

GRACE CHURCH

of the Episcopal Diocese of New York

**IGLESIA LA GRACIA**

**De la Diócesis Episcopal de Nueva York**

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023**

**FEBRUARY 25, 2024**

**Staff**

The Reverend Adolfo Moronta, Priest-In-Charge

Michael DiLeo, Director of Music of Grace Church

Jorge Cruz, Director of Music of La Gracia

Suzan Ortega-Collado, Administrator

Eduardo Huerta, Sexton

**The Vestry**

 Daisy Calderón Senior Warden Eileen McClean Junior Warden

**\*Class of 2023:**

Andrea Hamilton-Singh

Daisy Calderón

Kevin Richards

**Class of 2024**:

Mary Baker

Eileen McClean

Camille Worrell

Sandy McAllister

**Class of 2025:**

Sorraya Sampson-Elliott

George O’Hanlon

**Annual Meeting Held February 25, 2024**

*When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*

**Grace Church Annual Meeting - 2024**

***Agenda***

* The Call to Order - Daisy Calderón
* Opening Prayer – Fr. Adolfo Moronta
* The Report of the Nominating Committee and Opening of the Polls**\***
* The Necrology (Read during the Prayers of the People at 11:00 A.M.)
* Closing Hymn and change of venue to the parish hall.
* Report of the Sr. Warden
* Report of the Priest-In-Charge
* Report of the Treasurer
* Closing of Polls
* Other Business/Reports
* Closing Prayers and Doxology

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**Grace Church Annual Meeting 2024**

**CANDIDATE FOR SENIOR WARDEN**

Eileen McClean (Sr. Warden)

**CANDIDATE(S) FOR JUNIOR WARDEN (TWO-YEAR TERM – VOTE FOR ONE)**

George O’Hanlon (Jr. Warden) **\_\_\_\_**

Sandy Gadsden-McAllister (Jr. Warden) **\_\_\_\_**

**CANDIDATE(S) FOR VESTRY**

Andrea Spencer **\_\_\_\_\_**

Kevin Richards  **\_\_\_\_\_**

Daisy Calderón  **\_\_\_\_\_**

**Diocesan Convention Representatives**

Daisy Calderón

Eileen McClean \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Irene Alves

Sandy Gadsden-McAllister

Fr. Adolfo Moronta

**The Necrology**

Record of those whose funerals were held at Grace since the last annual meeting.

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of Christ, rest in peace.

**Name Date of Death**

Alfonso López Moras 4/26/23

Jose Luis Clavijo Zeballo 5/20/23

Richard LaBorde 9/26/23

Uriel Reid 10/21/23

Robert J. Auld 11/24/23

Raymond Palmosi 12/24/23

**Statistics for Annual Report for 2023**

**Register of Services – 2023 Register of Services - 2022**

#### Sunday Holy Eucharists: **140** Sunday Holy Eucharists: **128**

Weekday Holy Eucharists: **104** Weekday Holy Eucharists: **86**

**Record of Baptisms in 2023:**

1. Lauren Nicole Muralles
2. Savannah Williams
3. Avery Maitland
4. Even Zepada Ramos
5. Rodney Pérez
6. Miles Davis
7. Michaelknight Santiago
8. Luna Marie Halstead

**Record of First Communions in 2023:**

1. Jason Belduma
2. Dallana Genis
3. Rosemary Genis
4. Alexander Genis
5. William Guillen
6. Katherine Osorio
7. Susan Osorio
8. Ryan Pérez
9. Rodney Pérez
10. Melisa Rojas

### **Record of those Confirmed or Received in 2023:**

### **Record of Marriages in 2023:**

### Daniel Robles & Daysi Sánchez

### **Record of Quinceañeras(os) in 2023:**

1. Jocelyn Rosas
2. Lindsey González
3. Alexander Genis
4. Àngela Morales
5. Selena Lozada Pérez (18)

**Letters of Transfer in 2023:**

#####  IN:

 OUT:

**Senior Warden Report – For 2023**

Daisy Calderon – Senior Warden

As we commence a new year and welcome new leadership into the Vestry it is vital that we determine what our focus points should be.  As a community of faith, we need to re-engineer our present so that we can build a strong and solid future.

These are challenging times for our parish, and as we all know, this is not a recent occurrence.  Finances remain an ongoing concern and we need to increase our efforts to become a healthier and vibrant congregation. As we strive toward these goals, we need to construct an environment of trust and unselfish commitment to support our clergy, lay leadership, and our church community in general. Our path forward must be rebuilt and redesigned while respecting and embracing our differences.

Occasions to be thankful for during 2023 and other realities:

**Bishop Matthew Foster Heyd – Grace, hope and love.**

Bishop Heyd’s visit to our parish was an exciting moment for our parish and parishioners in general. The bishop’s humbleness and spirituality permeated through his service. His visit to our parish was a wonderful event that will be remembered for years to come. We were joined by local politicians, community organizers and other guests.

Bishop Heyd clearly knows the issues that need focus and attention, and fully understands that these are challenging and changing times for parishes and the Diocese in general. He is aware that congregations are impacted by a general decline, aging congregations, the aftereffects of Covid and the need to heal and to re-group. He challenged us to work in ways to re-invent our parishes, prepare for change, and to explore the possibilities to reverse the decline prevalent throughout our parishes.

In general Bishop Hyde’s visit to our Church was well received and attended by parishioners from Grace and La Gracia. This was Definitely a very significant event for our Parish. It was truly a pleasure to have responded to the call to work with Parishioners and Vestry members who love our church, are committed to it, and are more than willing to put their best foot forward when called upon. Through the effort of volunteers from Grace and La Gracia we were able to coordinate a successful Luncheon. It is important to mention that this activity was made possible through donations/contributions from parishioners from Grace and La Gracia.

**One Church Committee -** As mentioned by the bishop during his sermon, we are already 1 church in many ways. There is work still to be done, and ideas to be shared, so that we together continue to work towards this goal.

Grace and La Gracia will be engaged and asked for their general feedback on this Diocesan request. Based on the feedback, the next steps will be determined as to the tools and process we will build upon to achieve this mandate. One church is about unity, all else

In the process of defining the meaning of One church, we should attempt to build upon the ideas that can build us up and not tear us down, we need to focus on the unifying aspects, while embracing flexibility and change to continue thriving as a parish community.

**La Gracia and Stewardship**: Working closely with and frequently with the Stewardship Committee to deliver the same message to La Gracia Parishioners. The objective is to have a coordinated and unified approach to stewardship, and to continuously have conversations on the importance of pledging regularly and supporting our parish and community.

A primary objective for 2024 is to find alternative ways to raise funds for our beloved parish through cultural events and activities of importance to the Latino congregation and the community in general.

**Finances:** As we start the year and generally during the first quarter, we see information relevant to the state of our finances firsthand (increased expenses, reduced income, drawdowns, frequent outflows. We generally, and rightfully so, become concerned during this time, and frequently verbalize the need to generate additional and constant income streams. These realities, no matter how harsh, must remain in the forefront knowing fully well that this is not a comfortable topic.

We need to become comfortable with the uncomfortable, we need to face and embrace our realities and be open to change. We must not be afraid to embrace ideas that are out of the ordinary. Weekly offerings will not sustain us, we need to make it a priority to find and establish creative income streams to self-sustain ourselves. To become financially solid, we must be constant at finding creative ways to leverage our assets and to increase or create new income streams.

With God in the forefront, with care for each other and our parish, we can once again become a vibrant community and parish.

In Christ and with profound faith,

Daisy,

**Priest-In-Charge Report For 2023**

**Priest in Charge Report**

**The Rev. Adolfo Moronta**

2024 has just begun! Practically, we have just celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ this past Christmas, therefore, with the joy of this celebration still fresh in our minds, we begin the new year praying for light and love in our mist here at Grace/La Gracia Episcopal Church. 2024 Marks my 8th year In Grace/ La Gracia. These eight years have been a wonderful journey, where I have grown as a priest, and I have gotten to know all of you, and you have become my friends and family in faith.

Recent years have been filled with unrest and turmoil on many fronts all over the world. 2023 was no exception. In addition to the ongoing concerns over climate change, immigration, economic woes, several major crises occurred during 2023 which have caused even more concern and worry. Some significant events of the past year include the continuing conflict in the Ukraine which has been leading to “Ukraine fatigue” in Western countries, the Hamas attack on Israel in October, leading to armed conflict and humanitarian concerns in the region, political disfunction in the US Congress and the legal troubles facing a former President of the United States. And 2024 is not looking to be calmer as 2024 is a Presidential election year in the United States with all the political drama that comes with that.

There have been challenges at a global level and we as a community of faith have also encountered challenges of our own. We lost 6 dear parishioners who went to the heavenly kingdom they are: Alfonso Lopez Moras, Jose Luis Claviejo Zeballo, Richard LaBorde, Uriel Reid, Robert J. Auld and Raymond Palmosi. On a more positive level we also had the past year 8 Baptisms and 14 First Communion.

In my personal life 2023 was a very difficult year since it was the year in which my mother was diagnosed with cancer, leading to one of the most difficult years in my life. As her health deteriorated our family faced a long, stressful journey. One of the greatest challenges for me personally was to see our roles reverse, as I now was taking on the responsibility of being a caretaker for the person who had raised me and always been there for me. Although I know we still have a long road ahead of us, thankfully she has responded to chemotherapy and her cancer has significantly reduced by 98%. I thank all of you for your prayers and encouragement and I thank God for His presence in our lives.

**We can all take pride over the accomplishments of 2023, including:**

**Bishop Heyd’s visitation** was one of our most significant activities of 2023. During his visit he met first with the Vestry and then separately with me where he reiterated his support towards my ministry. Even though it rained that didn't stop our parishioners from attending and the church was filled with 147 in attendance.

**Church growth:** There had been quite a few parishioners who for one reason or another were not coming to our services, and they have been gradually returning to our Parish. I am delighted to see these dear parishioners formally returned to our spiritual home. Additionally, there are many new faces in both our Sunday services and the Noonday services especially of people that have recently moved to the area and are making Grace Church their spiritual home.

**200th Anniversary Committee:** This year we will be journeying toward a remarkable 200th anniversary celebration. This celebration is just around the corner, and it will be a momentous occasion that invites us to honor our rich history and embrace the promise of tomorrow. Delores Brathwaite was called to chair this important committee, a position which she accepted. The 200th Anniversary Committee met periodically during 2023.

They have developed a special Anniversary logo and tag line, and have also held a series of events, all of which will culminate in a memorable ceremonial celebration on September 21, 2024. Our 200th Anniversary tells us that our parish is alive and thriving.

**Downtown Music:** In light of the increasing cost of our operations over the years, it was necessary to renegotiate the arrangement with Downtown Music. The agreement with them had been unchanged for 11 years. I increased their rent from the current long-standing amount of $2000 a year to $4000 per year, which became effective July 1, 2023.

**New Lease for LUW:** By the end of 2023 Sorraya Sampson, in collaboration with Douglas Austin began working on the new lease that will be renegotiated this year with LUW. This new lease will secure additional funds for our Parish.

**Special Donation to Grace Church:** In 2023 we received a very generous donation from one of our long-time parishioners of $100,000. The funds were given to Grace Church with the specific instructions that they be deposited directly to the Grace Episcopal Church Fiduciary Trust that we have at the Diocese.

**Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee has been back in session since the middle of 2023. Their duties include: 1) Assist with the church budget, 2) find ways to bring more revenue to the church, 3) provide ideas for possible fundraising options, 4) set a list of financial goals and proposals with funding strategies to achieve them.

**Boiler Fundraising:** With the blessing of God and the generosity of some our parishioners to whom I reached out, I was able to raise $20,500 for the repair of our Boiler. We are also hoping to get an additional $5,000 through a grant.

**Church Bazaar:** Saturday, June 10th was a blessed day for our fundraising Bazaar. The good and sunny weather brought out a constant stream of people coming to browse and buy. It started at 10:00 AM and lasted till about 4:00 PM. In total the church was able to raise $4,106.00 from the Bazaar. Special thanks to Camille Worrell for organizing and putting together this activity. Her dedication along with the help of many parishioners made this event successful.

**Eucharistic Ministers:** After a long halt due to Covid, the month of June of 2023 marked the return of the Eucharistic Ministers to the homes of our parishioners. The Eucharistic Ministers take Communion to those who are homebound and cannot participate in the Sunday Liturgy at the Parish.

**Healing Service:** June 2023 also marked the return of the Healing Service. The Healing Service takes place on the last Sunday of each month where we pray for those who are sick or in need of healing.

**Church Office**: Wayne upgraded our software program in the office. All our emails have been updated to Microsoft Cloud 365 for more security. The change in the hosting of the email addresses from on premises to cloud-based email will eliminate the cost and expense associated with purchasing a physical server and software (Exchange Server software). We also replaced the old internet router and one of our printers. All of these actions will result in the church saving considerable money.

**Homecoming Barbecue in the Rectory:** Our wonderful celebration in 2023 was the result of the hard work of many people, and I am especially thankful to everyone who contributed to the success of that special day. Our Homecoming was a great day! A day that we can build on to reinforce our relationships and our church identity. I hope for us to take the excitement and energy and fellowship forward and work toward the tradition of Homecoming Sunday every year better and better.

**Retreat:** On November 18 and 19 approximately forty parishioners of Grace, and a group from St Andrews Episcopal Church, attended a retreat at Grace Church, titled **Life in the Spirit Seminar.** This event was hosted by the La Gracia parishioners who organized the retreat and who were the ushers of this magnificent spiritual experience. Everyone left the retreat with a renewed sense of faith and purpose.

**Sidewalk repair:** There is a portion of our sidewalk on Church St that needs urgent repair. I applied for a grant with the city of White Plains which was approved by the end of 2023. Work should begin any time before Spring.

**Sacristy improvements:**  In 2023 we were able to make some needed improvements in a section of the Sacristy. Cabinets were sanded down and painted and we had glass placed on the countertops to protect the refurnished surfaces.

**Outreach:** we held multiple campaigns to support those in great need. One example is the was the Caring Cupboard, which allows the less privileged from our community to retrieve food staples from our food pantry during weekday working hours. This ministry is funded in its totality by grants that I apply for. In addition to the above, I meet regularly with Central **Westchester Clericus**, these meetings take place mainly for collegiality, fellowship and to explore ways we can all contribute with one another and our community. I have also joined the **Ministers’ Fellowship Council of White Plains & Vicinity** which meets regularly on a monthly basis. On a diocesan level I am part of the **Ordination Task Force Committee**. I am also very happy to share with all of you that we enter this year with the re-establishment of the longtime relationship we have had with **Louis Capelli** which I am sure will bring blessings to Grace/ La Gracia.

One of the major challenges we face in Grace/ La Gracia is our financial deficit. That is why we need your continued support not only with your with financial giving, but also with your time and talent. Let us face our reality and move forward in a direction that will allow us to continue to do God’s ministry. We need your help. Make a commitment and get involved.

I would like to thank our staff – Suzan (Parish Administrator), Michael (Organist/Choir), Maria (Bookkeeping), and Eduardo (Sexton). I would also like to thank our Wardens and Vestry members for their leadership. Furthermore, there are so many volunteers to thank. Brinda Bradley and the Altar Guild. Marie Barrows and the SAGE members. Karen Odom and the Book Club and Shoji Mizumoto who has shared all his gifs with our Parish. Lauren and our acolytes. George and the Christian ed team. Mary Baker for the Angelus Newsletter. Our Grace Pastoral Care givers. Delores Brathwaite and the 200th Anniversary Committee. Sorraya Sampson, Chair of Buildings and Grounds. Walter and Sylvia Simon. The La Gracia Committee, especially Daisy Calderon who is continuously helping me to lead la Gracia. And so many more. Thanks to all of you.

As we continue our path into 2024, we must remember that the Holy Spirit is always leading the church in a new direction and towards a new vision. Therefore, we need to open our hearts towards his guidance, because at the end of the day we cannot remain still, reminiscing about the past. If we let the Spirit lead us, our church and our lives will blossom and flourish. Grace/ La Gracia remain open to the flow of the Spirit for without movement, the church is lifeless and static, we must therefore embrace change.

It is not always easy to come together as a racially diverse, intercultural, bilingual parish.  We still have work to do.  But I believe this is what we are called to be, and even now we get to experience a richness and vitality that strengthens our faith and gives us growth and joy.

2023 brought some challenging moments to our lives, but we have endured the challenges because of our faith in God. May this new year bring good things to all of you. I pray that 2024 brings you immense joy and wonderful moments to cherish.

Respectfuly submitted,

**Fr. Adolfo Moronta**

**Priest in Charge Annual Report La Gracia For 2023**

**Priest in Charge Report**

**The Rev. Adolfo Moronta**

I read once in a magazine that Churches that hope to grow must foster diversity, since people going to church want to see the multicultural, multiethnic, multigenerational population that mirrors heaven itself. Diversity, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is defined as “the state of having people who are different races or who have different cultures in a group or organization.”

If we look at America today, we see how this country has become increasingly diverse, Grace Church is part of this diversity since we house under the same roof people of all kinds of races and cultures. Amongst one of the aspects that the Episcopal Church is known for is by its slogan: “The Episcopal Church Welcomes You," which represents the radical hospitality extended to all of us by Jesus who stretched out his arms of love on the cross to embrace humanity.

Diversity is biblical. Jesus commissioned the disciples (and his church) to all the nations. That is why, in places like Acts 15, Ephesians 2 and 3, as well as in Galatians 3, the New Testament addresses the mystery of Jew and Gentile diversity.

La Gracia is also a great example of diversity since it’s the spiritual home of Latinos from all over Latin America; to its services attend people from countries such as: Honduras, El Salvador, Venezuela, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Dominican Republic. La Gracia is diverse but one element that really unites them is not just the language, but their deep faith in Jesus and their devotion to Mary.

An important part of La Gracia is the La Gracia Committee which is made up of long-time key members of this ministry who have been in the congregation from 8 to 25 years. The Committee meets every month to plan and coordinate all activities related to this ministry.

In 2023 La Gracia continued to be involved in general parish activities such as: **Grace retreat**. For the second year on a road La Gracia has hosted the Grace retreat, where we were all spiritually connected and engaged. **Church Bazaar:** La Gracia was actively involved not only in the sorting out of items, pricing, and organization of the Bazaar, but also on the day of the event serving as sellers, cashiers, organizing and cleaning. **Homecoming Barbecue**: Serving on various levels, cooking, food distribution and cleanup. **Christmas Dinner:** actively involved in decorating the Parish Hall for the event, serving, setting up and cleaning at the end of the activity.

* **Stewardship**: La Gracia contributed financially to the church during 2023 by pledging and loose plate offerings. We continue to work on stewardship, and motivating parishioners to support all the ministries of the Grace/ La Gracia with their time, talent and treasure.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **La Gracia**  |
| **Amount** | **Count** |
| **2024 Pledge:** |   31,106.00  | 47 |
| **2023 Pledge:** |   39,555.00  | 59 |
|  |  |  |

* **Sunday attendance:** La Gracia continues to have a good Sunday attendance, an average of 80-90
* Throughout 2023 new members continued to attend the 12:30 service.
* **Live streaming:** through Facebook continues to be very successful.
* **Services:** La Gracia has two services per week, Sunday 12:30 p.m. & Thursday 7:30 p.m.
* **Mother’s Day Celebration:** La Gracia held a well-attended Mother’s Day lunch for all parishioners. During lunch we had raffles, sang, danced, distributed gifts and enjoyed a good time together.
* **Father’s Day Celebration:** La Gracia had its Father’s Day celebration which consisted of a lunch, raffles, singing, and gifts will be given out to all the fathers.
* **Bishop Hyed**: During the month of July all the Latino Congregations each represented by their Priest and 3 members had a meeting with Bishop Heyd on July 19 in [St **Bartholomew's** Episcopal Church](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEA_enUS1042US1042&sxsrf=AB5stBhColw0bapBMu_r5xVqtPYBLCI9xQ:1689802446550&q=St+Bartholomew%27s+Episcopal+Church&spell=1&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj2nsTU3JuAAxUakIkEHW9JCecQkeECKAB6BAgJEAE) . The meeting was to envision the future of the Latino Ministry and to share our thoughts and concerns. It was a joyous meeting where we had a chance to confer with one another and the Rt Rev. Matthew Heyd.
* I attended a retreat along with some of the members of La Garcia and members of all the Latino congregations of the Diocese on August 4-6 in Bethel, Pennsylvania.
* **First Communion:** In September we had the First Communion for 14 children.
* **Hosted Grace retreat:** On November 18 and 19 approximately forty parishioners of Grace, and a group from St Andrews Episcopal Church, attended a retreat at Grace Church, titled **Life in the Spirit Seminar.** This event was hosted by the La Gracia parishioners who organized the retreat and who were the ushers of this magnificent spiritual experience. Everyone left the retreat with a renewed sense of faith and purpose.
* **Virgin of Guadalupe:** La Gracia held its largest celebration, the Virgin of Guadalupe. This celebration brought out many parishioners who came despite the cold weather that we had on that day. More than 150 parishioners came to this service. We began as every year with a procession accompanied by a Mariachi band, followed by the Eucharist and then we had dinner and the singing of the Mananitas at 12 AM.
* **Christmas Dinner:** For the second time this year Grace and La Gracia held a joint Christmas dinner. The Christmas Dinner took place on December 21 at 7 PM.
* **Christmas Pageant:** For the second year in a road La Gracia was part of the Christmas Pageant which took place onDecember 24 at 4:00 PM.

I would like to thank all the members of the La Gracia Committee: Daisy Calderon, Rosario and Jose Luis Murillo, Edith Gonzalez, Alicia Silva, Claudia Reyes, Paz Torres, Pablo Aguilar, Rocio Marin, Carmen, Rosa Moreno, Martin Huerta, Alba Juarez, Liz & Emmanuel Gonzalez. Additionally, I would like to thank the Acolytes, Ushers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and all those who continuously help me to lead La Gracia.

I am happy to see that the Lord continues to bless and guide us as we proceed on the path to a vibrant, growing, and renewed parish. I have three main goals: 1) Grow the Church not only spiritually, but also in numbers 2) Continue to be a bridge between Grace and La Gracia 3) Work closely with the Vestry.

Respectfuly submitted,

**Fr. Adolfo Moronta**

 **Fiscal State Of Grace Church Report For 2023**

**Ministry/Committee: Finance
Chair: Kevin Richards
Members: Carlos Muñoz, Camille Worrell, Andrea Spencer, Daisy Calderon, Fr. Adolfo Moronta**

In 2023, we were met with various financial challenges although we were able to keep our expenses in line with our budget we were not able to do the same in from a revenue standpoint which led to our significant loss.

Over the course of the year, we withdrew $80,000 from our investment account to pay our obligations, this is a 30,000 increase over previous years withdraws. Our challenge to operate within our means continues but we have hopes of solving some of these revenue matters through active renegotiation of our contracts with third parties. Expense management, particularly around utilities costs is urgent and will continue to be a focus of this Finance Committee with the help of the Vestry and Buildings and Grounds Committee.

|  |
| --- |
| **Grace Church** |
| **Income and Expenses** |
| **2022 and 2023 Actuals and 2024 Budget** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | **--------Change------** |  | **--------Change------** |
|  |  |  |  **2023 Jan-Dec** |  **2022 Jan-Dec** | **$** | **%** | **2024 Budget** | **$** | **%** |
|  | **Income** |  |  |  |  | Budget |  |  |
|  |  | Parishioner Contributions |  290,292  |  275,869  |  14,423  | 5% |  283,000  |  (7,292) | -3% |
|  |  | Rental Income Cons. |  134,656  |  124,864  |  9,792  | 8% |  140,000  |  5,344  | 4% |
|  |  | Grants and Other Donations |  76,554  |  162,442  |  (85,888) | -53% |  75,000  |  (1,554) | -2% |
|  |  | Other income |  37,819  |  98,204  |  (60,384) | -61% |  45,000  |  7,181  | 16% |
|  | **Total Income** |  **539,321**  |  **661,379**  | **(122,058)** | **-18%** |  **543,000**  |  3,679  | **1%** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Expense** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Buildings and Grounds** |  **230,803**  |  **193,866**  |  36,937  | **19%** |  **251,505**  |  20,702  | **8%** |
|  |  | **Church Operations** |  **52,537**  |  **34,118**  |  18,419  | **54%** |  **41,250**  |  (11,287) | **-27%** |
|  |  | **Office Expenses** |  **39,446**  |  **39,112**  |  334  | **1%** |  **36,800**  |  (2,646) | **-7%** |
|  |  | **Payroll** |  **249,393**  |  **358,656**  |  (109,262) | **-30%** |  **255,050**  |  5,657  | **2%** |
|  |  | **Diocesan Assessment** |  **71,735**  |  **65,371**  |  6,364  | **10%** |  **60,200**  |  (11,535) | **-19%** |
|  | **Total Expense** |  **643,914**  |  **691,121**  | **(47,207)** | **-7%** |  **644,805**  |  891  | **0%** |
|  | **Net Loss** | **(104,593)** | **(29,743)** | **(74,850)** | **252%** | **(101,805)** |  2,788  | **-3%** |

 **Acolyte Ministry Report For 2023**

**Ministry/Committee: Acolyte Guild**

**Chair: Lauren Reid**

**Members:**

Anna Kristina O’Hanlon

Nikolas O’Hanlon

Vika O’Hanlon

Lauren Reid

Andrea Spencer

Dana Walters

Bair Estepan

Aadi Kumar

Gabrielle Parkinson

Harrison Richards

Ivana Richards

Emmi Woodberry

Eric Woodberry

Aaron Woodberry

Brinda Bradley

Sam Brown

Jean Chambers

Janine Daughtry

Melanie Jackson

Priya Kumar

Linda Harmon

Shoji Mizumoto

**Where we are now December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)** The purpose of the Grace Church Acolyte is to aid and assist the clergy and congregation in prayer, praise and worship. This ministry is open to all youth of Grace Church starting around age 7, as well as adults of all ages. We are currently still working most Sundays with a scaled down presence on the altar. Brinda Bradley serves every Sunday at 8, while at 10 we often serve with 2-3 acolytes, with the occasional full altar. This year Priya Kumar and Vika O’Hanlon left for college but were ready to step in and serve on Christmas Eve along with Anna O’Hanlon. We were so pleased to have Bair Estepan join his grandmother Jean Chambers on the altar on several occasions. Once again, on Christmas Eve, the youth and young adults of our parish “took over” the 4pm Family Service. This included acolytes, lectors, and ushers. We look forward to this evolving tradition this year.

I want to add special thanks to all those who came out to serve at my father’s funeral this past November. Uriel Reid was a lifelong acolyte who knew that his calling was to be in service on the altar. My family could not have asked for a more appropriate tribute to him.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024)** We are hopeful thatmore parishioners will join us on the altar on Sundays, and we are glad to know that some have already signed up to join us this year.

**What resources we will need to get there:** What we need most are parishioners who are willing to give one Sunday a month in service on the altar.

**Altar Guild Report for 2023**

**Chair: Brinda Bradley**

**Members: Carol Mitchell, Hilliary Fleming, Sandy McAllister, Melanie Jackson, Audrey Taylor, Edith Gonzalez, Martin Huerta**

**Where we are now:** Altar Guild is comprised of teams of two members, who provide the set up, clean up and decorations for all mass and Holy Days. Each team is responsible for these duties once per month. Due to COVID, we have instituted individual wine cups, the wearing of mask and the use of plastic gloves during Communion. We continue to be responsible for the maintenance of altar linens, glass items, frontals, vestments, robes and all other hardware which is used during all church services. We order and store all items mentioned and order all supplies and flowers for all services. We, as a group, attended the New York Altar Guild Workshop in October of 2023.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024:** We will try to maintain an atmosphere of quiet, serenity and respect in preparation of the services in the church. We would like to recruit two more members to fill the vacancies which occurred due to COVID and retirement. We would like to replace some of the older cabinets in the Sacristy.

What resources do we need to get there? We need the cooperation of all committees and organizations, from within and outside of the church, to repeat the church. The committees and organizations should not move any items or furniture in the church. If there is a need to do so, the item and furniture should be placed back to its original spot. We will actively seek to fill the vacancies. We are seeking funds to replace the cabinets.

**Grace Church Book Club Report for 2023**

Now in its 25th year, the Grace Church Book Club was launched in 1999 with Toni Morrison’s story of Beloved. Roughly 180 books and five films later, the Grace Church Book Club is still going strong.

Recent book selections to date have included:

**2022-2023**

The Cage by Bonnie Kistler

The Long Songs of W.E.B. DuBois by Honoree Fanonne Jeffers

My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She’s Sorry by Fredrick Backman

The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict and Victoria Murray

The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life by David Brooks

Still Life by Louise Penny

Trust by Herman Diaz

**2023-2024**

The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Enemies in Love: A German POW, a Black Nurse, and an Unlikely Romance by Alexis Clark

The First Ladies by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray

Higher is Waiting by Tyler Perry

The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times by Michelle Obama

Lone Women by Victor LaValle

Tishomingo Blues by Elmore Leonard

\*This year’s Summer Read is still to be determined

**Films:** Angela’s Ashes, The DaVinci Code, Eyes Beyond Seeing,

White Oleander, The Help

**Special Honors**: In January 2003, Grace Messiah presented the book club with a special copy of Cane River signed author, Lalita Tademy

**Book Club Library:** If you’ve ever thought, ‘I’m going to read that book club book one day,’ we’ve made it extra easy—we’ve built a library within a library. Select book club books donated by members are available on a first-come first-served basis on the top left bookshelves in the church library. To check out a book, simply find and sign the appropriate sign-out sheet in the marked binder shelved with the books. When you’ve finished, simply return the book to the bookshelf.

**Mission**: Our mission is simply to create a social connection through shared reading that is enriching, enlightening and entertaining**. Founding, Past and Current Members**: Irene Alves, Jean Marie Angelo, Laura Auld, Mary Baker, Barbara Biles, Barbara Brown, Verna Brown, Norene Bueti, Dr. Valencia Carroll, Carole Carter, Karen Finkbe, Ella Fitzgerald, Vilma France, Linda Gallo, Arlene Roberts Grant, Rev. Gawain de Leeuw, Linda Heusser, Louise Holsapple, Dorothy Jackson, Ray LaVigne, Joan Lemond, Dr. Barbra McCune, Trisha McGuinness, Dr. John Mitchell, Karen Odom, Mural Patrick, Margaret Broomfield Parkinson, Joyce Pickering, Ann Post, Angie Poulos, Monica Powell, Lorraine Reid, Cynthia Sangurima-Brown, Joy Scantlebury, Monica Scantlebury, Christine Scott-Deutsch, Francoise Simon, Sylvia Simon, Phyllis Shwedo, Karen Southwick, Jennifer Telford, Katy Toolin, Jane Washington

We welcome new members! Join us every month or just for one meeting. If you’re interested or have a suggestion for a good read, contact **Karen Odom at** [**karenodom@yahoo.com**](karenodom%40yahoo.com%20) **or 914.523.7693.**

**Submitted by: Karen Odom**

**Christian Education – Youth Program Report for 2023**

**Chair: George O’Hanlon**

**Members: George O’Hanlon, Lauren Reid, Ingrid Richards, Erika Santos, Tiffany Woodberry**

**Where we are now (December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)**

2023 proved successful for the Youth Education program on many fronts: 1.) We held several recognition/celebratory events, such as the Blessing of the Book Bags, the Christmas Pageant, Graduation Sunday and the Easter Egg Hunt; 2.) We provide weekly Christian education for each of our groups: PreK/K, Primary 1-3 grades, Primary 4-6 Grades; and Middle School. In addition, we have a high school (J2A) group that meets regularly but less frequently, consistent with our high schooler’s schedules. The lessons in our Youth Education program are coordinated with the weekly sermon topic and designed to be age appropriate and applicable to the ages of the students for each class. We have updated the curriculum this year, which seems to have been successful. The size of the Sunday school varies, but in any given week we average approximately 7 students for the classes up through middle school and a similar number for the high school group. We have 5 teachers. We encourage our participants to serve regularly in the Sunday service, as ushers, acolytes and lectors. Our challenges are largely attendance levels. Our students are heavily weighted toward the older end of our age group and we have not had new students join our program this year. We continue to solicit new students and hope to expand our participation.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024)**

Our goals for 2024 are to: (1) Expand the number of students in the program. We will pursue this goal through recruiting students from our congregation, giving our program visibility during our services, and being sure that our ushering staff is familiar with our program and able to direct newcomers to our program; (2) Continue to run the program and activities as we have for the past few years; (3) Update our program as we did this year with a new curriculum, with the goal to ensure our program is relevant and interesting to our students, and also consistent with our goal of providing a Christian education to our students.

**What resources we will need to get there:**

We will need the support and cooperation of the congregation, the ushering staff and Church staff to be on the look out for and help us to recruit students and parents to our program.

**The Episcopal Church Women Report for 2023 (ECW)**

**Chair Melanie Jackson Co-Chair**

**Members: Irene Alves, Laura Auld, Marie Barrow, Gloria Chang, Barbara Biles, Melanie Jackson, Carole Lashley, Trisha McGuinness, Joyce Pickering, Charlotte Roberson, Joy Scantlebury, Monica Scantlebury, Yvonne Scarborough, Sylvia Simon, Shirley Spencer, Andrea Spencer, Audrey Taylor and Jane Washington.**

**Where we are now (December 2023):** (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)

In February of this year, the ECW held their holiday dinner at Via Garibaldi Restaurant in White Plains. The event was attended by 29 women from Grace/La Gracia. Also in February we hosted the first Black History Month Jeopardy at Grace Church. It was a fun event which was well received and we plan to repeat it in 2024. The ECW participated in Women’s History Month offering a Litany for Women and group reading of a “Manifest for Women.” Both of these events strengthened our bonds to each other and our love and concern for the plight of all women. In the Spring we facilitated the United Thank Offering collection with members Marie Barrow and Andrea Spencer as our chairwomen. Grace/La Gracia contributed $1616 to the UTO in 2023. Father’s Day breakfast returned as a sit down event after having been a grab and go event in the aftermath of the pandemic. We are currently collecting personal hygiene products for Samaritan House Women’s Shelter. This is a church wide effort. We hope to collect 200 items in honor of the 200th Anniversary Celebration. Upcoming events include our annual ECW dinner outing for the women of Grace/La Gracia, an event related to the 200th Anniversary celebration and Father’s Day Breakfast. We welcomed new members: Yvonne Scarborough, Joy Scantlebury and Monica Scantlebury.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024:**

 (1-3 goals for 2024) We hope to carry out the events that we have planned. We hope to remain relevant to our members and continue to attract new members. We hope to continue to live meaningful, purpose driven lives doing deeds that feed our spirits and those around us, as we serve God.

**What resources we will need to get there:**

The desire to live a God centered life. Prayer and Thanksgiving. The continued support of our ECW members. The support of our clergy, leadership and parishioners.

**Music at Grace Church Report For 2023**

**Chair: Michael DiLeo**

**Where we are now (December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)**

The Grace Church Choir consists of paid professional singers as well as volunteers. Under the direction of Michael A. DiLeo Jr, The Grace Church Choir lots of different choral works such as classical, spiritual, sacred, and traditional music. This year in particular, we have been introducing new styles of music, and the choir has been singing more modern and contemporary style music during services. We are planning to continue more modern and contemporary music in 2024.

Section Leaders play a big role in our church choir. A Section Leader is responsible for supporting the music director and is responsible for providing leadership to their assigned musical section, and coordinating with rehearsals as needed to ensure excellence and satisfy the congregation's musical experience. A choir normally consists of four section leaders: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Currently, we have two section leaders titled Soprano/Alto, Tenor/Bass. We almost hired a third section leader for the 2023-24 season, but due to finances within the church, we were unable to hire another section leader. The choir has done such a terrific job in satisfying the congregation with music, but in order for the choir to grow more and satisfy itself more professionally, it is very important that we work towards a budget for having four section leaders for our choir, as well as accumulating more volunteers (adults, adolescents, teens) both inside and outside of Grace Church.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024)**

* Having four section leaders in the choir with a reasonable budget
* Having a bigger choir of at least 15 people
* Presenting more contemporary, modern, and gospel styles of music (certain pieces
* Inviting people from around the community to sponsor and join our Music Department

**What resources we will need to get there:**

* The Music Director, Music Committee and the treasurer of the Vestry need to suggest and approve of a reasonable budget that will be able to pay all four section leaders in a quartet instead of just two.
* The budget that is approved should be agreed to annually in order to accommodate four section leaders.
* Promote the Grace Church Choir with ads and flyers around the City of White Plains, and other school districts and colleges. This will help to accumulate more volunteers around our community and to help our Music Department grow throughout 2024 and the coming years.
* Have more fundraised events sponsored by the Music Department including an Organ Recital series.

**Stewardship Report For 2023**

**Chair: Andrea Spencer**

**Members: Hillary Fleming Co-Chair, Shoji Mizumoto ACS, Ginger Waters - Parking, Daisy Calderon - LA GRACIA, Sylvia Simon – Counter**

**Where we are now (December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)**

This year, our Stewardship Committee gained new members and new leadership. This followed many years of faithful leadership by Charlotte Roberson and Cynthia Sangurima-Brown.

Some new ideas that the Committee tried were producing our own envelopes for those parishioners who wanted them. We were able to offer 50 custom, individualized offertory envelopes per order for a small fee. We weren't sure it could be done! We were tenacious and found a solution using the envelope printing capability in “Microsoft Word” and together with Excel's ability to store the biblical quotes of verses that contained the word "Grace." In linking the two applications, we were successful in creating English and Spanish envelopes.

Our 2024 STEWARDSHIP THEME

“God has given us two hands therefore, giving back to God all that is his.”

Instead of having testimonials we performed skits for Stewardship season.

We also were able to get clarity on parking privileges at the Hamilton-Main Garage, and reassign some parking coupons that were no longer being used.

The Stewardship Committee worked closely with the Counters during the year and reported to the Vestry regularly.

Thanks to the congregation for supporting the church with gifts of time, talent and treasure. It is very necessary and very appreciated.

**STEWARDSHIP REPORT – LA GRACIA**

This year, there was an intentional drive to engage and inform La Gracia parishioners as to the importance of stewardship. In conjunction with the stewardship committee multiple presentations were held during the La Gracia services throughout the Stewardship campaign period. Presenters included our treasurer, the Chair of stewardship and the Senior Warden. The objective of these presentations/talks was primarily to share financial information with the La Gracia parishioners and bring awareness to the financial realities and challenges we are facing as a parish. Emphasis was placed on the importance of honoring promised pledges and about pledging responsibly and not overstates pledges to help us create a viable budget.

Focus has also been placed on maintaining good records for existing and new La Gracia parishioners to accurately track and credit received pledges. Our parishioner list has been purged and updated by removing individuals that no longer attend the La Gracia Services. Envelope numbers have been reassigned as the result of this exercise.

Total pledges for La Gracia have been calculated based on all received pledge forms. Promises remain in the same range as in prior years; we will continue to work at improving these numbers. We must also ensure that all new pledging parishioners are assigned a Pledge # so that their pledges do not end up in the loose plate offerings.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024) Our** goals for 2024 are: (1) Stewardship and Fundraising will be all year long (2) Continue to update and provide transparency as to where we are with our Pledges 3) Provide a webinar on Planned Giving 4) Improve collaborations with Grace LA GRACIA

**What resources we will need to get there:** We are depending on the congregations to fulfill their committed pledges in a timely manner. We will need the support of the Vestry in budget management to meet the financial needs of the Church. We also need all other committees of the Church to encourage and keep Stewardship and fundraising at the center.

**200th Anniversary Committee Report For 2023**

**Ministry/Committee: 200 Anniversary Committee**

**Chair: Delores Scott Brathwaite Co-Chair: Hillary Fleming**

**Members: Daisy Calderón (La Gracia), Irene Alves, Ginger Waters Grant, Mary Baker, Audrey Taylor, George O’Hanlon, Eileen McClean, Nathan Hogan, Karen Odom, Barbara Biles, Linda Harmon, Melanie Jackson**

**Where we are now (December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)**

At the end of Dec. 2023 we had successfully accomplished two fundraising events: The Popcorn Project and the sale of Poinsettias. We have just presented to the congregation a look at the first 100 years of Grace – Exploring and Capturing the History of Grace Church.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024)**

In September 2024 we will celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Grace. From Jan. to Sept. the committee will be engaging in various events and programs to highlight and embrace the history of the church, and the people that gave the church “life in the community”.

**What resources we will need to get there:**

Money and people are at the base of what will ensure a successful year. We need the church and the community to be dedicated to making this a memorable event this year.

**Pastoral Care Report for 2023**

Pastoral care is bringing Christ's compassion to people in emotional, mental, physical or spiritual need, in addition to keeping them up to date about Grace Church events. 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.

Pastoral Care is one of the most essential and important ministries of a parish. People need to feel that their priest/ 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.

After a long halt due to Covid, Eucharistic Ministers resumed visits in June of 2023. For the months of June, July, August and September, 8 visits per month were scheduled for a total of 32 visits.  7 Visits were scheduled in October; 6 for November and 6 for September totaling 19 visits.  The total number of visits scheduled for the period June through December was 51.

While Fr. Adolfo visits people in the hospital, and in their homes or whatever setting they may be; phone calls is also a major way in which to reach out to parishioners. It’s really amazing what a simple phone can do to 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.

Another important part of this committee is the card ministry. Which is also a way to make a difference and show our parishioners that we are thinking of them. Knowing that someone has taken the time to choose a card sends a clear message that we want to keep in touch. Birthday, sympathy, get well and thinking of you cards are sent throughout the year.

**What resources we need:**

1. A new committee chair
2. More members on the Pastoral Care Committee.
3. Refine the maintenance process for adding and maintaining names on the prayer list.
4. Schedule quarterly meetings

**S.A.GE (Seniors At Grace Church) Report for 2023**

**Chair: Marie Barrow Co-Chair N/A**

**Members: Joe Ann B. Boylan, Bernice Burton, Carole Carter, Joyce Pickering, Al E. Sargent, Shirley Spencer and Heather Southwick**

**Where we are now (December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023):**

Sage began since since October 2015 under the leadership fo Dr. Barbara McCune. This ministry developed in response to a need which was identified during our Renewal Works Project. Senior members requested a mnistryf which whould help them to continue to grow spiritually while providing them with an opportunity for fellowship with other parishioners. At this time there 14 members of the group with an average age of 82. When Dr. Barbara asked me to take over as the Co-ordinatror of this ministry I prayed about it. After meeting the group I wholeheartely accepted the position. I have been chairing this group since 2018. At this time we had up to 16 memberrs. We continued meeting in the library on the first WEdensday of eachmoth from 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM. We had some great meetings with exciting learing. Also discussions and a viariety of life experiences that was shared with the group. The ministers at the time Fr. Chip, Mother Judith and now Fr. Adolfo were always actively involved with our group and provided us with prayers and updates. Then came COVID in 2020. This didn’t stop us. We continued meeting via phone conferences. We had the need to continue to hear each others’ voices, to share our joys and concerns and to learn about what was happening at Grace /La Gracia. Many Wednesdays Fr. Aolfo has joined us to pray with us and to give us updates. As I look at my roster now my heart is heavy as I count 7 remaining members. Many of our members have died aor moved awary. Our last member passing was Elsie Adams who was 103 years old (2024). WE also lost Uriel Reid (2022). We miss you both dearly – RIP.

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024)**

* To continue to have monthly meetings.
* To increase membership participation.
* To continue to have full and active participation from all of our members.
* To have Fr. Adolfo join us when he can.

**What resources we will need to get there:**

* If you are 80 years of age or above and would like to be a prat of this ministry, please see Marie Barrow for information.
* We will continue to meet via phone on the first Wednesday of each month from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM
* I will give a freindley reminder call to each member and Fr. Adolfo before the meeting in order to get full participation.

**Walk of Grace Report for 2023**

**Chair: Arlene Roberts Grant**

**Members: N/A**

**Where we are now (December 2023): (Achievement, challenges, and unfinished business of 2023)**

The *Walk of Grace* capital campaign is your opportunity to play an active role in beautifying our church grounds. Parishioners have a limited opportunity to engrave the pathway stones along the front and side of the church. The net proceeds from *Walk of Grace* donations are used to maintain and enhance our church grounds.

To date, the *Walk of Grace* project has received **42** donations. After engraving costs, net proceeds of roughly **$6,400** have made the following gifts possible:

* *Landscape Upgrade* using mature evergreen, perennial and annual plants
* *Urn Planters*
* *Sprinkler System* installation

**Where we hope to be in December 2024: (1-3 goals for 2024)**

Additional donor support will allow us to make further enhancements and address a few maintenance issues presently under consideration:

* Install new security gate in rear, adjacent to the park.
* Plant graceful Limelight Hydrangea Trees along sun-filled park fence.
* Replace temporary planter urns (2) at church entrance:
	+ *Permanent concrete urn fell, shattered July 2023*
* Replace damaged concrete benches:
	+ *Due to the elements, whole sections of concrete have broken off. The supporting steel frame can be painful to sit on!*
* Shift *Walk of Grace* layout (near benches) for additional engraving opportunities.

**What resources we will need to get there:**

Earlier proceeds from this fundraiser have been exhausted. We encourage you to consider donating to the *Walk of Grace* capital campaign now. It is our hope that many of you will choose to participate in the project so that the *Walk of Grace* truly reflects the diversity of our vibrant Grace/La Gracia congregation. As each section is completed, the pathway becomes a beautiful mosaic of engraved names and tributes to those we love. *What an attractive representation of our parish to the larger White Plains community!*

Your engraving can be in memory of a loved one, in thanksgiving of family or in celebration of a family event. Each stone, approximately 2 feet wide, will perfectly capture all that you wish to express. Placement along the *Walk of Grace* is on a first come, first serve basis.

Vendor engraving charges determine current pricing. Installment payment plans are available to assist. Current pricing: $1,125. Thank you in advance for your strong support.

We look forward to joining you on a stroll along the Walk of Grace in memory, thanksgiving or celebration of your loved one!