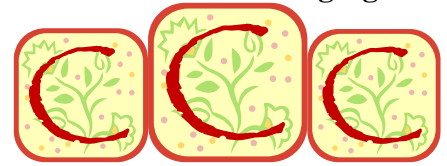


A nondenominational Christian congregation



for persons of all faiths and of uncertain faith
meeting in historic St. Peter's Church

346 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

www.chelseachurch.org

(212) 886-5463

THE CHELSEA COMMUNITY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Spring-Summer 2006

WALK THE VIA DOLOROSA ON PALM SUNDAY

CCC's 10th annual Palm Sunday musical pageant, newly entitled *Walk the Via Dolorosa*, depicts the last week in the life of Jesus of Nazareth and features musical selections from Broadway's *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Tim Rice, Andrew Lloyd Webber), Lloyd Webber's "Love Changes Everything" (*Aspects of Love*), Charles Gounod's "O Divine Redeemer," George Bennard's "The Old Rugged Cross," and the American folk hymn "Were You There?"

The production was conceived and directed by CCC member **Rick Carrier**. **William Daniel Grey**, who sang Jesus in the original *Jesus Christ Superstar* Broadway production, created the musical accompaniment using fully digital technology. Premiering this year will be "**Bartimaeus' Song**," by award-winning songwriter and one of our soloists **Karen Benedetto**, who has received recognition in several national and international songwriting competitions. She will also accompany tenor **Anthony Santelmo, Jr.** sings the role of Bartimaeus, the blind man healed by Jesus. Mr. Santelmo, a 2005 MAC Male Vocalist Nominee (cabaret genre), was recently in the York Theatre's Musical in Mufti 2005 Series of Harvey Schmidt/Tom Jones' *Mirette*.



Tenor **Scott Benedict**, formerly of The Washington Opera, performs the role of Jesus. **William Daniel Grey**, tenor, plays Judas, a role he performed in the first national company of *Superstar* at the Kennedy Center Opera House. Two of our regular soloists, **Tracy Strong** and **Pam Palmieri**, will sing the roles of Mary Magdalene and Mary, respectively. Opera singer and mezzo soprano **Suzie Evjen** (Martha) is a graduate of the Boston Conservatory and been a featured performer for the New York Opera Forum and The Actor's Playground. Baritone **Bill Saffkow**, who performed on NPR as a soloist

with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, will sing Billy Sprague's and Niles Borop's stirring "Via Dolorosa." Other featured singers include **Kelly Carroll**, **Russell Cook**, CCC board member **Wayne Kammerer**, **Gary Solomon**, and **Rick Carrier**. **Amira Mor** will perform the "Dance of the Seven Veils" for King Herod.

There is no charge for the pageant; an offering will be accepted. For the complete text of the press release, visit www.chelseachurch.org. (Photos by Bruce Colin)

CCC Celebrates Its First Ash Wednesday Service

Possibly initiating a new tradition, we marked Ash Wednesday with a brief service held at the home of **Thad McGar**. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a time of reflection on the journey through spiritual wilderness on the way to the Resurrection, which in some traditions involves fasting, in others daily prayers, and in some, nothing at all. For some it simply means the end of the Mardi Gras (or "Fat Tuesday") celebrations. In this service, we sang a couple hymns, heard some Bible readings, offered our own thoughts and reflections, and offered specific prayers, hopes, or intentions for the season leading up to Easter. The imposition of ashes was available to those wishing it. It was moving, different for some while familiar to others, and had the unique character of a community for "people of all faiths and of uncertain faith."

31st Candlelight Carol Service, December 18th



Nearly four hundred attended CCC's 31st annual Candlelight Carol Service on December 18th. **John Eggleston** rehearsed and directed the choir in both new and familiar pieces, and Brian Murray read Clement Clarke Moore's *A Visit from St. Nicholas*. The traditional reception with egg nog, hot cider, and homemade cookies was held in the rectory following the concert. (Photo by Robert Mitchell, Jr.)

Pastoral Reflections

Over the past several months, we have been reading *Working on the Inside: The Spiritual Life Through the Eyes of Actors* by **Retta Blaney** in our Sunday morning book discussion group, a book suggested to us by **Mary Sheeran**. While the title suggests a focus on the interior life of the spirit, the contributors also speak extensively on life in community as well, with topics such as ritual, hospitality, community and transformation.

Our discussions have been very wide ranging, and we have taken the opportunity to explore our own lives in the context of Chelsea Community Church and the other communities of which many of us are a part. These have been fascinating discussions, reflecting on such questions as how we shape ritual to include such a diverse community of believers; the role of prayer in a church that includes many people "of uncertain faith;" the meaning of showing hospitality to strangers and newcomers; the essence of *community* at Chelsea Community Church since 1975; the success of the church in creating a place for both healing



and growth; the obstacles we face in reaching out beyond our familiar faces; what Chelsea Community Church might look like in 5, 10 or 50 years. What is our common vision, if any?

These are exciting questions. This particular book study will have come to a close by the time you read this newsletter, but these questions will still be very much alive. We will be looking for ways to continue grappling with them and to extend the discussion to more people, including long-time members and founders, more recent members and friends, occasional visitors and people who don't yet know us.

I am reminded of the words of John 10:10 that states that God means for us to "have life, and have it more abundantly." We certainly do have life in abundance at Chelsea Community Church. Moving forward, our challenge is to go deeper, to explore what gifts are embedded in our abundant life, what they mean to us, and how we may share them more freely with those who are in need of them.

Much love, John
Rev. John Magisano
Pastoral Counselor

Book Club



The new session of the Book Club begins Sunday, April 2nd. We will be reading a book called *Sacred Contracts*, by Carolyn Myss, Harmony Publishers. This book was suggested to us by the author of our last book, Retta Blaney who wrote *Working on the Inside; the Spiritual Life Through the Eyes of Actors*. The Book Club meets on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. (except on Sundays when there are trustee meetings) in the Rectory chapel on the first floor. All are welcome.

Newsnotes

Our sympathy is extended to **David Robinson** upon the death of his father, James M. Robinson, Sr. Many of us recall the extraordinary talent on the banjo that he demonstrated during one Sunday service, accompanied on piano by David's mother, who died a few years ago. Afterward, in the rectory, they entertained us for more than an hour with more selections. In going through the family's house in suburban Kansas City, KS, David has found 15 instruments, including a 1931 Mastertone banjo. Once his work related to the estate is finished, David hopes to finish editing his video of his father's banjo playing. CCC made a contribution in memory of Mr. Robinson to The Fretted Instrument Guild of America.

Pictorial Photographers of America (PPA) Celebrates Its 90th Anniversary at Westbeth Gallery in April, with Work by Five from the CCC Community

Founded in 1916 by Clarence H. White, Gertrude Kaesebier and others, PPA celebrates this landmark anniversary as one of America's most enduring photography clubs with a month-long exhibit (April 8 – 30) and program of weekend presentations at Westbeth Gallery and Westbeth Community Room (55 Bethune Street). The exhibit includes archival as well as contemporary work, including images by five photographers from the CCC community -- **Kathy Reid, Lynn Ramsey, Robert Mitchell, Jr., Bruce Colin** and **Kathryn Buck**. Photo-ecologist **Bruce Colin** will also give a presentation based on his recent trip to Botswana on Saturday, April 15, at 3 p.m. PPA meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in St. Peter's

Rectory and has a standing exhibit there as well as at Mama Buddha Restaurant on Hudson. For more information, contact any of the above, call 212-243-0273, visit www.ppa-photoclub.org or write info@ppa-photoclub.org.

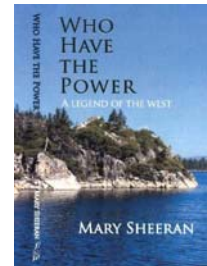
Mike Campbell recently started a new position as corporate and specialty sales manager with Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company (www.gacpc.com) in Portland. “Good people, wonderful books, and I’m happy HP was looking out for me,” he writes. Congratulations are also extended to Mike on the recent occasion of his 50th birthday!

Merle Lister’s late husband, Lee Levine, was honored at LaMaMa on

March 11. Merle presented the tribute to Levine, a lighting designer technician and technical designer at La MaMa in the sixties and early seventies, on the day that would have marked his eighty-first birthday. Levine had worked on more than twenty productions at La MaMa, as well as productions at other theaters including The Playwrights’ Place, 41st Street Theater, Royal Playhouse, and dance, jazz and disco venues. According to playwright Paul Foster, “Lee knew not only about lighting the stage, but understood shadows within shadows, the color effects, stationary or moving or used as hard texture. I call that genius.” Levine died on September 22, 2000. Merle is shown here with actress Ruth Brandeis, left, who joined her in the tribute. (Photo by Kathy Reid)



Mary Sheeran’s New Novel, *Who Have the Power: A Legend of the West*, will be published August 28. Set in the period from 1866 to 1875, the novel’s background is the devastating effect of the mining and timbering culture on the native tribes in the Comstock Lode region of western Nevada, particularly on the Washo tribe, for whom Lake Tahoe is their sacred body of water. Mary states the novel is about the tragedy of lost history and the persistent power of the imaginative life and that she wrote the bulk of the work following her seminary study. She also indicates there is humor and some Christian commentary by the characters, often veering toward feminist theology. Imagine that, she says. *Who Have the Power* is a trade paperback, 364 pp., \$19.95.



Margaret Daffin was featured in Halliburton’s *Today*, February 9th, in an article which began: “Some people are born with two left feet. Others, such as Margaret Daffin, are not only at ease on the dance floor, but they actually dedicate a good portion of their lives to the art form.” The article featured Margaret’s long volunteer relationship with the United States Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association (USABDA), known as USA Dance, in recognition of Halliburton recently donated \$400 to the organization. In addition to promoting dance, the Houston chapter of USABDA raises funds for local nonprofits such as the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and, quite often, Margaret is the event chairman for the dance-oriented galas.

News of Some of Our Speakers

Rabbi Niles Goldstein has a new book, *Gonzo Judaism*, coming out in August. **Rev. Christine Van Dyke** has accepted pastorates at two Vermont churches of her denomination, the Reformed Church in America. Her parents belong to one of these small congregations, which are 18 miles apart. Congratulations to both!

Denise Soares, the wife of **Ed Soares** (probably our earliest "pastoral counselor" before we actually had that title, a very frequent speaker for us for years, a Roman Catholic laicized priest) will graduate in May, with honors, from Divinity School -- on the 55th anniversary of Ed's own ordination. She has been asked by a nearby Lebanese church to be their interim pastor. We send best wishes.

Rev. Dr. Diana Lee Beach, another longtime friend and speaker for CCC, will soon leave Jersey City to become "wise woman" for a retreat center for women in Maine, Greenfire, where "All women are welcome from any faith tradition or none." Visit www.greenfireretreat.org for information on this interesting place. We wish Diana all the best on this next stage of her journey.

Special Services

Maundy Thursday Service

The Maundy Thursday service is April 13th, at 6:30 p.m. The location is still to be decided as of this printing and will be shared in the regular Sunday worship services as soon as a decision is made. For more information, contact John at jmagi@aol.com.

SCHEDULE of SPEAKERS CHELSEA COMMUNITY CHURCH April 2-July 30

April 2 **Esther Sohn** (Presbyterian) is on the ordination track of her denomination. She is working toward a D.Min. degree at New York Theological Seminary, where she earned her M.Div.. A native of Korea, she recently started the organization Log on Jesus to help immigrants who do not have the support services of a church.

[April 9] **Palm Sunday Pageant, "Walk the Via Dolorosa,"** 11:45 a.m.
Prayer Circle, in which participants may raise their joys and concerns, follows pageant.

[Thursday,
April 13] Maundy Thursday (see this page, above)

EASTER

April 16 **Rev. John Magisano** (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches), Chelsea Community Church's pastoral counselor, is director of training and client services at Nonprofit Connection, a firm that provides capacity-building technical assistance to nonprofit organizations in New York City. He earned his M.Div. degree at New York Theological Seminary and has served as assistant pastor for development at the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford. **Soloist:** William Safkow

April 23 **Sister Carol Perry** (Roman Catholic) is resident Biblical scholar at Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan. A member of the Sisters of St. Ursula, she studied at Regina Mundi in Rome, where she earned the equivalent of a master's degree in theology. She also holds an M.A. in theology from St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Ind. She has

retired from the faculty of John Coleman High School in Hurley. **Soloist:** Vivian Beckford

- April 30 **Raymond Gombach** (Presbyterian) is a member of the Network of Biblical Storytellers. He has taught master classes on telling and learning sacred stories at Yale Divinity School, Duke University and Drew University. **Soloist:** Karen Benedetto
- May 7 **Rev. Dr. Karen L. Ziegler** (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches) is on the faculty at Duke University Medical School, a fellow at the Center for Integrative Medicine at Duke and an associate fellow at the University of Arizona Program in Integrative Medicine. Her work as a family nurse practitioner at Duke's Brain Tumor Center was recognized by a *New York Times* Job Market Award in 2003. She was the senior pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of New York from 1979-88 and pastoral consultant to Chelsea Community Church in 1992-93. She earned her M.Div. degree at Union Theological Seminary and her D.Min. at New York Theological Seminary. She later enrolled in the Columbia University School of Nursing and went on to earn an M.S.N. degree from Duke University School of Nursing. In 2004 the Karen L. Ziegler Feminist Preaching Prize was established in her honor at Union Theological Seminary. **Soloist:** Randa McNamara
- May 14 **Rev. Clifford Frasier** (United Church of Christ) is centennial coordinator of the American Waldensian Society, organizing a celebration of the role of religious minorities in a pluralistic society. He has been coordinator of Presbyterian Welcome, a program encouraging inclusivity, associate pastor of Jan Hus Presbyterian Church and a member of the social justice staff at Riverside Church. In 2003-04 he spent six months in prison for civil disobedience at Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (formerly School of the Americas). He earned his M.Div. at Harvard Divinity School and last year did graduate work as a National Urban Fellow at Baruch College in a program backed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. **Soloist:** Martha Bernard
- May 21 **Rev. Mieke Vandersall** (Presbyterian) is minister director of Presbyterian Welcome, a program reaching out to lesbians, gays and bisexuals. Also a parish associate at St. James Presbyterian Church in Harlem, she earned her M.Div. at Union Theological Seminary. **Soloist:** Deborah Karpel
- May 28 **Sharon White** (Nondenominational) is a case manager at Exodus Transitional Community in Manhattan and a trustee of New Jerusalem Church in the Bronx. She spent 11 years in Bedford Hills Correctional Facility before being released in 2005. She is pursuing a degree at Lehman College.
- June 4 **Teresa McGee** (Episcopal) is director of personnel for Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers. She is the author of four published books. The latest is *Transforming Trauma* (Orbis, 2005). She received a Christopher Award in 2003 for *Jim's Last Summer: Lessons for Living from a Dying Priest* (Orbis, 2002). A former Maryknoll lay missionary in Peru, she earned an M.A. in theology at Loyola University in Chicago and an advanced professional diploma in spirituality and pastoral counseling at Fordham University. **Soloist:** Mary Sheeran

- June 11 **Rev. John Magisano** (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches), Chelsea Community Church's pastoral counselor, is director of training and client services at Nonprofit Connection, a firm that provides capacity-building technical assistance to nonprofit organizations in New York City. He earned his M.Div. degree at New York Theological Seminary and has served as assistant pastor for development at the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford. **Soloist:** Lynne Robinson
- June 18 **Rev. Krishna Stone** (nondenominational) is manager of community relations at Gay Men's Health Crisis. She started as a volunteer with the agency in 1986 and became a full-time staff member in 1992. She was ordained at Sanctuary of the Beloved and has led spiritual and holistic retreats and facilitated spiritual support groups for persons living with or impacted by HIV and AIDS. She also works with AIDS Medicine & Miracles, a national organization that promotes the well being of patients.
- June 25 **Rev. Daniel Shenk** (American Baptist) is chaplain of St. Mary's Episcopal Center, a skilled nursing facility for persons living with HIV. A graduate of Union Theological Seminary and the Blanton-Peale Institute of Religion & Health, he was a founder of Bailey House in Greenwich Village and has served as a case manager with the West Side Federation for Senior & Supportive Housing. He spent January in the Mara region of Tanzania where he lived as a child of Mennonite missionaries. **Soloist:** Sarah Miller
- July 2 **Lay-Led Service**
- July 9 **Kate McCormick** (Episcopal) is parish administrator and an associate in ministry at All Saints Episcopal Church in Glen Rock, NJ. She earned an M.Div. degree at Union Theological Seminary and is engaged in the process leading to ordination as a priest in her denomination. She was an editor at *Newsday* for 18 years and then served as an associate editor at the Episcopal News Service.
- July 16 **Rev. Dr. Roy Lloyd** (Lutheran) is senior manager of media relations for the American Bible Society. He was formerly director of broadcast news and producer of network TV shows for the National Council of Churches. A graduate of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, he also earned a Ph.D. in communication in education from the University of Pittsburgh.
- July 23 **Rev. Dana Fenton** (American Baptist) teaches sociology at Lehman College. She earned M.Div. and M.Phil. degrees at Union Theological Seminary and is a former pastor of churches in Long Beach and Queens.
- July 30 **Robert Puryear** (nondenominational) is an assistant deacon and Sunday school teacher at New Jerusalem Church in the Bronx. He holds a diploma from Search the Word Correspondence Bible Training Center, earned while he was in Midstate Correctional. **Soloist:** Diana Solomon-Glover

Buster's Tribute

He entered life with a happy heart.

In seven short years
He gave lifetimes of love.

To my sister, Maria,
To his cat-sitter, Angela,
To his fur roommate, Pumpkin.

Now our hearts are empty
Without his endearing presence,
Because the love of a good cat
Can turn a life around.

Our animals come to us with
Such innocence and trust.
It is up to us to honor that covenant.

He was a prince among cats.
His name was Buster.
His nickname was Beezer or Bee.

His capacity for love and forgiveness
Was infinite, just like his Creator.

On a lighter note he had a habit
Of knocking around his food dishes.
Oh, what we would give to hear that clatter
And see that precious face once more.

-Angela Romano

