

# GRACE EPIPHANY CHURCH

## *Speaking of Grace*

Volume 3, Issue 8

October 2011

### **Contributors to Speaking of Grace**

Thomas Eoyang  
Carol Faris  
Hal Horning  
Edward Landin  
Michael Nash  
Emmy Starr  
Harold Starr  
Helen White

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### **Wednesday Service Noon in the GE Chapel**

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### **Blessing of the Animals 3 PM, Sunday, October 9**

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### **Vestry Meeting after the 10:30 service Sunday, October 16**

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### **GE Men after the 10:30 service Sunday, October 23**

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### **Fifth Sunday Combined Service 9:30 AM, October 30**

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### **Speaking of Grace Deadline For November Issue 9 AM Thursday, October 27**

## **Class Warfare and a Christian View of Commonwealth**

You can always count on it. Whenever a discussion arises about divisions between the rich and the poor, the defenders of the rich accuse those who raise the issue of inciting “class warfare.” Behind that code word, of course, the defenders of the rich expect you to fear the bogey men of Marxism, Stalinist/Maoist Communism, and a totalitarian everybody-in-gray-pajamas society. “Let’s just all get along to make our capitalist economy work,” comes the soothing message. “Let’s not fight along class lines—that’s so divisive.” Some would even like us to believe that there are no class lines in these free United States. After all, there is no Duke of Fishtown or Baroness of Bucks; people can move up and down the socioeconomic ladder, so we’ve solved the problems of class division—right?

An in-depth article in September’s *Atlantic Monthly* (“Can the Middle Class Be Saved?” <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/09/can-the-middle-class-be-saved/8600/>; hard copies under the Social Justice/Outreach bulletin board in Cline) should help dispel the illusion that there are no class divisions in the U.S. For many of us, if we are paying attention, the lines between these divisions are places of real tension and struggle.

Those soothing voices would like us not to remember our own history, and the entire recorded history of the civilized world. They would like us not to remember the excesses of the Gilded Age and the Roaring Twenties and the visible pain that capitalist excesses caused for the underclass. They would have us forget that some of this real pain was alleviated by the social legislation of the New Deal in the 1930s and the Great Society legislation of the 1960s.

They would have us ignore that just about every economic system devised by humans—including the empires we read about in the Bible, including feudalism, including Western Hemisphere slavery, including early-, middle-, and late-stage capitalism, has been based on exploitation of one class by another class. Those soothing voices that claim to speak from a Christian ethos would especially like us not to notice various inconvenient parts of the Bible: the books of Isaiah, Micah, and Amos among the other prophets; the report in Acts 4 of how the early church held everything in common, “and distribution was made to each as any had need.” These passages clearly describe what the economics of a just society should look like. The soothing voices would like us not to hear the repeated biblical fact that God calls us to build a just society, the kingdom of God—not as an afterthought, not as a “nice-to-have, but not immediately necessary,” but as an urgent undertaking.

A posting on the *Washington Post* “On Faith” blog, by theologian Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite of Chicago Theological Seminary (“It’s not ‘class warfare,’ it’s Christianity,” <http://ht.ly/6zHkG>; hard copies under the Social Justice/Outreach bulletin board) offers a cogent discussion of competing “Christian” views of the current profound disagreements about the United States’ economic woes, and indeed about our economy in general. Thistlethwaite thoroughly debunks the idea that God is somehow on the side of unfettered capitalism.

*Continued on page three*

## Paradise, In The Hymnal

Jesus was not explicit in describing exactly where he would be after he left this earth. Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but one day you will. . . Set your troubled hearts at rest. Trust in God always; trust also in me. There are many dwelling places in my father's house. If it were not so I should have told you so. I am going there on purpose to prepare a place for you." *John 13:36-14:2*

Many Christians have not been content with this general proposition, and attempts have been made to answer specific questions in hymns, for better or worse. For one suggestion look to *O Love that will not let me go*: "I lay in dust life's glory dead, And from the ground there blossoms red, Life that shall endless be." It's still not clear, and, no, I don't understand it either.

We are assured that there are many dwelling places, but no precise description of real estate, except the description of what Jesus was leaving behind to share our humanity. "Out of the ivory palaces, Into a world of woe." The pearly gates and streets of gold as depicted in *Revelation 21:21* would require rich dwellings. Ivory might do it.

Resurrection of the body is taken for granted. And we will be fed. My mother's favorite hymn was "Jerusalem the golden, With milk and honey blest." I preferred "I'm living on the mountain, underneath a cloudless sky. I'm drinking at the fountain that never shall run dry. O yes! I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply, For I am dwelling in Beulah Land." But do I want to eat manna throughout eternity? When manna-eating Israelites complained of missing the meat they ate in Egypt, a large flock of quail was flown in for the evening meal (*Exodus 16*). Would we prefer milk and honey? I suppose it would seem mean spirited to decline salvation on the basis of the menu.

We are not necessarily going empty handed. "So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, Till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, And exchange it some day for a crown." Presumably there is only one "old rugged cross" and someone else has laid claim to it. There will be no shortage of crowns for exchange; they are regularly cast down by persons entering heaven. Please, let's not assume that there is an entrance fee beyond living an exemplary life. If I get there, by no means a certainty, I'll probably have to go empty handed, no trophies. And I will not require a crown.

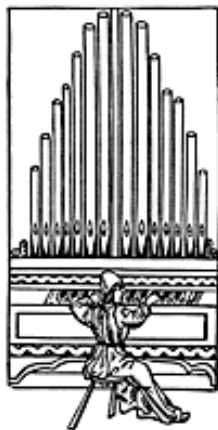
And what are we going to be doing for eternity? It is generally accepted that we will be praising God in song. One possibility is the beautiful hymn, *Amazing Grace*. It has, however, a cautionary stanza: "When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise, Than when we've first begun."

Unless my views change substantially, there is no hymn that would suit me eternally. I prefer the conviction of the last phrase of *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*:

"Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise."

"Lost in wonder." It is as simple as that. The rest is distraction. In death we will be embarking on a wondrous journey, the destination indescribable. We will be joining The Eternal. No mortal can require more.

**Carol Faris**



### Organ Concert at GE 3 PM, Sunday, October 23

Following our successful music series this past spring, an organ recital will kick off the 2011-2012 year. Andrew Senn, Director of Music and Organist at The First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, will perform the *Trois Chorales of César Franck* at 3 PM, October 23. A freewill offering will be taken to help support the care and maintenance of our historic E.M. Skinner organ. Other events this season will include our annual Epiphany Lessons and Carols, and a piano recital featuring Fr. Thomas and myself! Keep tuned for dates and times.

**Edward Landin**

### Remember Those in Need

Times continue to be tough so some of our neighbors are having trouble putting food on their tables. Next time you are food shopping please pick up a few non-perishable, non-breakable items and leave them on GE's North Porch (at the main entrance to the church.) All food donations will be delivered to St. Vincent's Food Cupboard in Germantown.

## Prayer for Lori Sutherland

Gracious God, we thank you for the blessing that Lori Sutherland has been in our lives and in the life of our church.

We thank you for her spirit, her compassion, her grace, her unfailing good cheer, her astonishing competence, her wisdom and guidance, her wit and intelligence, her commitment and hard work, and her courage. We thank you for the countless things she has accomplished to make our life at Grace Epiphany richer, more effective, and more closely aligned with your will for us.

We pray that you may continue to hold her in your divine embrace, guiding her in the times that are to come, helping her to live her life to the fullest measure, giving her health, joy, and peace. Fill her with the knowledge of your love that she may continue to meet the challenges of life with strength, courage, and grace.

All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

*This prayer was offered by Fr. Thomas at the 10:30 service on September 18.*



Grace Epiphany's window illustrating Jesus saying: "Let the little children come to me," is the cover of one of the four different note cards the Social Justice Outreach Team is offering for sale to help fund its projects. The inside is blank so the cards can be used any time of the year. A pack of 20 (five each of four different windows) costs \$12. *Photo by Michael Nash*



*Tears and smiles were mixed equally at the Sunday, September 18 reception for Lori Sutherland, whose years of outstanding service as GE's Parish Administrator were acknowledged with cheers and gifts from various parish constituencies. Above: Yvonne Andrews gives Lori a hug. Fr. Thomas is in the background. Photo by Hal Horning*



## Class Warfare and a Christian View of Commonwealth

*Continued from page one*

Earlier this week I went with Kathleen McMullen, of our Social Justice/Outreach Team, to visit the St. Barnabas Mission, a homeless shelter and preschool in West Philadelphia funded in large part by Episcopal Community Services. We saw and heard about the tremendous work that Dana Barbry-Nuble and her staff are doing not just to "help" but to turn around the lives of some of what Jesus in Matthew's gospel calls "the least of these." To hear about the cuts in their public funding while taxes on the rich are at an all time low and to learn from the *Atlantic* article how the middle class is being systematically weakened made it clear to me that class warfare is indeed raging, and is being waged, as usual, by the powerful against the weak.

As we continue our faithful ministry and contributions in support of ECS, St. Barnabas, the St. James and Teshaq Schools, and the other ministries we have chosen, may we also answer God's call to see clearly the systems of injustice that make these ministries necessary and keep them constantly vulnerable.

**Father Thomas**



## Prayer Corner

We offer a prayer of celebration for the fourth anniversary of **The Rev. Thomas Eoyang's** ministry as Rector of Grace Epiphany Church. (224 E. Gowen Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19119.)

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### Needed: Ushers/Greeters

An important ministry during our Sunday worship is to be an usher/greeter. The ministry represents the first contact a newcomer makes with our worship service and can set the tone for his or her experience with us. It is the first point at which we make sure to show the welcome that we believe we offer to everyone. At this time, our ministry of ushering and greeting needs more people, especially at the 8 AM service, where we are down to two, with Susan O'Neill's departure. Anyone interested in taking on this ministry, please speak with Thomas or Jonatas Calixte.

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### Altar Guild Meeting

**10 AM, Saturday, October 15**

There will be a meeting of the members of the Altar Guild on Saturday, October 15 at 10 AM. Those who would like to learn more about the Altar Guild are invited to attend. During the meeting the procedures for preparing for the Eucharist and the care of the linens and elements will be reviewed. Additional copies of the Altar Guild Reference Guide will be distributed. The Altar Guild calendar of events for rest of 2011 and 2012 will be discussed.

**Evelyn Washington**

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GRACE EPIPHANY CHURCH  
*Through October 1*

# COAT DRIVE

We are collecting new or slightly used coats for people in need — All sizes, from infants through adults



*Please bring to the Parish Office Mon-Thu between 12-4,  
or call 215.549.5682 or 215.621.6110  
for coats to be picked up*

The Coat Drive has been extended to October 8. Gently used coats for all ages are needed. Cash to buy coats at second-hand shop is also welcome. See Barbara Lightfoot for information.



## Green Tip # 34

### Save \$\$, Reduce Toxic Emissions

Jackrabbit starts and hard braking can increase fuel consumption by as much as 40%. Tests show that jackrabbit starts and hard braking reduces travel time by only four percent, while toxic emissions were more than five times higher. The proper way is to accelerate slowly and smoothly, then get into high gear as quickly as possible. In city driving, nearly 50% of the energy needed to power your car goes to acceleration. For more driving tips see [http://eartheasy.com/move\\_fuel\\_efficient\\_driving.html](http://eartheasy.com/move_fuel_efficient_driving.html)

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## Breakfast With the Bible

**Reconvenes at 7:50 AM, Tuesday, October 4**

### GE Conference Room

Given the interest in the continuing saga of the Middle East drama, our group decided to read even more carefully the Book of Genesis with an eye and an ear to current events. Let's take a look again, and carefully see what is there, and even what is not there.

Evolution or creationism? Chapters One and Two are at the heart of heated evangelical and progressive disagreements today over Biblical interpretation. School boards in some states are still voting on this. Why?

Other questions we might ask: Why do we no longer live in Eden? What does the story of The Flood hold for us today? What does God's promise to Abraham have to do with world religions today? How do both stories of Sarah and Hagar fit into our understanding of the Middle East crisis today?

We can always read this by ourselves, but we have learned from our time together that reading alone, without friends in conversation is . . .well, lonely. Coffee and pastries are served and there is no homework Please join us!

**Helen White, Leader**

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## October Birthdays

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Karen Shirley Getzen | 11 Walter Johnson   |
| 8 Durand Davis         | 12 Steffen Knight   |
| 5 Warren Thomas        | 14 Emmy Starr       |
| 10 Adam Eldridge       | 16 Elizabeth Wilson |
| Jasmine Williams       | 28 Jasmine Smith    |

*Please call the office, 215-248-2950,  
if your birthday has not been listed*



## It's Always Something

With Lori Sutherland gone, the "It's Always Something" feature about property repairs and expenses does not appear in its usual format—I hope just for this month.

Instead, I must report the need to look at some expensive but much-needed window replacements in Cline Auditorium and the Big Backyard space directly upstairs from Cline. These windows are part of the original construction of the Parish Hall, and therefore date back to the early 1960s. A simple examination reveals that many of them do not close properly, the wooden frames having expanded and contracted over the years. The windows allow rain and roof drainage into the building. They allow heat to escape during the winter, thus increasing our energy costs, and the windows in Cline present a security risk, since they cannot always be closed.

Dan Finn asked several companies to bid on the project to replace the windows exactly as they are. Every company declined the project, because the work would be too customized and expensive to make it worthwhile. It became clear to Dan and me that to replace the windows we will have to allow the incorporation of a more modern window system, and that doing so will significantly change the appearance of the windows. While a certain aesthetic will be lost, we will gain in building integrity (stopping the water leakage and resulting damage to the structure of the building itself), energy efficiency, and security. This project promises to be very expensive, and I am hoping that we will be able to obtain grant funding from a variety of sources, so that it will not further deplete our dwindling endowment. To this end, the Vestry passed the following motion at the meeting of September 18, 2011:

### *Replacement of Parish Hall windows*

*Moved:* that the Vestry allow the Sexton and Rector to solicit bids for the replacement of the arched windows in Cline and in the Big Backyard space on the second floor of the Parish Hall, with the understanding that the replacement will significantly alter the appearance and function of these windows. Before any financial commitment is made to make these replacements, the Sexton and Rector will make a presentation to the Vestry about the nature and cost of the replacements and how the costs will be funded.

**Fr. Thomas**

## Welcome, Janet Sampson! GE's New Parish Administrator

Please welcome Janet Sampson, the new Parish Administrator of Grace Epiphany Church. Her first day on the job was September 19, Her hours will be 12:30 to 5:30 PM Monday through Thursday, for 20 hours per week.

Janet is a longtime resident of the area recently returning to Philadelphia after living in Chicago for five years. She has extensive administrative experience and recently worked in a property management firm in Illinois. Janet has been an educational consultant in the areas of Mathematics and Chinese Studies. Happy to serve as parish administrator here at Grace Epiphany, she enjoys problem solving, loves working with people, and adores music and the arts. Janet expresses her creativity as a quilter and textile crafter.

Dan, Edward and I are looking forward to working with our new colleague. Please introduce yourselves to Janet if you are around the office during the week.

**Fr. Thomas**

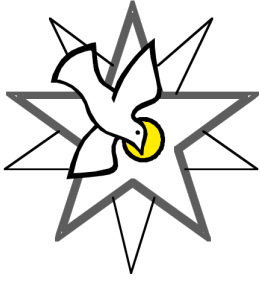


## Jerusalem and Peace

There is probably no more vexing challenge to peace in the Middle East (and therefore peace in the world) than the situation in Israel and Palestine. There are two opportunities in our diocese to learn more about and to get engaged in the quest for peace through the lens of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem:

**Ray Suarez: Jerusalem the Center of the World** – Friday, October 7 from 7 to 9 PM at St. Peter's Church, 313 Pine Street, Philadelphia. Free, and open to all. No reservations are needed. Philadelphia Theological Institute is cosponsoring this event with The American Friends of The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Ray Suarez, Senior Correspondent for the PBS NewsHour, will be the featured speaker. For more information about AFEDJ go to [www.afedj.org](http://www.afedj.org).

**American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem** – Missioner Workshop. Saturday, October 22, 9:30 to 3 PM Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 8000 St. Martin's Lane, 215.247.7466, [www.stmartinec.org](http://www.stmartinec.org). Learn how to join with others to become more active in support of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and in the struggle to achieve peace in Israel and Palestine. More information is available in a letter posted on the "Around the Diocese" and "Social Justice/Outreach" bulletin boards.



# GRACE EPIPHANY CHURCH

224 East Gowen Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19119

*Grace Epiphany Church is an Episcopal, diverse, and inclusive community of faith, joined together in the love of Jesus Christ. Our mission is to reach out to one another and to those around us in justice, love, and compassion, so that we may faithfully witness and proclaim Christ's love for all through our worship, spiritual growth, and service to others.*

**SUNDAY SERVICES** 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist  
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist and Church School  
One service only at 9:30 AM on each fifth Sunday

**HOW TO REACH US** Parish Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 10 AM – 3 PM  
Office Phone: (215) 248-2950 Fax: (215) 753-0354  
Web: [www.grace-epi.org](http://www.grace-epi.org)  
E-mail: [graceepiphany@verizon.net](mailto:graceepiphany@verizon.net)

E-mail us—We'd love to hear from you!



**RECTOR**  
The Rev. Thomas Eoyang, Jr.  
[rector.graceepiphany@verizon.net](mailto:rector.graceepiphany@verizon.net)

**RECTOR'S WARDEN**  
Jerome Smith

**PARISH ADMINISTRATOR**  
Janet Sampson  
[graceepiphany@verizon.net](mailto:graceepiphany@verizon.net)

**ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER**  
Edward Landin

**SEXTON**  
Daniel Finn



## Many Gifts, One Spirit 2011



Pledges are still coming in, so if you haven't pledged, it isn't too late. We need everyone's support to carry out our mission!

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**To Grace Epiphany Church, 224 E. Gowen Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19119**

As a steward of God's gifts and in gratitude for all His blessings and for the work of my Parish, Diocese and National Church it is my intention in the year 2011 to give Grace Epiphany Church the amount listed below. (I understand this pledge is good unless I notify the treasurer of a change or cancellation.)

(Please fill in only one amount) \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week; \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month; \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year.

Date payments will start: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your support**

