



Over 150 Years in the Heart of White Plains

<u>Time For Healing</u>

By Rev. Adolfo Moronta

We are in a new year, a new beginning, a new path of hope and expectation. One of the most encouraging things about the New Year is the word "new." The word "new" means we get to start all over again. Every January we all collectively get a "do-over"—another chance to do it right. A new year is also the way God tells you to get up; I give you another chance to live and start again from my hand.

The last months of 2021 were difficult in many ways for us as a Parish. We found ourselves hurt, damaged in some ways. I remember that while we were in the turmoil, a parishioner told me that "this is going to pass and the church will continue."

We have arrived into 2022 and, as we stand today, we are in a new position. We know we need to go through a process of healing, and healing takes time. Today we find ourselves walking in a different environment, and we need to turn our eyes forward, be united, and remain strong as Grace / La Gracia, for we are not alone. The Lord is and will always be with us.

With God by our side, things will turn out much better in the months ahead. In front of us is the opportunity to write a new 365 page book. What the New Year brings to Grace Church will depend a great deal on what each of us brings to the New Year.

2022 brings to Grace/ La Gracia a time of change. Change is not easy. Change is to undergo alteration, transformation, transition to go from one phase to another. Change is entering the unknown, is sometimes slow, and sometimes a difficult task. Change could sometimes be uncomfortable and may require of us to put things down that we love or really want.

Sometimes change happens naturally and other times it requires a lot of effort from us. But change happens all around us. As we go through the process of discernment, we will be adding a new chapter to the book that Grace/La Gracia has already written. Sure, we want things to get better, but as we wait, we need to trust that the Lord is by our side. This situation did not take Him by surprise. His power and love is with us.

Jeremiah 29:11 says: "I know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for." Understanding this truth can calm our souls, and can make a difference in our lives during difficult times. This can simply be summarized as God is in control!

The bible says: put your eyes on Christ; a "strong castle is our God". Psalm 93 says: "The Lord is king. He is clothed with majesty and strength". In other words, you have to look to the one that has everything within His dominion, and at the end, everything will be ok.

Philippians 4:19 says that "God will supply all that you lack according to his riches in glory." Psalm 37:25 also reminds us: "I have never seen the righteous left all alone."

Grace Church, have faith; our hope is placed in God who has authority over all things. Romans 8:28 emphasizes: "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose." And Romans 8:37 adds: "But in all things, we are more than conquerors, and I will rejoice in the God of my salvation." Remember that no matter how dark today might be, the sun will always rise in the morning.

PRAYER FOR THIS CHURCH

Heavenly Father –

We praise and glorify you for this church. Thank you for all our brothers and sisters who gather in this place of worship. We ask you to show us the path that this church should take. Give us a deeper revelation of your plan and purpose. Bless and enlighten the Vestry and guide them as they try to move this church forward.

We ask you to bless and strengthen us today. Bring healing to our bodies, to our hearts. Lay your hands on those whose hearts have been broken, Father. In Jesus' name, touch our lives and souls. We lift our needs to your presence, our sadness, our worries, our troubles. In the name of Jesus, we declare peace and strength upon all of us now.

Help us to seek divine direction, divine healings, divine strength. If we are searching for answers, we just ask. Lead us, Lord, and give us direction. Put us on your path. Carry us where you want us to go. Shine your light upon us and give us true joy. Fill us with love.

Help us to put our lives into your hands. Heal us where we are sick or broken. Help us to know your will for our lives. We are your children and we come to your presence knowing you are our loving Father.

Confident of your redeeming love, we pray. AMEN



CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES SPRING 2022

GRACE CHURCH - MARCH

Lent Season March 2nd Ash Wednesday - Services: 7:30 AM, 12:00 PM, and 7:30 PM March 20 - Rite 13 Celebration Service 10:00 AM

LA GRACIA - MARCH

Cuaresma Cuaresma Week Stations of the Cross every Friday 7:00 PM

GRACE CHURCH - APRIL

April 10th Holy Week Palm Sunday. Service 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM April 14th Maundy Thursday. – Service 7:00 PM April 15th Good Friday. – Service 12:00 PM April 16th Easter Vigil. – Service 7:00 PM April 17th Easter Sunday. – Service 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM

LA GRACIA - APRIL

April 16th (Saturday) Easter Vigil. April 17th Resurrection Sunday (Easter Sunday). April 24th Sunday: FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY.

GRACE CHURCH - MAY

May 8th Mother's Day May 26th Day of Ascension.

LA GRACIA - MAY

May 8th (Sunday) Celebración de México (Dia Oficial 5 de Mayo), Batalla de puebla.
May 8th (Sunday) Día de las Madres
May 30th (Sunday) Day of the Virgin of Copacabana and Mother's Day in the Dominican Republic.
May First Communion.



<u>Ash Wednesday, Lent & Holy Week</u>

Rev. Adolfo Moronta



Have you ever noticed how once a year, usually in February or March, there are a lot of people walking around with an ash cross on their foreheads? You probably knew it had something to do with Lent, but you weren't sure why the ash cross was significant.

The ash cross on the foreheads is meant to represent mortality and penance for our sins. It is applied by a priest with the following words: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return."

The ashes symbolize two main things: death and repentance. "Ashes are equivalent to dust, and human flesh is composed of dust or clay (<u>Genesis 2:7</u>), and when a human corpse decomposes, it returns to dust or ash."

When we come forward to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday, we are saying that we are sorry for our sins, and that we want to use the season of Lent to correct our faults, purify our hearts, control our desires, and grow in holiness so we will be prepared to celebrate Easter with great joy.

With this focus on our own mortality, our sinfulness, and our need for reconciliation, Christians can enter into the Lenten season solemnly, while also looking forward in greater anticipation and joy to the message of Easter and Christ's ultimate victory over sin and death. In 2022, Ash Wednesday falls on March 2.







When the Lenten season comes to an end, we enter into Holy Week. Holy Week is most definitely a very sacred time of the year when we will commemorate and remember the last week of Jesus' life on this earth. These are the days leading up to the great Easter Feast. The greatest focus of the week is the Passion (suffering) and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the events that led up to it.

Holy Week begins with <u>Palm Sunday</u>, which marks Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The central feature of this day, as it was in the earliest times, is the procession of palms. Palms are a symbol of victory, triumph; a symbol used by kings when they were going to be enthroned. For us they are a symbol of victory over evil. On Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday, the palms are blessed and are then carried by the parishioners in procession to the church, after which the Eucharist is celebrated. The other notable and very ancient feature of the present Palm Sunday service is the reading of the Gospel of the Passion.

Following Palm Sunday, we walk into the Triduum. This is the three days just before Easter; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Holy Saturday (Vigil).

Maundy Thursday

Maundy" is a short form of mandatum (Latin), means "command." It was on the Thursday of Christ's final week before being crucified and resurrected that He gave this commandment to His disciples. Jesus and his disciples had just shared what is known as the Last Supper and he was washing their feet when he stated:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another" (John 13:34).

On Maundy Thursday we remember: The Last Supper, the institution of the Eucharist, the institution of the priesthood, the washing of the feet of the disciples, the establishment of the New Commandment, Jesus's prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the night on which Jesus was betrayed.

Good Friday

Is the day of the crucifixion and death of our Lord, we have the veneration of the Cross. We go forward and kiss the Cross in order to show honor and respect for Christ's sacrifice for our sake. There is no consecration of the Eucharist on this day, and the Communion we receive will be from the night before, which has been reserved in the tabernacle.



Holy Saturday is a vigil. We keep watch for the expectant rising of Our Savior. This was the day He went down into the netherworld in order to bring back up with Him into heaven those who had died before His coming. Up to this time, the gates to heaven were closed and no one could go there because of the original sin of Adam. Jesus changed all that. By paying the price for our sins on the Cross, He gained for us our eternal salvation, and heaven was opened once more.

Easter Sunday

Easter is the most important day of the entire Christian year, a day for great joy; the central event in the church year. The <u>resurrection</u> of Jesus (alongside his crucifixion) is the central element in the Christian faith. Without the resurrection there would be no Christianity. "If Christ has not been raised," wrote St. Paul, "then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (<u>1 Corinthians 15:14</u>).



	Brief Overview of Significance	2022 Date
Ash Wednesday	The beginning of Lent, a day of reflection and repentance from sin	March 2, 2022
Palm Sunday	Celebrates Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem	April 10, 2022
Holy Week	The week leading up to Easter	April 10 - April 16, 2022
<u>Maundy</u> <u>Thursday</u>	Commemorates the foot washing and Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles	April 14, 2022
Good Friday	Commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary	April 15, 2022
Easter Sunday	Celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and his victory over sin and death.	April 17, 2022



STEWARDSHIP

We are all praying for a healthier and happier year. The negativity rate of the Omicron virus seems to be decreasing. It is the blessing of the Lord that has helped Grace/ LaGracia get to where we are today. Your Vestry thanks you for your 2022 pledge. Let us begin 2022 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 custom-made boxes of pledge envelopes this year. However, there are generic envelopes in the back of the church. Your pledge number stays the same. You can also use a plain white envelope. Please write your pledge number on your checks and your envelopes. If you give cash, please be sure to write your name and pledge number on the envelope. You can also give

electronically.

- Please write down the amount you have pledged on a calendar (January 1, 2022).
- 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. 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 there is a discrepancy, contact Charlotte Roberson, Chair or Cynthia Brown, Co-Chair of Stewardship.
- 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.

Charlotte Roberson, Stewardship Chairperson

Dando Seguimiento a su Promesa

Todos estamos orando por un año más saludable y feliz. La tasa de negatividad del virus Omicron parece estar disminuyendo. Es la bendición del Señor que ha ayudado a Grace/La Gracia a llegar a donde estamos hoy. La Junta le agradece su promesa de 2022. Comencemos 2022 con algunas ideas sobre cómo dar un seguimiento de cuánto ha prometido y cuánto queda de su promesa. En primer lugar, debe saber que, debido al costo, no hay cajas de sobres de promesa este año. Sin embargo, hay sobres genéricos en la parte trasera de la iglesia. Su número de promesa sigue siendo el mismo. También puede usar un sobre blanco normal. Escriba su número de promesa en sus cheques y sobres.

Si dona en efectivo, asegúrese de escribir su nombre y número de promesa en el sobre. También puede dar electrónicamente. • Anote la cantidad que ha prometido en un calendario (1 de Enero de 2022). • Si dona semanal, mensual o trimestralmente, escriba cada cantidad 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 que queda en su promesa. En Junio, haga lo mismo y decida si ha cumplido la mitad (1/2) de su promesa. Así mismo en Septiembre tres cuartas partes (3/4) de tu aportación y al final de Diciembre tu aportación completa. Si hay alguna discrepancia, comuníquese con Charlotte Roberson, presidenta o con Cynthia Brown, copresidenta de administración. • Si pierde una semana o un mes, recuerde compensar la cantidad tan pronto como pueda. Entendemos que la pandemia de Covid ha afectado a todas nuestras vidas. Se necesita más reflexión y preparación para dar 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 ano.

Charlotte Roberson

OLD TESTAMENT BLOOPERS FROM CHILDREN

Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the Ten Amendments.

The Fifth Commandment is humor thy mother and father.

Moses died before he ever reached the UK. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the Battle of Geritol.

The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.

David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the liar. He fought with the Finklesteins, a race of people who lived in the biblical times.

Solomon, one of David's sons, has 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.

YOUTH EDUCATION

This past quarter has been a full one for our Youth Education program. While certainly our annual youth Christmas Pageant was the highlight, the Pageant was far from the only activity in which our youth participated.

Our elementary school aged students spent much of November and December completing their unit on how Jesus wants us to be humble and how he wants us to conduct ourselves like Him. Having finished this important study, the class then began a new unit in mid-January on the miracles which Jesus performed. Our elementary age Youth Education teachers are Linda Gallo, Ingrid Richards, Erika Santos, and Tiffany Woodberry.

Our Rite 13 (7th and 8th grade) class has focused on decision making. Today's teens have many decisions to make on a daily basis. We discussed making informed choices built on our Christian values and thinking ahead about the challenges middle school aged children face in making decisions. George O'Hanlon is our Rite 13 teacher.

Our Journey to Adulthood (high school students) class meets twice monthly on Sunday afternoons and discusses how Christian values and principles can be applied practically to the lives of our high school students. Lauren Reid is our J2A teacher.



The Youth Education program put on our annual Christmas Pageant this past December 24th, as has been our tradition for many years. We were very proud of our students, as they managed the entire service, other than the role of our Pastor Father Chip and our Music Director, Peter Roberts. Our elementary aged children served as our actors; while our Rite 13 and J2A members served as narrators, ushers, acolytes and lectors. The Congregation was thrilled to see a youth-managed and largely-led service. The roles performed were: Dominic Sanchez played Emperor Augustus and a shepherd; Savannah MacLeish played Mary; Sebastian Lopes played Joseph; Emmi Woodberry played the Angel Gabriel and a King; Aadi Kumar played a shepherd and a King. Our narrators were: Priya Kumar, Rohan Kumar, Eric Woodberry, Aaron Woodberry, Vika O'Hanlon, Harrison Richards and Ivana Richards. Nik O'Hanlon served as usher and photographer. Peter Roberts did his usual stellar job in providing music for the program. It was a joyous evening and reflects the importance of the youth in our congregation.

By George O'Hanlon

MARCH IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Providing Healing, Promoting Hope)

By Peter Roberts

In recognition of women in the church and in honor of women's history month, this article will explore one of several music supplements to the 1982 Hymnal entitled **Voices Found**.

Voices Found is a collection of hymns and spiritual songs by, for, and about women. The music is written for congregational and for small parish choirs as well as for treble voices. This hymnbook is a compilation of contemporary and historical music and poetry that crosses boundaries of geography, time, and culture. **Voices Found** highlights the diversity of the gifts of women and affirms and expands the spirituality of all women and men seeking to express their voice in the contemporary church.

Several women composers of note are featured in **Voices Found.** Among them are historical composers such as the Byzantine abbess named Kassia (ca.810-ca. 867) who was one of the first women on record to write music for the liturgy. One of her compositions entitled "The Hymn of the Repentant Sinful Woman" remains part of the music sung in many Eastern churches during Holy Week. Another major historical composer whose composition has enjoyed great popularity recently is Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179). The composer was a powerful abbess whose work was officially recognized by Pope Eugenius III at the Council of Trier in 1147-1148. Her work has been recorded extensively by several women's vocal ensembles and is now part of the mainstream classical repertoire. The hymnal also features works by contemporary composers and poets (both professional and amateur) such as Alice Parker, Natalie Sleeth, Ana Hernandez, and Kimberley Williams.





Published in 2004, **Voices Found** recognizes women composers and poets past and present. This supplement to the 1982 Hymnal adds diversity and breathes new life into themes and events found in the Old and New Testament. This work gives the listener and the singer new opportunities to celebrate and to reflect on the Gospel.

Listen as we celebrate National Women's History Month by including some of this music in our Sunday services.



WOMEN CAN BE SUPERHEROS

By Mary Baker

Halloween is many months away and yet in the middle of March you may wonder why you see neighborhood children parading around in costumes. You might wonder what is happening. It is because Purim is being celebrated in Jewish houses of worship as a reminder of the exciting story of Queen Esther, who courageously saved all her fellow Jewish citizens from being killed.

The Jewish people were an exiled, conquered people living as subjects in Persia. Esther was a beautiful young Jewish girl who was being raised by her cousin Mordecai after her parents died. She was taken to live in the king's palace and eventually became his Queen, although no one there realized she was Jewish.

Also at the court was a high royal official named Haman. He was a cruel, selfish official who sought a way to get rid of the Jewish people whom he despised. He came up with a plan to kill all the Jews and he cast lots to decide the date when this would happen. Purim is the Hebrew word for "lots."

Mordecai was able to get word to Esther of this plan and its great danger to all, including Esther herself. Although she was very fearful, she heard God's call for courage and realized there was "no security in silence." Mordecai, in perhaps the most meaningful Scripture verse in this Biblical story, suggested to her that perhaps God has placed her in the court "for just such a time as this." (Esther 4:14)

This is a gripping story that is told in one of the great books of the Old Testament. You should read for yourself what happens as this dramatic story unfolds. Without giving away the dramatic ending, I will leave it to you to read the conclusion for yourself in the Book of Esther.

Purim is celebrated on the 14th day of the month of Adar, the day that Haman decided by lot to kill all the Jews. This year Purim begins in the evening of March 16th. Every year in Jewish houses of worship, the Scriptural story of Esther is read and the story is reenacted as the children parade around wearing costumes to reflect those long-ago times. When the story is read, the congregation loudly uses noise makers to drown out evil Haman's name. It is a truly festive event.

A celebratory meal is held which usually includes filled cookies in the shape of Haman's 3-cornered hat. The cookies are called Hamantaschen. It is also traditional at this time to exchange gifts of food or drink and to donate charity to the poor.

In the month of March, when we are in the midst of Women's History Month, it doesn't get much more exciting than celebrating Queen Esther whose courage and action saved all her people. She was truly a historical superheroine.





Reflections on Pastoral Care By: Rev. Adolfo Moronta

Pastoral care is bringing Christ's compassion to people in emotional, mental, physical or spiritual need. What does the Bible say about helping others? Quite a lot, actually! Both the Old and New Testament are filled with Bible verses about helping others in need. Serving others is clearly important in the eyes of God, but finding ways to serve can often fall by the wayside in our busy day-to-day lives.

My favorite is Matthew 25:44-45: "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'" This verse is a wake-up call to remind us that God is in all places! Sometimes we get caught up in our own perceptions of where God is, and we may utterly miss Him being right in front of us.



It tells us that we need to keep our hearts open to Him and how he wants us to share His love with everyone you encounter.

Pastoral Care is one of the most essential and important ministries of a parish. People need to feel that their priest and parish is taking care of them, that if they are in the hospital or going through problems their priest and fellow parishioners are going to be there for them supporting them in every way that is possible.

Covid has brought many changes to our lives, and Pastoral Care has had to adapt to this circumstance. While I still visit people in the hospital, in their homes or whatever setting they may be, phone calls have become a major new way in which to reach out to parishioners. It's really amazing what a simple phone can do for a person. Parishioners get a major mood boost and completely shift when they talk to their priest or to a parishioner who calls to see how they are doing and listens to them, prays for them, and encourages them to hold on to their faith as God and medicine continue to work on their health.

Pastoral Care -- A Vital Ministry

By Sylvia Simon

The Pastoral Care Committee of Eucharistic Visitors are licensed by the Episcopal Diocese of NY. They take communion to those individuals who are unable to attend church. Their mission is to maintain a connection between sick and shut-ins and Grace Church.

I first became aware of the Pastoral Care Committee from Judy Hutton, a parishioner who recently passed away. Judy was involved in several committees (ECW and Welcoming) in addition to Pastoral Care. Yet, she seemed to be especially devoted to Pastoral Care. It was not until I observed her during a Pastoral Care visit that I realized its importance.

I was visiting a good friend and Grace parishioner in a nursing home. Judy and Cecelia Paegler were also visiting. They gave Verna Brown communion and prayed with her. I also observed as they chatted with her about the latest happenings at Grace and engaged her in active discussion about the national political situation. Verna had ALS and could not talk, but she was actively engaged. (Shaking her head and rolling her eyes and laughing.) It was then I realized how valuable this ministry is. It is a life-line to the Grace Church Community.

Most of us have heard the saying "Out of sight, out of mind." Unfortunately, this is very often true when a parishioner is no longer able to attend church services or events. They may be forgotten. Pastoral Care members provide emotional support to parishioners and their families in addition to keeping them up to date about Grace Church events. Pre-pandemic Pastoral Care members took communion once a month to parishioners who were unable to attend church.

I truly understand the importance of this ministry and, although I had previously reached out to parishioners on my own, I decided to formally become an active member after joining the Vestry.

This Ministry has been especially important during the three-year pandemic. Although we are now unable to take communion to parishioners, we have assisted those needing vaccinations. In addition, we stay in touch with homebound individuals and their family members via phone. We also send cards to all parishioners celebrating special milestones such as birthdays and anniversaries.

Hopefully, in the future, Pastoral Care Members will be able to again take communion to the homebound and will be able to return to participating in a monthly healing service.

One of the most important members of Pastoral Care is Fr Adolfo Moronta. He is a phenomenal spiritual leader. When called, he never hesitates to go in person wherever he is needed. For example, Sharon Werth, a former parishioner, called Fr Adolfo to inform him that our beloved former Deacon Martha Jane was not expected to live. He drove all the way to Cape May, New Jersey, to administer last rights to Martha Jane just before she passed away. Fr Adolfo's unrelenting spiritual support for those needing it is an essential component of this special ministry. Even as I leave the Vestry, I remain a devoted member of this valuable ministry. God knows I may one day need it.

Below are the names of Past and Present Pastoral Care Members

Irene Alves	Arlene Grant	
Marie Barrow	Judy Hutton (deceased)	
The Rev. Marsha Glover	Eileen McClean	
Daisy Calderon	Carolyn Rogers	
Cynthia Cole	Joyce Sampson	
Lisa Daley	Sylvia Simon	
Sandy Gadsden-McAllister	Audrey Taylor	
Cecelia Paegler (deceased)	Ray Williams	
The Rev. Richard Kunz, Past Spiritual Leader		

Fr Adolfo Moronta, Spiritual Leader



Culture In A Bowl By Charlotte Roberson



On January 1, 2022 I had the pleasure of tasting a delicious Haitian soup called joumou. My son-in-law, born in French Guiana to parents of French Guianese and Haitian descent, brought home the soup to celebrate Haitian Independence Day. Joumou soup is a hearty blend of potatoes, pumpkin (joumou), beef, malanga, yams, turnips, chili peppers and other things.

I asked my son "what is the connection between joumou soup and Haitian Independence Day?" My son explained that this dish was originally cooked by slaves for their owners; and that it has come to symbolize hope and dignity in Haiti which has had a long and troubled history. I was then given a long refresher course on how Haiti won its independence from France in 1804. We also discussed why the United States originally refused to recognize Haiti's independence.

Now back to joumou soup. On NPR (national public radio) Scott Simon, host, asked Dominique Dupuy, Haitian ambassador to UNESCO, to describe the famed Haitian soup joumou. Dupuy described the soup as "velvety, bright yellow, very tasty soup". He then called joumou "a bowl of freedom". He reminded Simon that although the slaves made the soup before 1804 they were not allowed to eat it as the slaves were considered too 'uncivilized'. So now on January 1st each year Haitians eat joumou and declare that it is "the national soup of the first free Black people in the history of humanity".

Joumou soup is delicious and represents freedom to formerly enslaved people. Haitians bring a bowl of joumou to a neighbor (after a fight) as a sign of peace. On January 1st each year families prepare the soup and take it to orphans, the elderly and those in jail as a symbol of coming together and solidarity.

Would you like to make joumou soup? Then go to savorythoughts.com for the recipe. From start to finish it will take you 3-4 hours. But in the end you will have a real delicious meal.





Grace Church Book Club Update

Join us the second Tuesday of Every Month



The Book Club celebrated Black History Month with an extraordinary exploration of the concept of critical race theory with our February selection, **Silent Covenants**, by law professor and legal scholar Derek Bell. A difficult but essential read, it examines critical race theory through the lens of the historic Brown vs. Board of Education 1954 ruling. In addition to earning a unanimous 5 out of 5 rating from participating Book Club members, the book sparked a thought-provoking discussion with Dr. Jamal Donnor, an expert on the subject, who teaches the concept at the College of William and Mary and who also happens to be the son-in-law of Grace Church parishioner Dr. John Mitchell.

The Book Club will round out the current season with the following selections:

Mar 8, Falling: A Novel by T.J. Newman: we'll switch gears (no pun intended) with a suspense novel involving a fearful flight, kidnapping of the pilot's family, and desperate measures to survive.

Apr 12, A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson: we'll explore the majestic stillness of the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine through the true personal account and comic perspective of the author.

May 10, The President's Daughter: A Thriller by James Patterson and Bill Clinton: in this thriller collaboratively penned by a best-selling author and former U.S. president, we'll follow the abduction of a former Navy SEAL and past-president's daughter and the resulting one-man special-ops response that ensues.

Jun 14, Billy Lynn's Long Half-Time Walk by Ben Fountain: an award-winning satire set in Texas during the war in Iraq will take us on a journey through the extreme disconnect between the war at home in the U.S. and the controversial war far beyond our borders.

Summer 2022, State of Terror: A Novel by Hillary Clinton and Louise Penny: we will wrap up the season with another high-profile collaboration thriller, pairing the 67th U.S. Secretary of State and an award-winning mystery novelist. We will follow the intricate, unpredictable events after a political enemy has been chosen as Secretary of State. With this appointment, the president believes he has silenced his harsh critic, but we'll learn why he couldn't be more wrong.

By Karen Odom



WHAT IS CRITICAL RACE THEORY?

A Review by John Pope Mitchell, M.D.

On behalf of the Grace Episcopal Church's Book Club under the leadership of Ms. Karen Odom, we selected for the month of February "Silent Covenants: Brown V. Board of Education and the unfulfilled hopes for racial reform." As we wrestled with the question of what is "Critical Race Theory?" Professor Dr. Jamel K. Donnor of William and Mary College, Virginia, suggested we start with the above titled book. Professor Donnor joined and facilitated our discussion.

Dr. Donnor is an Associate Professor of Education and Affiliated Faculty in the departments of American studies, Asian man Pacific Islander studies and the Center for racial and social justice. His area of expertise is in Critical Race Theory and Education, U.S. Supreme Court Jurisprudence, American Constitutional Theory, Education and Civil Rights just to name a few of many areas.

Silent Covenants in the study of Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Q. What is Critical Race Theory in the context of Silent Covenants?

A. It is the study of case law over the last 40 years, through the lens of a civil rights lawyer, who worked to end to school segregation, especially in the South. It is taught at the 400 level in colleges and universities. Primarily it is presented in law schools where case law is preeminent to the study of jurisprudence. Contributors to CRT include: Patricia Williams, Kimberly Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, Kendall Thomas, Richard Delgado, Mari Matsuda and Alan Freeman.

Q. What other perspective is revealed in the book?

A. Let us start with a definition of what is a "covenant." A covenant is a formal agreement. (Mariam– Webster dictionary). Professor Derrick Bell wants to give us a historical account of what blacks were promised-and what was taken away. It reveals truths about divisions sown and a chasm created by the white elite class who forever divided poor whites, who should have been natural allies to black people. Poor whites while suffering exploitation by the elite ruling class could at least feel superior to every man, woman and child who were descendants of slaves. As we will see later, the history of civil rights and laws that purported to help relieve the injustices, were not what they appeared to be on the surface.

Q. What is CRT not about?

A. It is not a condemnation of all white people. It is not teaching history to foster hatred of white people or put them on a guilt trip. It is not something you teach in primary school, or middle school or even high school. It exhaustively studies case law and illustrates how our constitution was constructed to favor the land owners and the property owners of which slaves were included. The land owners convinced working class whites to support African slavery. It was presented as being in their interests, even though these workers could never compete with wealthy elites. The white working class could vote and owing to their shared whiteness, were united against a threat of slave revolts or escapes.



Q. What did Professor Derrick Bell have to say about "Plessy vs, Ferguson?

A. He felt that "Separate but equal" if it had been enforced would have been better than "Brown vs Board of Ed." "Brown" revealed the unfulfilled hopes for racial reform. While declaring that segregation is harmful to black children, the unhappy fact is that as the Nation's racial history makes clear, racial division has been a source of much undeserved benefit to the whites and a great deal of misery to African-Americans.

School districts failed to comply with separate but equal or "with all deliberate speed," that Brown espoused. "Deliberate" would not be never be effectively enforced.

Q. What are among other decisions explored?

A. Dred Scott V. Sanford (freed slave was not a citizen and had no standing before the law), Hayes-Tilden Compromise (Union soldiers withdrew from the South), Jim Crow laws upheld and the courts.

Q. What does "the Interest–Convergence Covenants" mean?

A. Black rights are recognized and protected when and only so long as policy makers perceive that such advances will further interests that are their primary concerns.

Q. How does this apply to Brown?

A. "The major boost that this decision provided (was) in our competition with communist governments abroad and the campaign to uproot subversive elements at home. This equals a "fortuitary" convergence.

Q. What other "fortuitaries" does history point to?

A. The abolition of slavery in the northern states was probably because of the lesser need for slaves, the North's small investment in slavery, and the hostility of the white labor class to competition.

Another example is the Emancipation Proclamation. Arguably Lincoln hated slavery. It extended the executive order only to those states that had seceded from the Union. There was no real emancipation of those in the slave holding states. 200,000 African-Americans joined the Union Army which was desperate for recruits. The proclamation was more symbolic than substantive.

The Civil War amendments to the Constitution, the 14th and 15th, was a desire to maintain control of congress by Republicans. It was meant to frustrate the attempts of Southerners to reassert their political power. The 14th amendment guaranteed Life, Liberty and Property for all "persons." The operative word was "persons" and how it would be defined. The 15th amendment was enacted guaranteeing the right to vote. History and current events tells us that this amendment is still under constant assault.

Q. What is a simple formula that Professor Bell put forward?

A. Justice for Blacks versus racism= racism

Racism vs. (with) obvious perceptions of white self-interest= justice for Blacks

In Silent Covenants we receive a historical view of black history and civil rights where "again and again, perceived self-interests by whites, rather than the racial injustices towards blacks has been the major motivation in racial-mediated policies.



Q. What is the role of fortuity and racial policy-making?

A. The interest–Convergence Principal. There are 2 sides of the same: Involuntary racial sacrifice and interest convergence remedies, equal racial

fortuity. Rule 1. The interest of blacks in achieving racial quality will be accommodated only when that interest converges with the interests of whites and policy-making positions. This convergence is far more important for gaining relief then the degree of harm suffered by blacks or the character of proof offered to improve that harm. Rule 2. Even when interest–convergence results in an effective racial remedy, that remedy will be abrogated at the point the policy- makers fear the remedial policy is threatening the superior societal status of elites, particularly those in the middle and upper classes.

Q. Back to the question of the desegregation of schools. What did Professor Bell conclude?

A. Overall while it might have been of some benefit to a few, it was not the answer to lifting African-Americans towards meaningful education. As schools in urban areas required integration, the white families mainly took flight to the suburbs. This had the effect of resegregating schools in the South and especially in the North's large metropolitan areas. In a sense "separate but equal" would become a reality that would force hard work towards excellence to come from within school systems. It was the disillusionment of black parents with a remedy that disproportionately burdened blacks that most dramatically shifted the political landscape regarding busing. It "caused more difficulties than it is worth." Professor Bell quoted W.E B. Du Bois, who warned in 1933: "A mixed school with poor unsympathetic teachers, with hostile public opinion, and no teaching of truth concerning black folk is bad." He also went on to say that the "mixed school is the more natural basis for the education of all youth." Especially because "it inspires greater self-confidence; and suppresses the inferiority complex."

Q. What other law cases or historical events are covered in this book?

A. Reconstruction and a Second Reconstruction of the 60s, the history of Jim Crow laws, the New Deal and reorientation of the Democratic Party regarding black voters, President Truman's integration of blacks into all branches in the military along with multiple dozens of other law cases.

Q. What does the professor say about affirmative action?

A. Unquestionably it is white women who have been the major beneficiaries of affirmative action. "The term 'affirmative action' connotes remedial activity beyond what normally would be provided. It implies *noblesse oblige*, not legal duty, and suggests the dispensation of charity rather than the granting of much-deserved relief." Also Justice Harry Blackmun (U.C. California vs Bakke) "institutions of high learning albeit more on the undergraduate than the graduate level, have given conceded preferences up to a point to those possessed of athletic skills, to the children of alumni, to the affluent who may bestow their largess on the institutions, and to those having connections with celebrities, the famous and powerful."

Professor Bell added, "In a society in which the essence of whiteness is an entitlement to priority over blacks for things of value, affirmative action programs was certain to lead to major opposition. Professors Susan Sturm and Lani Guinier point to the notion "if I did not get in, racial preference must have been the cause." As Professor Bell points out "This easily reached assumption provides psychic comfort at the cost of common sense to even impressively qualified applicants. It is a painful prove that the essence of racism, the sense of priority of place over the "other," still is both present and pervasive. Finally it is pointed out that "working class and upwardly striving middle-class whites perceive incorrectly but no less fervently that the share of educational opportunities available to their children is endangered by minority admissions programs. Their believe is strengthened by the conviction that blacks are not supposed to get ahead of whites... (Meanwhile) losses to the white privileged are accepted and attributed to "just the breaks."

Q. Are there any other observations that stands out in this book?

A. It could not be underscored or highlighted more, Professor Bell notes "more objective observers of **black distress view the source as a lack of employment,** the bed rock of survival and success in this society." Professor Bell also refers to sociologist William Julius Wilson. "It is massive unemployment and **not the lack of family values** that has devastated our inner-cities, a place where one third of young men-denied even menial jobs when they lacked education and skills-(are) in prison or in the jaws of the criminal court system, most of them for nonviolent drug offenses."

Derrick Bell quotes the former National Urban League President Hugh Price. "Work is essentially the activity through which human beings define themselves and their relationship not only to society, but to life itself."

Our Book Club members and Professor Dr. Jamel Donnor encourages anyone who wants to gain a basis for discussing Critical Race Theory to read this book. That way whether you agree or disagree, you will know what you are talking about.



EPISCOPAL CHURCH NEWS ALERT By Mary Baker

The 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, on July 7-14. At this assembly, many policies on a wide range of national and international issues will be debated and voted on by all the bishops and delegates. The policies which are approved are the ones our denomination stands for and advocates for publicly. After the convention is over, the policies which have been approved are made public to each individual church. What happens then? Is any follow-up done?

Did you know that the Episcopal Church has an Office of Government Relations in Washington D.C.? It is there that our church's policies are put into action. It is from there efforts are made to lobby on our church's behalf when any governmental issue arises that our church has an interest in. Efforts are made there to try to get congressional sponsors for proposed laws that are of interest to us. It is very important to note that whatever work is done at the Washington office on behalf of the Episcopal Church must have its origin in something that has been voted on affirmatively at the General Convention.

The topics raised and approved at General Convention are <u>not</u> forgotten between conventions. You can be sure that there is daily work being done in Washington by that office to advocate for the issues raised at our General Convention. They are being carried out daily by our dedicated Washington office staff.

The Washington Office would like to have each of us at our local church know just what they are doing and how they are carrying out our church's mandates. You are encouraged to access their website and participate in a number of ways. For several years now, I have been registered by that office and am invited each Thursday to access a half hour zoom update on the issues of the day and what our church is doing on behalf of our national and international concerns. This office also sends me relevant petitions that I can sign and have sent to our Senators and Representative in Congress to let them know that I and my church do or do not support such issues.

This is an important way that we at the local level can be kept aware of what is being done on our behalf in carrying out our church's mission. This is an important way to view the news of the day from an Episcopal member's point of view.

Spend some time investigating the many options available on their Home page, especially your ability to sign up for Action Alerts. It also has other Advisory Resources and Posts from the Hill. Becoming familiar with this website is a very good way to keep up with the current news from a faith-based perspective.

The Office of Government Relations has a very informative website which can be accessed at: Episcopalchurch.org

Diplomacy is the art of letting somebody else have your way.



EARTH DAY By Mary Baker

Earth Day is being celebrated this year on April 22nd. This is a day to honor all creation. It is a day to renew our commitment to care for the creation that God has given us.

Some time ago I read this devotional article about creation. I have requested and been given permission to include it in the Angelus in honor of Earth Day. I believe it will certainly add to our awe and appreciation of creation. I doubt if you will ever again read that first sentence of Scripture in the same way again!

SCIENCE MEETS SCRIPTURE

A Devotional from "Investigating Faith with Lee Strobel"

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1

Much has been written about the origin of the universe. Has it always been here, or did it have a beginning? If it did have a beginning, what caused it to come into existence?

In the early twentieth century an understanding emerged that gradually formed the prevailing theory among cosmologists. "In the beginning there was an explosion," explained Nobel Prize-winning physicist Steven Weinberg. "Not an explosion like those familiar on earth, starting from a definite center and spreading out to engulf more and more of the circumambient air, but an explosion which occurred simultaneously everywhere, filling all space from the beginning, with every particle of matter rushing apart from every other particle."

Within the tiniest split second, the temperature hit a hundred thousand million degrees Centigrade. "This is much hotter than in the center of even the hottest star, he wrote.

The matter rushing apart, he explained, consisted of such elementary particles as negatively charged electrons, positively charged positrons, and neutrinos, which lack both electrical charge and mass. Interestingly, there were also photons: "The universe," he said, "was filled with light."

"The matter of the Universe," wrote Robert Jastrow, astronomer and founding director of NASDA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, "{was} packed together into one dense mass under enormous pressure, and with temperatures ranging up to trillions of degrees. The dazzling brilliance of the radiation in this dense, hot Universe must have been beyond description. The picture suggests the explosion of a cosmic hydrogen bomb. The instant in which the cosmic bomb exploded marked the beginning of the Universe In a purely physical sense, it was the moment of creation."

From an infinitesimal point—which scientists call a singularity—the entire universe and time itself exploded into being. And science can't account for it.

Yet the very first verse in the Bible explains: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). As theologians have classically put it, "God created everything ex nihilo"--meaning "out of nothing."

Science is catching up with Scripture. Jastrow, who was not a Christian, famously remarked, "For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

As Christians we should be lovers of truth. So seize opportunities to learn from both theology and science—while worshipping the God of all truth.

PRAYER FOR EARTH DAY

From the New Zealand Prayer Book, page 569

God of unchangeable power, when you fashioned the world, the morning stars sang together and the host of heaven shouted for joy: Open our eyes to the wonders of creation and teach us to use all things for good, to the honor of your glorious Name. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

From the Book of Common Prayer, page 259

O merciful Creator; your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



REST IN PEACE

Almighty God, Father of mercies and giver of comfort: Deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn; that, casting all their care on you, they may know the consolation of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Oscar Bunche



Dorothy Jackson

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