

**The Weekly Epistle:
The Seventh Sunday of Easter
(The Sunday after Ascension Day)
16th May 2010
GRACE CHURCH IN NEW YORK**

Dear Friends,



It's Friday morning as I write this. Outside my office window the jackhammers are busy pulverizing the Broadway sidewalk. Meanwhile the restoration crew out in the church is climbing all over the scaffolding, drilling probes into the chancel floor, and running what sounds to be another jackhammer in the basement under the choir. So much for Grace Church being a peaceful, spiritual oasis apart! Often we like to think that the business of the church is the "spiritual." We should be quiet, set our sights on holy things, and not be distracted by the material order. The reality is, we who dwell in time and space have no access to the spiritual realm apart from the world of matter. Indeed, God speaks his Word and conveys his grace to us through the stuff of the earth: bread and wine, flesh and blood, bricks and mortar, wood and nails, stained glass and stone. In the same way that you need a device of plastic, metal, and wire to listen to the radio waves that are around us at every second, so also do we need the stuff of the earth if we are to hear the music of heaven. The enormous effort we put in to keeping this house of God in order is not a sign that we're off mission, and neglecting our spiritual duties. Rather, we are keeping the radio in good working order so that we can say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears" (1 Samuel 3:10).

There goes the lawn mower. I see and hear that the weeds are being whacked to the glory of God. The sidewalk crews are making straight the way of the Lord. See you in church.

The Rev. J. Donald Waring, Rector

+ + +

9:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

Music: The Parish Choir

Nursery care for children ages 0-3

Sunday School for children at 9:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m.

Morning Prayer & Sermon

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donal Waring

Music: The Junior Choristers with Adults

Nursery care for children ages 0-3

Sunday School for children during the sermon

6:00 p.m.

Holy Eucharist, Rite II in the Chantry

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donal Waring

Music: Hymns with piano, instrumentalists

SUNDAY

THE VIEW UP HIGH - It's a fitting title for the Sunday after Ascension Day! The south transept scaffolding has been in place for some time now. How long will it be there? What's been happening up high where we can't see? At 10 am on Sunday in the Reception Room, the lead architect on the project, Kevin Daly, from the firm of Walter B. Melvin Architects, LLC will display photos and give detailed explanations of the restoration to plaster, stone, and stained glass that has already taken place, and is about to become much more noticeable in the church. In heart and mind we will ascend to the top of the scaffolding and see what's up there. Bring your questions. Coffee is served.

TOUR THE CHURCH - The Bicentennial Capital Campaign is in the home stretch as we approach Sunday, June 6. For the past three months we have been leading small group tours to help explain the complexity of construction in the church, and the challenges of restoring the interior. If you have not been able to make one of these tours, you can take one today immediately following the 11 am and 6 pm services. Meet the Rector in the north transept where the tour will begin.

CHOIR RAFFLE - The choir is sponsoring another amazing raffle with incredible items including an iPad; ipod touch; a Nintendo DSi; tickets to "La Cage au Folles" on Broadway; Temple St. Clair earrings; an original signed print from photographer Annie Liebovitz, and much more! Stop by the choir table in Tuttle hall and buy a raffle ticket today. Raffle tickets are \$5 & \$10 each and support the Boys and Girls Choirs' special projects fund. The drawing will take place at the parish picnic on Sunday, June 6th, out in Huntington Close.

CHALLENGE PLEDGE - Great news! Those of you who have been following our weekly annual pledge announcements have recognized that we have been stalled at \$850,000 - \$50,000 short of where the budget expects pledging to be. A generous parishioner has stepped forward with a wonderful offer to jump start the engine: a \$25,000 challenge pledge. Every new pledge and all increases to existing pledges will be matched, dollar for dollar, up to \$25,000. Please see the form at the end of the Weekly Epistle, fill it out, and return it to the parish office as soon as you possibly can. Or, you can give online through the church website at www.gracechurchnyc.org. Click on the main menu button, "Give to Grace Online," then the Donate button by Annual Pledge Campaign, and type "Challenge Pledge" in the comments section. You can even stipulate whether your gift will be a one-time payment, or something you wish to spread out over the year. Don't miss an extraordinary opportunity to double the impact of your supporting the Lord's work through the ministries of Grace Church.

BROADWAY SIDEWALK - Thank you for your patience as we replace the entire Broadway sidewalk between 10th and 11th Streets, fronting the rectory yard, church, and Huntington Close. The project, costing approximately \$150,000, is being funded by the capital repairs budget. It will be done in phases, and should be completed by June. Access to the parish house, church, and chantry will be maintained at all times.

COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP will occur in the Grace Church School dining room today rather than Tuttle Hall. Tuttle Hall is currently set up for the upcoming school play.

CENTERING PRAYER GROUP meets at 5 pm in the Third Floor Conference Room.

EVENING ADULT EDUCATION - In place of light refreshments in the Reception Room tonight, join the Rector in the north transept for a tour of the church and an explanation of the ongoing restorations.

FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SUNDAY SCHOOL - All children ages 4-8 are welcome to attend. At 9 am, parents should drop their children off at the classrooms near Tuttle Hall. Children then rejoin their parents in time to receive Communion together. At 11 am, parents and children begin together in the church, and children follow the crucifer to their classes during the sermon. Parents collect their children in Tuttle Hall during the coffee hour.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - It's time to start thinking about Vacation Bible School 2010! This year's VBS will be a savannah-themed adventure for kids, ages 3-8 years old. Mark your calendars for June 28th-July 1st from 1pm-2pm. Email Maura Hooper for a registration form at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org.

SUMMER CAMP OPPORTUNITIES - Are you looking for summer camp opportunities for your child? An option is Incarnation Camp, which offers an abundance of spiritually rich and fun activities for children and teenagers. Located only 2 hours outside Manhattan, it is a camp adventure close to home. Incarnation is a values oriented camp, which makes chapel and grace at mealtimes an integral part of the fun. For more information, you can visit their website at www.incarnationcamp.org, or talk to Maura Hooper for more information.

PARISH LIFE

PARISH PICNIC VOLUNTEERS - The annual Parish Picnic is coming! On June 6th, we will celebrate the conclusion of the Bicentennial Capital Campaign, recognize our wonderful choirs, and conclude the program year with a festive all-parish picnic on the lawn of Huntington Close. All are welcome to attend! We are currently organizing committees to help purchase food and to set up for the event. If you would like to volunteer, contact Maura Hooper at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org.

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY - Beginning April 14 and going through June 2 Linda Bartholomew and Ted Pardoe will lead a small group Bible study focusing on the upcoming Sunday readings. Participants can join at any time. Classes meet in the reception room from 7-8 pm. No prior studies necessary. Contact Linda Bartholomew lbartholomew@gracechurchnyc.org for more information.

OPEN DOOR MINISTRY - Volunteers are sought to participate in the Open Door Ministry, with a summer session kick-off in June. The Open Door Ministry staffs Grace Church with volunteers to greet visitors, answer questions and offer brief tours. If you would like to learn more about "welcoming the stranger", please contact Singleton Cox singleton.cox@gmail.com and Jennifer San Cartier jsancartier@nyc.rr.com for more information."

20's/30's MEMORIAL DAY BBQ - Join us on Saturday May 29th at 4pm in Seymour Close for a Memorial Day weekend barbeque. Come out for some good food and a chance to unwind! Talk to Maura Hooper for details at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org or (212) 254-2000 x.113.

GIVE TO GRACE ONLINE - Our website is now capable of receiving online donations through all major credit cards. Make payments on your annual pledge, adopt a pipe, support outreach and music, put flowers on the altar, help restore the building all through our secure connection. Go to www.gracechurchnyc.org follow

the links.

A CALL FOR HOSPITALITY - The baked goods and other delicious nibbles that we enjoy after the 11 am service are the gift of parishioners who volunteer to bring them. For anyone who wishes to participate in this much needed ministry of hospitality, please visit bulletin board to the left of the ladies room door to sign up. The hospitality committee will be in touch with you shortly.

BAPTISM - The next date for Baptism is Pentecost Sunday, May 23, at the 11 am service. Please contact Ted Pardoe at tpardoe@gracechurchnyc.org

OUTREACH

FOOD DONATIONS - Thank you for all your generous contributions of non-perishable groceries. The Church in the Village-one of the emergency food pantries we support-is in desperate need of more food items. They create bags of groceries for those who can cook and those who cannot. Please continue to bring your donations to the bins in the narthex of Grace Church and we will collect them and deliver. Please do not donate items which require refrigeration.

EVERY WEEK:

BACH AT NOON - The organ compositions of Johann Sebastian Bach are played between 12:20 - 12:50 p.m. every Tuesday through Friday.

CHORAL EVENSONG with the Junior Choristers on Tuesdays, 6 pm, when Grace Church School is in session.

THE WEDNESDAY WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY meets each week at 10:15 am in the Reception Room. Newcomers are always welcome.

WEDNESDAY 6 PM EUCHARIST - The Holy Eucharist is celebrated every Wednesday at 6 pm in the Chantry with hymns and homily. Perfect for those who missed church on Sunday, or simply need an extra-dose of God's good news in the middle of the week. This Wednesday's preacher is the Rev. Linda Bartholomew.

ODDS AND ENDS:

ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES are once again available for the 11 a.m. service. Ask an usher and he or she will be glad to assist you.

PRAYER LIST - If you would like to have a name added to the prayer list, please email Bill Nave: bnave@gracechurchnyc.org or 212-254-2000, ext 100 by Tuesday. Names will be read during the services for four weeks unless notified otherwise.

GRACE CHURCH IN NEW YORK

2010 CHALLENGE PLEDGE

Grace Church relies on three major sources of revenue to fund our mission and ministry in New York City and beyond: the annual pledging of our members, a prudent draw on the endowment, and income from the LoftBuilding at 4th and 10th. The 2010 budget assumes \$900,000 in pledge income (2009 was \$912,000). *Unfortunately, we are stalled at \$850,000.* Unless we close the \$50,000 gap, the budget, which has already been cut to the bone, will be cut again. Staff members will be laid off. The building will be closed during the week. Ministries and services across the board will be reduced.

To help Grace Church remain a bright witness in the neighborhood and our lives, a generous parishioner has stepped forward with a \$25,000 challenge pledge. Every new pledge, and every increase to existing pledges will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$25,000. Every gift counts. Don't miss this opportunity to double the impact of your giving.

- To help Grace Church meet the challenge and keep the ministries going, please accept my 2010 pledge of \$ _____. I understand that I can make pay in installments over the remainder of the year.

Or

- To help Grace Church meet the challenge, please increase my existing pledge by \$ _____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please make checks payable to Grace Church, and write "Challenge Pledge" in the memo line. You can also give to Grace Church online at www.gracechurchnyc.org.

What Does My Annual Financial Pledge Do?

- Your pledge Welcomes all sorts and conditions of people by keeping the church building open seven days a week for anyone who wants to come inside, pray, rest, or meditate.
- Your pledge Grows a resilient and reasonable faith in people of all ages through our ambitious music program and Christian education classes for children and adults.
- Your pledge Spreads the good news of Jesus Christ through our presence, preaching, and worship services.
- Your pledge Consoles the grief stricken, brokenhearted, and downtrodden who come here seeking comfort, counsel, or a way to reach for a better life.
- Your pledge Supports the GO Project, a tutoring and social service program for 300 at-risk, public school students and their families.
- Your pledge Says a tangible "thank you" to God for all the blessings of your life.
- Your pledge Helps you become a more generous person by providing a clear discipline for giving. One reason why Jesus said "It is more blessed to give than to receive" is because generous hearts are generally happier, less anxious hearts.
- Your pledge Preserves one of the great architectural buildings of New York City.
- Your pledge Employs 12 full-time and 5 part-time people.