times during the service, collect and present the offering and also are responsible for the physical safety of the congregation during all services.

Pastoral Care Committee: Members are licensed Eucharistic Visitors who bring communion to parishioners at home and in nursing facilities who are unable to attend

Holy Eucharist services each week due to illness or infirmity. Committee members anoint parishioners monthly at the healing service and participate in the Greeting Card ministry. Designated members serve as liaisons to the Altar Guild and to the Rector. The Rector provides guidance and direction to the committee.

Book Club: The mission of the Book Club, launched in 1999, is to create a social connection through shared reading that is enriching, enlightening and entertaining. This very active group meets monthly from September through June. New members and visitors are always welcome.

Holiday Meals: In conjunction with Lifting Up Westchester and local volunteers, holiday meals are hosted for the homeless and hungry in the Parish Hall on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Members of Grace/La Gracia also serve meals on Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, President's Day, Columbus Day and Veteran's Day.



Caribbean Ministries: Caribbean Ministries is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) outreach program which meets once a month at Grace Church. Caribbean Ministries is composed of members of the clergy and parishioners from other parishes in the area as well as members from Grace/La Gracia, who raise funds and other resources for Anglican parishes throughout the Caribbean.

SAGE: Seniors at Grace Episcopal is a group of active seniors with an average age of 80. They meet monthly for conversation, learning, prayer and fellowship. This ministry developed in response to a need identified during our Renewal Works Project. Senior members requested a ministry which would help them to continue to grow spiritually while providing them



an opportunity for fellowship with other parishioners.

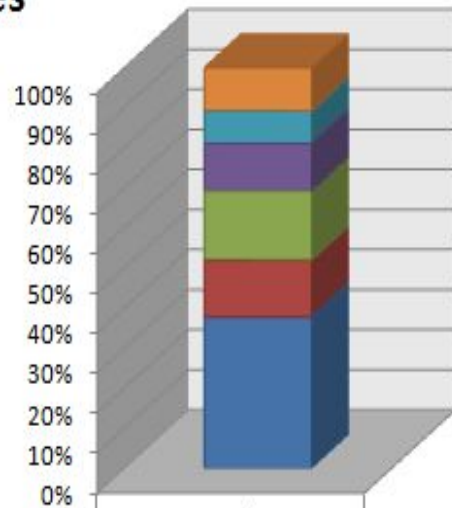
Church Finances and Stewardship

Responsibility for the financial matters of Grace Church/La Gracia rests with the laity, specifically the Vestry. The Finance Committee has fiduciary responsibility for oversight of financial assets, preparation of the annual operating budget and review of church records and financial statements. The committee is comprised of the Wardens, Treasurer and parishioners.

The Church promotes planned giving and bequests and the parish has been blessed with an endowment. A minimum fund balance of \$750,000 is mandated by the Vestry. Consistent with diocesan guidelines, the annual withdrawal to supplement the Operating Budget is capped at 5%.

The Operating Budget is supported in large part by pledge income, which represents more than 50% of total parish income. Stewardship income supports a wide variety of programs. Presently, a diocesan grant provides funds for a part-time Associate Priest to shepherd La Gracia as part of his responsibilities. The parish has operated under an austerity budget since 2006.

Pledges



GRACE/ LA
GRACIA

\$5000 and up	19
\$3000-\$4900	14
\$1500-\$2999	21
\$1000-\$1499	30
\$500-\$999	25
Less than \$500	66

2018 OPERATING BUDGET	
Income	
Pledges	290,850
Loose Plate	20,000
Rental Income	136,000
Grants	10,000
Fundraisers	2,500
Other Income	30,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$489,350
Endowment Drawdown	84,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$573,350
Expense	
Clergy	171,397
Rectory	12,700
Music	57,000
La Gracia	21,300
Church Operations	282,592
Office	98,661
Other Expense	22,800
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$666,450
PROFIT (DEFICIT)	(\$93,100)

A copy of the most recently audited financial statement is available upon request.

Description of White Plains

Located just 25 miles north of Manhattan at the center of Westchester County where the Cross-Westchester Expressway/Interstate 287 (I-287) intersects with several north-south limited access highways (Bronx River Parkway, Hutchinson River Parkway, and I-684), White Plains is a regional economic center and destination for business, government, transportation, healthcare, and shopping. In addition to the numerous retail outlets, corporate offices, and medical facilities, White Plains is the County seat and is home to the Westchester County Civic Center.

The White Plains TransCenter is a major hub for both the Metro-North Railroad and the Westchester County Bee-Line bus system. With 20,000 passenger (in and out) trips daily, White Plains, an express stop on the Harlem Line, is a short 35-minute commute via express train, and the second busiest station as a destination stop in the Metro-North Railroad system. In addition, 25,000 bus passenger trips are made through the TransCenter each weekday. The Bee-Line bus system provides service to commuters as well as for travelers to and from the Westchester County Airport. Other regional transit operators—including Adirondack Trailways and Coach USA—provide express bus service to and from White Plains for intercity passengers with service to Stamford, Boston, Long Island, Ithaca, and Albany.

Demographic Profile

The City of White Plains had a population of 56,853 in 2010, up 7 percent from 2000, a higher rate of growth than in Westchester County (3 percent) and New York State (2 percent). A compact city, White Plains comprises about 6 percent of the County's total population, while its land area (9.77 square miles) is only 2 percent of the County total. The City's overall population density (5,820 persons per square mile) is more than double that of the County (2,240 persons per square mile).

The median income for a household in the city is approximately \$80,701, 28 percent higher than the State median (\$58,003), but one and a half percent lower than that of the County (\$81,946). The per capita income for the city was \$45,122. About 9.1 percent of persons have incomes below the poverty line in 2013, much lower than the State rate (15.3 percent). The City's population is highly educated, with 46 percent college graduates, well above the statewide average (33 percent). Finally, the median value for owner-occupied homes in the City of White Plains is \$495,200, 59 percent higher than that of the State (\$288,000). The city is racially and ethnically diverse, with about 46 percent of the population White (non-Hispanic or Latino), 12.4 percent Black or African American, 6.5 percent Asian, and 4.6 from persons reporting other or two or more races. Latino persons of any race comprise about 33 percent of the population. The median age is approximately 38 years, with an age distribution similar to the County and State.

The History of Grace Church/La Gracia

The origins of Grace Church go back to the 18th century. Despite the stresses and interruptions of the Revolutionary War, the nucleus of a congregation which first gathered in 1724 survived. Initially combined with worshipers in Rye, the "White Plains Group" was incorporated under the title "Grace Church" in 1824. The Rev. William Mead was called as the first Rector and the first church was built on a separate site.

The decades of the 1830's and 1840's were years of vigorous expansion, guided by The Rev. Robert W. Harris who enlarged the church, built a rectory and opened a church school. Under his leadership, the cornerstone of the present church was laid. On New Year's Eve 1862, Eugene T. Reudhomme and his wife Permetta "sold to Grace Church, White Plains", for one dollar, the lot that became the northwest corner of Main and Church Streets. The physical plant of the Church itself includes a granite-stone, tile-roofed church which dates from 1864 and seats approximately 300. Both sides of the Church are lined with pictorial stained-glass windows and permanent Stations of the Cross plaques. At the north end of the Church, there is a large sanctuary and a free standing high altar. A small chapel area on the western side is not physically separated from the nave, and is used for regular seating during Sunday services. Construction was delayed by the Civil War, but the building designed by parishioner Isaac C. Buckout, (architect of several prominent area churches and buildings) was consecrated in September 1865. A balcony constructed in the rear of the Church houses the organ. The Columbarium located in the recently renovated bell tower was expanded in the mid-1990's. There is a relatively large sacristy located east of the altar.

Two active and former Rectors, The Rev. Frederick Van Kleek and The Rev. Frank H. Simmonds, shepherded Grace Church through the years 1870–1932. During their tenures, Grace Church became an increasingly important force in the community. Fr. Simmonds' social activism, in particular, seemed to foreshadow the profile of the parish today. At his funeral, hundreds of people quietly lined the streets of downtown White Plains -- an impressive testament to his leadership.

The size of the congregation declined during The Depression, World War II and the Korean War, but under the dynamic leadership of The Rev. David B. Weden, Rector from 1956 - 1969, Grace Church membership dramatically increased. Fr. Weden and his curates took active roles in the Civil Rights movement in White Plains. African-American membership grew steadily in response to the open attitude and activities of the clergy and parish.

A decisive moment in Grace's history came in the early 1960's when the Vestry rejected a proposal to relocate and committed to remain in the downtown area to continue its outreach to the community. A new parish hall was completed in 1967-68. The first floor is comprised of a parish hall, kitchen, restrooms, library, music/choir room, two conference rooms, sexton's storage area and a second entrance to the sacristy. The second floor includes offices for the Rector, associate clergy and staff. It also

houses three classrooms. Samaritan House, a women's shelter operated by Lifting up Westchester, occupies the third floor, and an elevator provides access to all floors.

When Fr. Weden left to become Dean of the Cathedral in Peoria, Illinois, The Rev. Wesley Konrad was called as the 11th Rector. He came to White Plains from All Saints, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands and many persons from the Caribbean islands became members of the parish. The first woman, Virginia Adams, was elected to the Vestry during his tenure as Rector. Father Konrad was a committed ecumenist. He established working relationships with many churches in White Plains. Like his predecessors, Fr. Konrad was deeply committed to the Civil Rights movement. In 1972, the White Plains Human Rights Commission honored him with its Distinguished Service Award. In 1974, after leading a festive year-long celebration of Grace Church's 150th anniversary, Father Konrad resigned to return to the Caribbean as Rector of a church in Frederiksted, St. Croix. Upon his retirement in 1986, he returned to White Plains and was invited by Father Peter Larom and the Vestry to become Rector Emeritus. During his tenure as Rector Emeritus, he continued to pursue a project he had initiated after his return to the Caribbean in 1974. He found substantial support among Grace Church members for this work, which resulted in the establishment of a not-for-profit service organization, Caribbean Ministries, Inc., in 1988.

During the tenure of The Reverend Herbert G. Draesel, 1975-1984, the parish continued its growth and expansion of activities. In 1979, Fr. Draesel inaugurated the Mission of Santa Rosa to serve the Latino congregation at Grace Church. Under his tenure, the nature of the church's outreach changed from supplying housing and supporting various social programs and movements, to actively developing and operating programs. Fr. Draesel established a wide range of successful social outreach programs, many of which are supported today by Grace/La Gracia through Lifting up Westchester (originally established as Grace Church Community Center). As a result of its outreach programs, the parish became a leader in advocating for the poor and disadvantaged. Grace Church Community Center was incorporated in 1982 as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. In 1984, Fr. Draesel resigned to become Rector of Holy Trinity Church in Manhattan.

The parish continued its growth under its 13th rector, the Reverend Richard Unsworth (Peter) Larom, 1985-1992. He came to the parish after serving as a missionary in Africa: first, as an Episcopal missionary to Uganda where he taught in its seminary and later as administrator of the World Vision's food program in the Sudan during the drought in 1984-1985. This missionary experience taught him how to deal with logistical obstacles and slow moving officialdom. These skills served him well in marshaling help for the hungry and homeless in Westchester County. To raise public consciousness about homelessness, Fr. Larom organized the acclaimed Hope for the Homeless Dinner which became an annual fundraiser for the hungry and homeless population in White Plains. After organizing support from other churches, he fought an aggressive battle with the city to gain permission to open a 38-bed shelter, Open Arms, in downtown White Plains. Father Larom expanded the Grace Church Community Center's programs. Perhaps the most innovative preventive program he devised was the Bridge Fund, an eviction prevention program to combat homelessness by making grants or no interest loans,

followed by financial counseling, to persons in immediate risk of eviction. The work of Grace Church was acknowledged by the National Church in 1985 when it was designated a Jubilee Center -- a model congregation of outreach, evangelism and advocacy. Father Larom initiated many physical improvements in the church such as new glass doors, stained glass windows, a beautiful columbarium, and a grand organ and balcony. To increase the church's endowment, he supervised successful negotiations for the sale of the church's air rights and its two Main Street storefronts for \$3.5 million. It was with regret that the parish accepted Father Larom's resignation in October 1992 to become Executive Director of the Seamen's Church Institute in Manhattan. His last counsel to the parish recalled the charge of St. James: ***"Be not hearers of the Word, but doers of the Word."*** This counsel has remained a consistent integral part of Grace/La Gracia's identity throughout its history.

During Father Larom's tenure in the mid to late 1980's, a capital campaign allowed Grace Church to construct a grand balcony in the rear of the Church and to install a Guilbaut-Therien pipe organ, with space for the choir. In addition, our air rights were sold - a trail blazing venture to establish an endowment. In the 1990's, two more capital campaigns, one joined by Grace Church Community Center, allowed for expansion and renovation of the kitchen, bathrooms, installation of air conditioning, and other work on the Church interior and parish hall. The Church also owns a rectory consisting of a three bedroom house on North Street opposite the White Plains High School.

In October 1994, The Reverend Joseph Harmon was installed as the 14th and first African-American Rector of Grace Church. During his tenure, Fr. Harmon revised and updated a number of operating policies and practices of the parish. He also restructured the Grace Church Community Center's Board of Directors to make it more representative of the changing needs of the parish and the community. In 1996, by mutual agreement, Fr. Harmon ended his tenure with Grace Church.

Later in 1996, The Reverend Janet Vincent, after serving as Rector of St. John's Church Kingston, NY, came to Grace Church as Priest-In-Charge. In 1998, Mother Janet was elected the 15th and first female Rector of Grace Church. Under her leadership, the Hispanic Mission, Santa Rosa, was incorporated into Grace Church as La Gracia with its worship in Spanish as an integral program of Grace Church. Many pastoral programs including bible study, inquirers classes, Christian education, welcoming, youth programs, including J2A (Journey to Adulthood) and Rite 13 were renewed or initiated under Mother Janet's leadership, including the very active book club. During her tenure, music and a liturgy that included healing services on a regular basis were enhanced to deepen our spiritual experience.

Mother Janet also was responsible for expanding the scope and mission of the Grace Church Community Center, by then the largest church based social service agency in Westchester County. As Lifting up Westchester, it continues to be the leading advocate in the community for the poor and underserved. During June 1999, Grace Church celebrated its 175th anniversary. Mother Janet resigned in October 2006 to become Rector of St. Columba Church in Washington, D.C.

During Mother Janet's tenure, a successful agreement with a major builder was negotiated in exchange for renegotiated air rights, resulting in substantial renovations and improvements. However, the program expansions, mentioned above and the costs of improvements placed strains on parish revenues, resulting in significant deterioration of the endowment and the need to retrench thereafter.

From 2007 to 2010, Grace Church underwent a difficult time of self-evaluation and a somewhat turbulent Rector search and selection successfully culminating in the installation of the Rev. Richard Kunz as 16th Rector of Grace/La Gracia in October 2010. Fr. Kunz came to Grace from several years of missionary work in Honduras as the Director of El Hogar, a home and school for homeless and poor children. Previously, he had served in several churches in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

During his tenure, Fr. Kunz led the Parish in moving vigorously toward restoration of its financial stability; payment of its assessments and replenishment of its endowment, albeit in lesser amounts than heretofore. Fr. Kunz also led an expansion of our partnership with LUW and developed outreach to El Hogar, a Honduran ministry to homeless and underprivileged youth where he had served a number of years. In 2016, we celebrated the 150th anniversary of our current Church building. Father Kunz retired in October 2017, leaving the Parish in better condition than when he arrived.

After seven years of strong financial discipline, Grace/La Gracia is making a controlled three-year investment in growth. With assistance from the Diocese, a bilingual Associate Priest was hired, and in less than a year, average attendance at our Spanish language service rose from about 50 to approximately 120. At the same time, English language service attendance has increased slightly. The Parish has recently inaugurated a monthly Saturday evening service. The level of funding for music will be an important focus for our new Rector. Grace/La Gracia is working actively to strengthen its youth programs in the face of competing demands for young people's time and interests.

Grace/La Gracia now feels itself well positioned to move forward on its quest to create a larger, younger, more closely integrated and multicultural Church well equipped to further serve its parishioners and the outside community.

Areas of Strength

We have identified numerous strengths that are critical to our core values and are important to maintain. They are summarized in the following statements:

- We are a High Church in liturgical practice and tradition.
- We are an ethnically, culturally and socially diverse congregation and we believe this enhances all aspects of our worship and parish life.
- We are committed to fellowship as a key component of our parish life, which both attracts new members and sustains our sense of community;
- Although we believe more balance is needed between our spiritual focus and our ministry to the disadvantaged, community partnerships remain a key aspect of our identity.

A summary of the Parish survey is available upon request.

Opportunities for Growth

Our self-examination led us to recognize what is most important to our parish life, and reemphasized those areas most important to our future development. Our survey clarified key aspects of our parish life and also raised issues regarding the degree of emphasis we should place on certain areas:

- We want to achieve a better balance between our emphasis on “outreach” and “in-reach.” Specifically, we seek an increased focus on pastoral care both from our clergy and in our ministry to one another.
- We want to enhance and expand our spiritual lives. This is reflected in a need for more Biblical and theological education (for adults, youth and children); creation of vehicles which provide ongoing opportunities for more personal forms of worship; and spiritual growth through retreats, neighborhood Eucharist, study groups, etc.
- We want to deepen our understanding and appreciation for all of the various ethnic and cultural backgrounds within our parish family. We want to achieve better integration of our Spanish and English-speaking parishioners with more joint activities, bi-lingual worship, and mutual assistance. In doing this, we are looking for ways to grow our membership as we become both more inclusive and more diverse.
- We want to refocus ourselves to stewardship, including a deeper understanding and commitment to the spiritual discipline of stewardship of our time, talent and treasure.

- As we grow as a parish, we want to emphasize the importance of effectively communicating with each other, particularly with La Gracia, fellow committee members, the elderly and disabled, as well as with our youth. We would like to establish an effective communication network allowing us to provide information about Grace/La Gracia and programs we offer to the community.

Closing Commentary

This document was thoughtfully and prayerfully created by the Search Committee. Those of us involved in its preparation hope it provides readers with a greater sense of Grace/La Gracia. We remain doubtful, however, that anything reduced to writing can adequately convey the feelings of energy, family, acceptance and above all, ***Spirit***, experienced by those of us who have chosen to make Grace/La Gracia our spiritual home. We have focused heavily on our various programs, organizations and commitments, but we cannot close without stressing that these activities are part of living our faith. None of the programs are intended to overshadow the one activity which remains most important, and sustains us in what may seem like an overwhelming level of activity: ***worship***. It is through sharing worship that we gain strength for all else we do, and it is in joining us in worship that one most clearly senses the many blessings the Lord has bestowed on this parish.

The Search Committee:

Mr. Carlos Muñoz, *Chair*
 Ms. Daisy Calderon
 Ms. Linda Gallo
 Ms. Arlene Roberts Grant
 Dr. Andrea Hamilton
 Mr. Stuart Madden
 Ms. Charlotte Roberson

2018 Grace Church Leadership Directory

Staff

The Rev. Dr. Judith Lee, Interim Pastor
The Rev. Adolfo Moronta, Associate Priest
Mr. Peter Roberts, Music Director
Ms. Maria Campos, Secretary
Mr. Taurino Juarez, Sexton

Vestry Members

Mr. Joseph C. Gallo, Senior Warden
Ms. Sorraya Sampson Elliott, Clerk
Ms. Hillary Fleming, Treasurer
Ms. Irene Alves - Buildings and Grounds
Ms. Daisy Calderon - La Gracia
Mr. Michael Heffner - Communications
Ms. Trish McGuinness - Welcoming
Ms. Karen Odom - Music Program
Ms. Marisol Ortega - Youth Ministries
Ms. Amy Owens - Youth Ministries
Ms. Charlotte Roberson - Stewardship