

The Weekly Epistle
The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 23, 2011
GRACE CHURCH IN NEW YORK



Dear Friends,

One day this week Stacie and I enjoyed lunch at a popular café on Union Square. The food was excellent and so was service. When the bill arrived I was already preparing to give a healthy tip, but then I noticed a little footnote printed out at the bottom of the check: *For your convenience the following gratuity calculations were performed for you.* The note then showed what I should add to the total price if I wanted to leave a 15, an 18, or a 20-percent tip. The message was anything but subtle: not only should you give a gratuity, here's what you should give.

This week is Pledge Sunday at Grace Church. If all has gone well you should have received in your conventional mail a letter from me and a brochure encouraging you to make a financial commitment to Grace Church for the year 2012. Note well that I have not performed any precise gratuity calculations to guide your decision making. Until now.

- The Bible commends the practice of tithing - giving 10% of one's income to support God's work through the church. The tithe is based not on the value of what God has served us, because the true worth of life, love, and existence are beyond any calculation. Rather, the tithe is based on the comparatively smaller figure of our incomes. Giving a percentage of your income is a way to thank God for all the blessings of this life. I will leave it to you to perform the calculations.
- For those who don't want to think percentages, here's another way to calculate your giving. In 2011 we have 239 pledging households at Grace Church, for a total of \$972,931. That makes the average pledge - the mean - approximately \$4,071. Some will say that the mean is skewed high by a handful of top givers. A more accurate snapshot of the people in our pews would be the median. Very well, then. Smile: the median pledge at Grace Church is \$1,320. For many in our parish I would imagine that these are two highly achievable numbers to build into a family budget. If you are below, and think you could be well beyond either the mean or the median, please use them as a benchmark.
- Finally, many hands make for lighter work. We have been flirting with the million-dollar mark for several years now, while the number of our households has remained about the same. Some would say that not losing ground in a difficult economy is an achievement. Personally, I am hoping that we can gain some traction this year. Let's have 300 households pledge for more than \$1 million in 2012. If you've never pledged before, please make this the year you begin. If you're below the median, aim there. If you've achieved the median but not yet the mean, get mean. If being mean is beneath you, think percentages and strive to tithe.

Everyone who makes a pledge in the first few weeks of the campaign will be invited to a festive cocktail party at the rectory on November 10 or 17. More details on that to come. In the meantime, thank you for all the ways that you help Grace Church to be the hands and feet and eyes and ears of Christ in the world.

The Rev. J. Donald Waring
Rector

Schedule of Services

9:00 am

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 ages 3-8 at 9:00 am

11:00 am

Morning Prayer, Rite I and Sermon

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

Music: The Choir of Men and Boys

Nursery care for children ages 0-3

Sunday School for children ages 3-12 during the sermon

6:00 pm

Holy Eucharist, Rite II in the Chantry

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

Music: Hymns with instrumentalists

Announcements

SUNDAY OCTOBER 23

2012 ANNUAL PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD - Today we ask all Grace Church members and friends to make a financial pledge to the work of the Lord through Grace Church for the year 2012. Pledge cards and brochures have been mailed out to the entire parish, and are also available in your pews, in the narthex, and outside the Reception Room. God has blessed us with a vibrant parish family, stunning architecture, glorious music, a tradition of reaching out to the least and the last in society, and most of all, the gift of his presence and companionship through all eternity. In thanksgiving for all the blessings of this life, and to empower the ministries of the church, we urge each household to commit to a financial gift for the coming year.

COCKTAILS AT THE RECTORY - In gratitude to those who make a 2012 pledge to Grace Church, Don and Stacie Waring will host two festive cocktail receptions at the Rectory on Thursdays, November 10 and 17 at 6:30 pm. You will receive an invitation from the Development Office upon receipt of your pledge card, and you may choose which date works best for you. Child care will be available in the church nursery for children up to age 4. Let's have the whole parish gather together in thanks to God for the Grace Church family.

SUNDAY FORUM 10 AM - CHRISTIAN ACCOUNTABILITY: INSTITUTIONAL AND

PERSONAL in Anthony Trollope's *The Warden* with Diana Benet, Ph.D. Beneath the romance and gentle comedy, Trollope satirizes some aspects of the Victorian Church of England. The Church is almost a character in *The Warden*. It is regarded by many as an entity with a life, purpose, and needs of its own, and Trollope's plot shows that this "character" can endanger individual conscience. Today's presentation is part of our fall Sunday Forum series, "The Church and the City," which is looking at how the church manifests itself in the city both physically and metaphorically. Each presentation will include time for questions and answers, and takes place in Tuttle Hall with coffee and refreshments.

CALLING ALL NEWCOMERS & INQUIRERS! After the 11 am service on Sunday, October 16 & 23 there will be a meeting for newcomers/inquirers. After folks get a beverage and other treat in Tuttle Hall, we will sit down in the Reception Room and consider the range of inquiries. For more information, or just

to check in, contact the Rev. Ted Pardoe at tpardoe@gracechurchnyc.org.

(TODAY!) SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AGES 9-12 takes place on the 4th Sunday of every month during the 11 am service in the McKittrick Room, located across from the current Sunday School classrooms. The curriculum will employ age-appropriate discussion and activities that foster a deeper understanding of one's personal relationship with God. For more information, please contact Maura Hooper at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org.

CENTERING PRAYER 5 PM Christian meditation each Sunday in the 3rd Floor Conference Room.

20s30s 4TH SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP DINNER On the 4th Sunday of every month following the 6pm service, connect with other 20s30s parishioners over dinner at a local restaurant. Tonight we will go to Saigon Market, 91 University Place at 12th Street. RSVP to Maura Hooper at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org.

PARISH NEWS

NEW LAY LEADERS ELECTED AT OCTOBER VESTRY MEETING - Congratulations to Elana Foundos, who was elected to serve out the unexpired term of Dorothy Mitchell. (Dorothy had resigned last summer when she and her family moved out of the city.) Congratulations also to Melinda Weir, who was appointed to the Investment Committee.

COMING SOON

OCTOBER 27 - ATTENTION ALL EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN!

The inaugural meeting of the Grace Church Chapter of the ECW of New York will be held on Thursday, October 27th at 6:30 pm in Tuttle Hall along with a "No Pressure Potluck." (Bring something sweet or savory to share.) Prepare for a fun evening of planning how we can grow into the life of the church through women's fellowship and ministries. RSVP to elanafoundos@gmail.com.

OCTOBER 30 - SUNDAY FORUM 10 AM - FINDING COMMON GROUND

with the Rev. Sarah Wood. "... For I was hungry and you gave me food ..." Matthew 25:35. Faith-filled lives beckon us to the expansive and awesome life of our incarnate Lord. Work with Common Ground and a homeless community of Atlanta became an experience wherein I discovered the inextricable relationship of us all, to and with one another. Come and hear a reflection on the great stretch of Christ's body and a theology enfolded, practiced, making that very connected and transformative truth of our lives known.

OCTOBER 30- ANNUAL CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN PARTY

This year's party will take place in Tuttle Hall on Sunday October 30th immediately following the 11am service, from 12:30p-2:00p. Children and families are invited for spooky fun and games, including our popular photo booth, a costume parade and trick or treating in the Parish House. Kids attending the 11am service are invited to wear their costumes to church. Please lend a hand by donating candy to our CARNIVAL CANDY DRIVE now through October 27th! Contact Maura Hooper for more information at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org.

NOVEMBER 2 - BOOK DISCUSSION BEGINS

Our Rector, Don Waring and new Assistant Rector, Sarah Wood will lead a discussion on the controversial book, Love Wins, by the author Rob Bell. Love Wins purports to be a book about heaven, hell, and the fate of every human being who has ever lived. Bell's thoughts are raising eyebrows, particularly in evangelical circles. The book is an easy read, and is available at local book stores and online. Join us for what promises to be a spirited discussion. The only requirement for participation is that you read the book. On Wednesdays, November 2, 9, and 16 at 7 pm in the Reception Room (directly after 6 pm Holy Eucharist).

NOVEMBER 6 - ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY

During the services on November 6th we remember all those connected with Grace Church who have died in the past year, and any others who may have died years ago, but still remain on the hearts and minds of their loved ones. To include a name on this year's list, please send the name and the service you plan to attend (9 am, 11 am, or 6 pm), to Jennifer Metz at jmetz@gracechurchnyc.org or 212-254-2000, x100 by Tuesday, November 1st. To keep the list manageable, we will be reading the names only at the service you specify.

NOVEMBER 6 - CHORAL EVENSONG 4PM

The Adult Choir will offer Choral Evensong featuring the REQUIEM of Alfred Desenclos as the primary musical meditation. The Evening Canticles will be those set by T. Tertius Noble in a minor and the Prayers

those set by William Byrd.

NOVEMBER 7 - OUTREACH MONDAY POTLUCK SUPPER

We meet in Tuttle Hall at 6:30 pm for a brief prayer service followed by dinner and our meeting. Please bring a dish to share if you care to, otherwise just your concern for the poor and the homeless of the city. Contact the Rev. Linda Bartholomew lbartholomew@gracechurchnyc.org for more information.

NOVEMBER 8 - CHRISTMAS PAGEANT INTERVIEWS

Time to start thinking about this year's pageant! Interviews will be held on Tuesday, November 8th from 2-6pm in the Music Room. Children 5 and older are welcome to participate. Only those interested in singing a solo, duet, or in a trio need to sign up for an interview. Contact Maura Hooper at mhooper@gracechurchnyc.org to schedule an appointment for your child.

NOVEMBER 11, 12 - INTIMATE EVENING OF CHAMBER MUSIC - THE WILLOW

ENSEMBLE under the artistic direction of Timothy Emerson, will hold concerts on November 11 & 12 at 8 pm in the Chantry, featuring works by Poulenc (Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, & Piano), Haydn ("Sunrise" Quartet) and Shostakovich (Piano Quintet). Tickets are \$15 advance/\$20 at the door. To reserve seats at \$15 each, email emerst@gmail.com or call (406) 861-8280 (specifying name, number of tickets and concert date).

DID YOU MISS A SERMON?

Click below to read or listen to a sermon

<http://gracechurchnyc.org/online-sermons/>