



Grace News

“Making God’s Kingdom Real for All!”

Grace Episcopal Church, 1041 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington DC 20007

Sept.-Oct. 2009 issue

Eucharistic Ministries

Helping people pray—that’s the job of our Servers and Communion Ministers. With a minimum of words, taking their part in the simple but powerful dance around the altar, these lay ministers invite everyone into the act of common prayer we call the Eucharist. Would you like to serve in this way, or at least explore the possibility? Already doing so but needing, or wanting a refresher? Plan to attend a **training on Sunday, September 13** after the 10:30 service. If you can’t make this one, I’ll offer a second training on Sunday, September 20.

John Graham

To learn more about these ministries, go to: <http://www.gracedc.org/worship/expect.php> (scroll down to “Eucharistic Ministries”)

The Rose Room gets a Child Friendly Remodeling

Think - new, bright, playful, happy, and nurturing. These are the adjectives that I hope come when you walk into the new and improved Rose Room. We have purchased new, attractive, child friendly tables that are uniquely shaped like a clover. Their height is adjustable, so they can also be used for Vestry meetings and other adult gatherings. We will also have new chairs sized to seat students of various heights and we will be painting the wall a warm, inviting color.

If and when the budget permits, a TV will be mounted on the wall to be used for educational videos. Removing the older TV will create more room for groups and activities. Once renovation is finished, Sunday School teachers will have the space to make their sessions more interactive.

The important and historical pictures and



A gaggle of Grace parents and kiddies sitting in the child friendly area at the back of the church.

posters on the walls will move to more appropriate venues. In their place you’ll find student work, character building posters, and motivational sayings. The room will become the children’s - centered around them and evolving from their ideas and creations. In this new and improved Sunday School room, our children will be able to further their spiritual growth in a warm, nurturing environment, set aside and designed with them in mind.

Sunday School staff

and parents have scheduled Sunday, September 6 and Sunday, September 13, after the 10:30 services, for clean-up, spruce-up, and re-decoration to make these contemplated changes a reality. Please come join us and help out if you can!

Jacqueline Walters

To learn more about Sunday School, visit: <http://www.gracedc.org/education/sundayschool.php>

What Going On at Grace?

Adult Forum, September and October

“Being Productive: Labor and Human Value”

9:30 am on Sundays, beginning September 6.

Let John Graham know if you'd like to receive each Sunday's readings ahead of time.

Choir Practice

Wednesdays at 8 p.m., beginning September 16.



Ken Bacon Memorial Service

Wednesday, September 9, 11 am at Washington National Cathedral

Grace's Garden

Saturday, September 12, beginning at 8:30 am

Join us for garden and grounds work with Grace's Table guests, and a barbeque to kick off a new season of Grace's Table and to honor all our GT volunteers. All are welcome. For more information on Grace's Table, go to

<http://www.gracedc.org/outreach/index.php#graces>

Rector on vacation (out of town)

Sunday, September 20 (leaving after church) through Thursday, October 1; Sunday, October 11 through Saturday, October 17. Nancy James will be our celebrant and preacher on September 27 and October 11.

Taste of Georgetown

Saturday, October 10 from 11 am to 4 pm.

Volunteers needed to sell tickets and for other important tasks! Sign up with Helen Buhr or Catherine Aselford. Volunteer training will be at noon on Sunday, October 4 at Grace.

This event raised **\$31,263.00** for the Georgetown Ministry Center in 2008, up from the previous high of \$28,887.00 in 2007. Visit www.tasteofgeorgetown.com and <http://www.gracedc.org/news/annual.php> (scroll down to “Taste”) for more information.



Arts Events at Grace

Jazz on the Lawn: final 2009 performance!

The Larry Brown Quartet, September 22 from 7 to 8:15pm

Visit www.larrybrownjazz.com for more on the band and music samples. Suggested contribution is \$5, all contributions will supplement Grace's annual Washington Interfaith Network dues. Tables and chairs provided or you can bring a blanket to sit on the grass. Feel free to bring a snack or picnic supper.

"Celtic Journeys": Harp solos and songs by Cecile Corbel.

Friday, October 2, 8-10 pm in the Grace sanctuary.

Sponsored by the Alliance Française; reserved tickets are \$8 for Alliance members and \$12 for non-members. Visit www.francedc.org and click on "Cultural Events" to read more about Corbel and to purchase tickets for the event. Tickets purchased at the door are \$2 more.

An Evening of Jazz and Poetry: Holly Bass and Friends

Tuesday, October 27 at St. Mary's Foggy Bottom, 723 23rd St. NW

Co-sponsored by St. Mary's and Grace, suggested donation is \$10. Light fare and beverages provided. Free parking with St. Mary's validation at the George Washington garage on H Street NW between 22nd and 23rd. Visit www.hollybass.com for more about Holly's work, and <http://www.gracedc.org/community/arts.php#jazz> for more information on this series.

Beyond the Gates of Grace

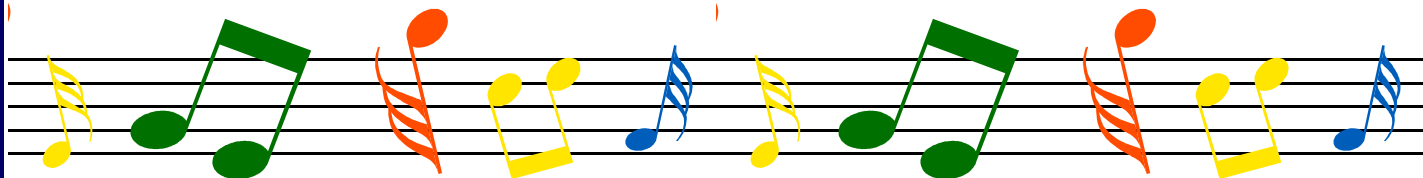
Washington Interfaith Network meeting: Thursday, September 17 at 7 pm (location TBA)

This meeting will focus on proposals to build a new West End Library near 21st and L Streets. Homeless persons, many of them well-known at Grace, frequent this library.

Library staff, lacking training and time for working with homeless persons, do their best to help, but it's not an ideal situation. A small group of representatives from WIN affiliates plans to work towards the inclusion of a Community Café in the library re-development. Some café staff would be trained to work with homeless persons. The café would welcome everyone, especially artists, students, and others who might be attracted to a "crossroads" environment. If you support this idea, or would like to learn more about it, please plan to attend this meeting. Contact John Graham for more information.

An Ode to Old, Traditional Hymns

A Spiritual Reflection, by Mary Carolyn Voght



Five years ago I visited a church in northern Virginia that has since broken away from the Episcopal Church to join the Convocation of Anglicans in North America. When I heard the news in 2006, that this particular church and another close by had voted to disaffiliate from the Episcopal Church, I can't say that I was much surprised. I remembered the Sunday morning I had spent at the church with a fellow Episcopalian and close friend. Walking out of the sanctuary after the service we had both turned to one another and said, "This is an Episcopal church?"

Except for the familiar sign with the white, blue, and red shield out front, nothing about our worship experience had seemed remotely Episcopalian. Not the haphazard liturgy, not the fear-mongering theology, and certainly not the hordes of young people literally raising their arms and faces up in prayer. These were all glaring departures from my usual church routine, but the difference that struck me the most that morning was the music.

My favorite part of church has always been the hymns. Nothing stirs the soul quite like a traditional well-known hymn, many with lyrics and music written centuries before, but also with a message that rings true for the ages. The words of such songs often read like poetry and the music is rich and hauntingly beautiful. I don't feel like I've been to church if I haven't sung any hymns.

During the service at the rather unEpiscopalian former Episcopal church, we did not sing church hymns. Instead, with the accompaniment of several acoustic guitars and a set of drums, we sang songs that many refer to as "praise music." I had heard a few of the songs before at youth group retreats when I was a teenager and during chapel services at the Episcopal middle school where I was teaching at the time. Teachers and students had struck a bargain to alternate between traditional music and praise music each week. Rather irreverently, I jokingly started referring to the praise music as "Jesus is my boyfriend music" because the

lyrics of many of the songs sound like they were written by a thirteen year old girl with phrases like, "You are my all in all," and "You are an awesome God."

Don't get me wrong, I think such music has its place (among middle and high school students) with its upbeat tunes and catchy choruses. I certainly preferred praise music to traditional hymns when I was a teenager. But as I grew older and my faith matured, I found myself becoming increasingly drawn to the old familiar hymns of my childhood. Part of it was nostalgia I think, memories of specific events or people associated with particular hymns, but there was also something else - a new found appreciation for the thoughtful messages contained within so many of the traditional hymns.

Unlike the praise music of my teenage years, songs from the Episcopal hymnal spoke to me with real wisdom, inspiration, and grace. I had grown tired of singing, "God, you rock!" and "I believe!" - the two primary messages in most praise music. The faith those songs describe is a simple one, lacking difficulties or much depth. During my twenties I discovered that spiritual faith is not simple or easy, and that there is much more to being a Christian than loudly professing your own faith.

That is why I now love many of the older hymns. I feel reassured singing about doubt and the struggles to lead a Christian life, "Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee," (Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing). I feel encouraged singing about the Christian mission to help solve the world's problems, "Cure they children's warring madness, bend our pride to Thy control. Shame our wanton selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul," (God of grace and God of Glory). And, I feel grateful and uplifted singing about the many blessings that God has given us, "Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day," (Ode to Joy).