

A high-angle, wide shot of the interior of a large Gothic cathedral. The nave is filled with a large congregation of people seated in dark wooden pews, facing the altar. The architecture features tall, pointed Gothic arches and three large, colorful stained-glass windows on the left side. Several large, ornate pendant lights hang from the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is solemn and grand.

PARISH PROFILE

CHURCH OF THE HEAVENLY REST

OUR SETTING

Brief History of the Church

In the year 2015—not that far in the future—Church of the Heavenly Rest will commemorate its 150th birthday, quite a cause for celebration. In 1865, the Rev. Dr. Robert Shaw Howland, rector of Holy Apostles, first founded our congregation, leading services at the Rutgers Female Institute on 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue. The church was formally established as Church of the Heavenly Rest on May 18, 1868, the name chosen as a memorial to the fallen soldiers of the recently-concluded Civil War. The congregation immediately began to erect a church building at 551 Fifth Avenue, just north of 45th Street and close to the noise and bustle of Grand Central Terminal. With its narrow frontage enclosed by residential buildings, it was described in *King's Handbook of New York City* (1892) as “one of the fashionable shrines of the city,” yet it also won a reputation for benevolence, providing meals, shelter, and support to the needy.

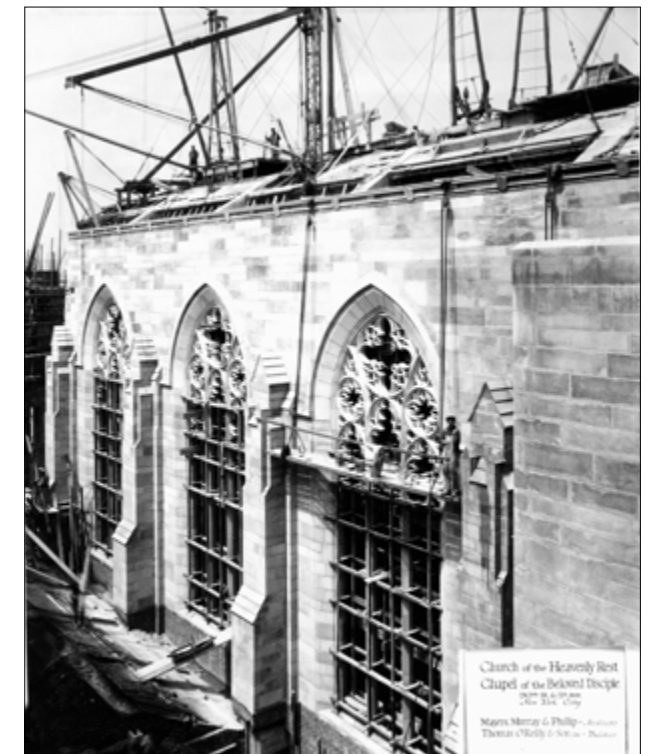
By the 1920s, however, prominent retailers such as Cartier, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Bergdorf Goodman had overtaken midtown, and the church found itself stranded in what was no longer a residential neighborhood. Fortunately for Heavenly Rest, a dynamic young rector, the Rev. Dr. Henry Darlington, led the church to its bold next move. He negotiated the purchase of a new site on East 90th Street in November 1924, helped sell the original church building, and moved the congregation uptown. There, it merged with the nearby Church of the Beloved Disciple, and shared its worship space at 65 East 89th Street (now the Roman Catholic Church of St Thomas More) until the new site could be completed.

Moving into the new church building in 1929, Heavenly Rest under Dr. Darlington's leadership was a nationally known church celebrating five services every Sunday; Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia was among its congregation. Dr. Darlington's sermons became renowned for their controversial take on political and social questions of the turbulent, Depression-era 1930s and wartime '40s. Under subsequent rectors, the musical and cultural life of the church blossomed, and it remained financially stable, despite entering an era (the 1960s and '70s) of growing skepticism regarding the

role of religion in society. Responding to social change, the church developed many of its **social inreach, outreach, and ministry programs**, which continue to this day.

Tragedy struck on the night of August 7, 1993. Fire broke out in the chancel of the church, which was fortunately detected quickly by a resident clergy member, who lived with her family in the Parish Hall tower. The fire destroyed the organ console, choir stalls, and other woodwork, but thanks to heroic fire crews, the stained-glass windows survived intact. It took a year of dogged restoration to clean and repair the church interior and the organ; the only scars remaining are two damaged stone arches in the chancel, which await fundraising to underwrite expensive restoration.

Only the ninth rector in Heavenly Rest's long history, the Rev. James L. Burns arrived at our freshly restored church in July 1996, having previously served as Dean of the Cathedral in Lexington, Kentucky. During Jim's rectorship, the congregation grew in size and diversity, deepened its outreach, and enriched its engagement with the cultural life of New York City. Above all, though, we are what we have always been: a church community of faith. We are inspired by the evolving traditions of the Episcopal liturgy and church music to sincere praise and worship of God. Worship brings us together into a community dedicated to serving the needs of those within and beyond our walls. In these vital respects we are what we have always been.



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Note: Gray clickable links in the copy will help you navigate this document.

Blue links will take you to relevant information on our website, www.heavenlyrest.org.

Featured quotes and demographic information are taken from a parish survey conducted in the fall of 2011.

CHR's parishioners love the church: the fire of 1993 taught us how important it is to us. There is a mysterious dignity about Heavenly Rest which must remain intact.

Our Landmark Building



It's true that a church is always more than just its physical building, but the architectural gem that houses Heavenly Rest is perhaps our most glorious asset. The lot on which our church stands was sold to us in 1924 by the widow of industrialist/philanthropist Andrew Carnegie – with the stipulation that she approve the architecture, which she would see daily from the windows of her mansion across 90th Street (now the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum). Construction began on All Saints' Day 1926, and the church was dedicated on Easter Day, March 31, 1929.

The towering design of the limestone-clad church is Gothic in inspiration, envisioned through the lens of then-popular Art Deco. Inside, the two styles combine to create a powerful, reverent structure in which every part of the church is visible to all who enter the church. The focus of the interior is the altar, with a simple yet soaring carved reredos featuring a massive empty cross surmounted by the risen Christ. This austere interior is simple, adorned with meaningful symbols, from the metal grapevines of the glass narthex doors (symbolizing Christ as the true vine) to the Baptistry's enameled mosaics of flowing waters (symbolizing the renewal of life through the power of God's Holy Spirit). In the chancel, the choir stalls' polychrome carvings of Tudor roses and Scottish thistles symbolize the roots of the Episcopal Church in America, while the vaulted ceiling is painted with stars to represent Heaven.

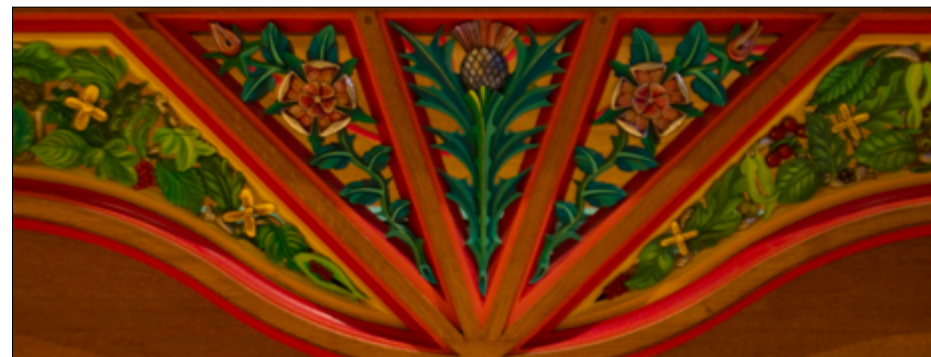
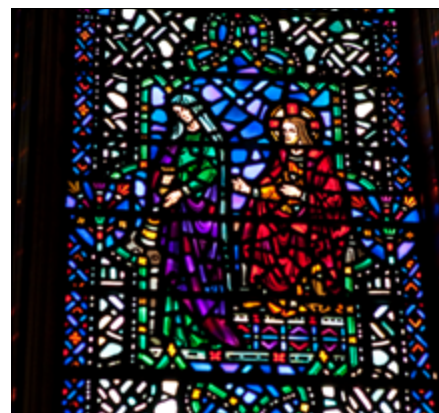
Thanks to our low-rise neighbors, sunlight still illuminates our stained-glass windows. Those on the north and south sides of the nave present the principal events of the Christian year; a rose window glows above the reredos, while a tall arched West Window pours in jewel-toned light over the church entrance.

Next to the nave, the Chapel of the Beloved Disciple represents the neighboring Episcopal Church with which Heavenly Rest merged in 1926, and displays important memorial tablets moved from that congregation's earlier building. Its Spanish-inspired decoration lends a sense of coziness, and color, to this smaller worship space. Stenciled ceiling beams and walls (note the fleurs-de-lis, a symbol of Mary and the Holy Trinity) are complemented by a stone reredos faced with enameled mosaics bearing the image of Christ flanked by the Virgin Mary and John, the Beloved Disciple.

Our prime Fifth Avenue location ensures that an estimated 15,000 annual visitors (besides those who come for worship or school business) may enter Heavenly Rest to pray, meditate, or simply admire our architecture. Those visitors come from all over the country, even the world—or maybe just down the block, drawn by the **Heavenly Rest Stop** café. Our doors stand open to the public every day from 10:00am to 5:00pm. A team of nine parishioners act as docents, sitting at the welcome desk to greet visitors and answer any questions.



I love the building and the feeling of the place — the simplicity and beauty, a place where it is peaceful to worship and meditate.



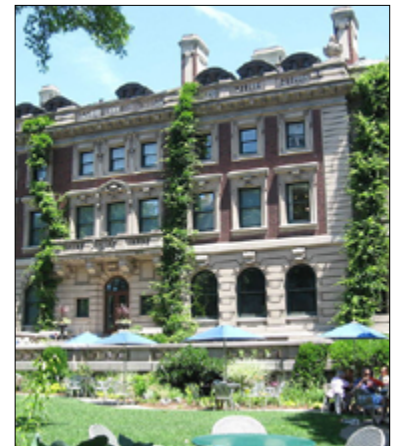
Our Neighborhood: Carnegie Hill

Like a Woody Allen film set or location shot for tv's *Gossip Girl*, the neighborhood in which our church proudly sits has a reputation, as a recent New York Times article puts it, as "**The Land of Good Bones and Deep Pockets.**" We are nestled at the heart of the quiet, leafy Carnegie Hill Historic District, named for Andrew Carnegie, whose Fifth Avenue mansion sits across 90th Street from our church. Not only has this 44-square-block area—from Fifth to Third avenues and 86th to 96th streets—been granted historic status, no less than 28 of its individual buildings have also earned their own landmark designations.

With an abundance of restaurants and two upscale hotels (The Wales and The Franklin), Carnegie Hill today is a lively center for tourists and resident New Yorkers. Our across-the-street neighbor, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, is only one of ten diverse cultural institutions lining Fifth Avenue's Museum Mile, from the Metropolitan Museum of Art at 82nd Street to the soon-to-open Museum for African Art at 110th Street. Poised at the center of

Museum Mile, Heavenly Rest also faces Central Park at the expansive Engineer's Gate, a joggers' landmark, where a running track circles the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Reservoir.

Endowed with an extraordinary collection of fine schools, both private and public, Carnegie Hill is a magnet for young and growing families, who are also drawn to our tree-lined streets and avenues with their wealth of elegant brownstones and dignified apartment buildings. Besides Heavenly Rest, Carnegie Hill embraces over a dozen places of worship, as well as a major cultural venue for readings and the arts: the 92nd Street Y. An active citizens' association, Carnegie Hill Neighbors, maintains our sidewalks and trees and sponsors a nightly patrol car to circulate through our streets. In contrast to the transient feeling of many Manhattan neighborhoods, Carnegie Hill retains a strong feeling of stability and camaraderie—many residents remain in the neighborhood for decades, or move back after years away. Carnegie Hill is a neighborhood few want to leave.



Our Parishioners

While it would seem natural to paint Heavenly Rest as a Carnegie Hill neighborhood church, in fact only about half of the congregation lives within ten blocks. We cherish our diversity and tend to share an inclusive social outlook. Heavenly Rest parishioners do not necessarily fit the moneyed Carnegie Hill stereotype: Our 2011 survey of Heavenly Rest parishioners found that more than a third have household incomes under \$100,000, while only a third earn \$200,000 or more. Despite inflation, the estimated average household income of parishioners has declined over the past ten years, from \$164,500 to \$152,000.

A few bullet points of results from our survey:

- Occupations range from doctors, lawyers, bankers, brokers, and professors to writers and editors, architects and designers, actors and musicians. The most significant clusters of parishioners' employment appear to be in education, finance, and writing.
- Just under half of parishioners work either full- or part-time; another 20 percent consider themselves to be self-employed, while around 19 percent are retirees.
- Considerably more members are women than men.
- Six out of ten members are married or in committed partnerships.
- Nearly three-quarters of the parish were Episcopalians before joining Heavenly Rest; many have been lifelong members of the Episcopal Church.

Perhaps because it has found a way to attract parishioners from beyond the immediate neighborhood, Heavenly Rest has fortunately bucked the national trend toward declining church membership: We've charted a 23 percent increase in membership over the past decade, with more than 1,700 people (including children) on our records, however accurate

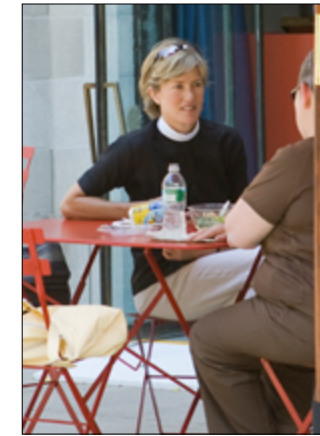
those may be. But while the number of active households increased during that period, from 850 to over 1,000, the proportion of those who made financial gifts (427 households, or 'pledging units,' in 2010) has stalled at around 40 percent.

Another shadow rests behind these upbeat demographics. The percentage of relatively new members (five years or less) has shrunk from 29 percent in 2001 to only 16 percent in 2011, while long-term members (ten years or more) now constitute 70 percent of our congregation. Over half have been members for fifteen years or more; several were baptized here, attended the **Trevor Day School**, or participated in the **Christmas pageant** as children. It's wonderful to be able to count on a large base of loyal parishioners, but we cannot rest on our laurels; to remain a vibrant congregation, infusions of new blood are needed. It's hardly surprising that our survey showed that the parish has aged considerably since 2001—now reporting an average age of 56 years; a third of the congregation is older than 65. Three-quarters of parishioners are parents, but only a third of those have children under the age of 18.

In our self-study we discovered that, while most parishioners describe Heavenly Rest as a warm and friendly place, not everyone feels that glow. What some members cherish as "friendly anonymity" or "not feeling pressured to meet everyone," others see as WASPy stand-offishness, cliquishness, or a lack of welcome. We cannot ignore the possible connection between this and our dwindling numbers of new members. Several parishioners have recommended reinvigorating our fellowship efforts with a Membership Committee, a full-fledged Sunday morning coffee hour, and programs specifically designed to attract new and younger members. The Vestry has already begun to address these concerns.



We are more laidback than our Upper East Side neighborhood suggests. The congregation is cultured, smart and savvy.



Our Clergy

We have a strong, ethical clergy, who provide spiritual sustenance with a sense of humility and humor.

Heavenly Rest parishioners consistently rate our multi-talented clergy as one of the church's most vital treasures; eloquent preaching is considered a major draw to our worship services. Our rector is supported by two full-time associate rectors, currently the Rev. Thomas N. Synan and the Rev. Elizabeth Garnsey. The associate rectors' job titles do not specify any particular branch of ministry; rather, associates develop distinctive styles of ministry according to their own particular gifts, in consultation with the Rector and the ministry team. In general, this collegial team shares preaching responsibilities, with the Rector preaching at the main service twice a month and each of the associates preaching once. Our associates are energetically engaged with a number of parish, diocesan and worldwide initiatives, and regularly share those experiences with us all.

The church also benefits from the faithful service of a vocational deacon, the Rev. Caroline Boynton, who participates fully in the liturgical life of the church as well as offering a particular ministry of pastoral care, support to the parish's prayer life, and counseling, alongside her professional work at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Assisting priests lend occasional but invaluable support to the full-time clergy. At present these include the Rev. Kristin Kopren (school chaplain at an Episcopal grade school, St. Hilda's and Hugh's) and the Rev. Rhonda Rubinson (currently the interim Priest in Charge of St. Philip's Church in Harlem during its transition).

Heavenly Rest has for many years offered at least one field placement position to a seminarian—lay or ordained—whether or not the seminarian is in the ordination process. Usually these seminarians are Master of Divinity students at General Theological Seminary, downtown. Their roles within the parish vary depending on their gifts and calling, but all are given full opportunity to observe and participate in all aspects of the life of the church, including preaching a sermon or two during the year.

OUR MISSION

To restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ through the worship of God, the building up of a faithful and loving community, and willing service to the needs of others.

OUR VISION

We will seek to praise and worship God with all the richness and breadth of the Anglican tradition, and to contribute to our worship:

- Thoughtful and inspiring preaching
- Open Eucharistic welcome
- A glorious and constantly renewed tradition of choral and instrumental church music
- Growth in understanding, commitment, and practical expressions of our faith for all ages from youth to adults
- A beautiful and inspiring church setting, carefully and lovingly maintained and open to all

Inspired by our worship, we will build up our church community by:

- Welcoming visitors, new members and families, and friends
- Increasing friendship and fellowship when we gather to make music, to study our faith and learn from one another, to provide enriching and entertaining programs for people of all ages, to share the work of the parish, or simply to enjoy one another's company
- Supporting each other in prayer
- Pledging ourselves to generous and prayerful financial stewardship and support of the church

Strengthened by our community, we will serve Christ in others by:

- Offering ministries of care, healing and recovery for those afflicted or suffering in mind, body, or spirit
- Helping those in need through programs such as the overnight shelter, meals for the homeless and housebound, Habitat for Humanity, and many other projects, whether organized from Heavenly Rest or shared with the wider Church
- Building and maintaining links with peoples and parishes in other countries, especially through programs such as the Carpenter's Kids and the Chaplain in Iraq
- Welcoming and working with other groups that support these objectives

A COMMUNITY OF WORSHIP

Worship Services

The worship style at Heavenly Rest strikes a balance between Anglican tradition and low-key informality. We have colorful chasubles; the dossal, stoles, burse and veil are all changed in accordance to the season. On major festivals, when the church is generally quite full, we “go for broke” with traditional elements: On Maundy Thursday, the rector and associate rectors participate in foot washing and they strip the altars, followed by an overnight prayer vigil; a three-hour Good Friday service incorporates the Stations of the Cross; incense is offered at the Easter Vigil; the clergy intone the liturgy at many holiday services. Our Palm Sunday service is especially popular, possibly because the congregation, singing, parades around the block following Giorgio, the faithful donkey who also stars in our **Christmas Pageant**. We also offer three 5:00pm Evensong services throughout the year: a Lessons and Carols service during Advent, another on Palm Sunday, and another on All Saints Day.

On a typical non-holiday Sunday, Heavenly Rest draws an average of around 250 worshippers to its main Eucharist service, held in the church at 10:30 am. During the service, children gather for a simplified Children’s Chapel in the adjacent chapel; while there is no formal coffee hour after the service (many parishioners would like to see this re-instituted), coffee, tea, and pastries are served for about half an hour. Early risers attend the 8:00am Sunday service in the chapel, which usually draws around 25 people; families often opt for the half-hour Family Service at 9:00am, which offers the day’s Gospel reading and Communion (attendance is around 50).

It’s a fact of Manhattan life that many residents travel extensively for work or have second homes outside the city; many families’ children also have mandatory Sunday sports events. The impact upon church attendance is considerable. Despite this, Heavenly Rest’s Sunday attendance has increased by 13 percent in the past ten years, with an annual average of 360 worshippers attending some form of Sunday service (including holiday services and Evensongs). We can depend on a healthy core of “regulars”: Some 28 percent of surveyed parishioners claim to attend services weekly, while another third attend two or three times a month. Attendance diminishes significantly during the summer, however, even with the recent addition of air-conditioning in the main church. The 9:00am service is suspended during this hiatus.

Weekday services do not compensate for the weekend exodus. On Wednesdays, two services are held in our chapel: a Eucharist service at Noon, and Communion combined with healing prayers and hymns at 6:00pm. Attendance at these has declined to a handful, and rarely exceeded 20. In 2010, hoping to provide more non-weekend worship opportunities, several parishioners asked to lead an Evening Prayer service at 5:30pm once a week. Frequently the leader is alone, but not discouraged.

I like the warmth of our parish, and its emphasis on traditional but not stuffy liturgy.



Music

Heavenly Rest has been renowned for its **music programs** since the early 1950s, and the program has only deepened that tradition of excellence under the twenty-four-year leadership of music director Mollie Nichols, with Steven Lawson assisting at the organ. Nearly two-thirds of surveyed parishioners rank the church’s music program as an extremely important aspect of the church. Besides being integral to our liturgy, music also offers another, vital spiritual dimension—“a form of outreach and prayer,” as one parishioner puts it.

Formerly a professional choir, Heavenly Rest’s adult choir of 35 to 40 singers has broadened to welcome talented parishioners alongside its professional section leaders/soloists. Besides providing music for the 10:30am Eucharist service, the adult choir also performs at seasonal Evensongs, at holiday services such as Ash Wednesday and Christmas Eve (where instrumental ensembles are often added), and, on occasion, at weddings and funerals. As well as singing service music and a psalm, the choir performs anthems at the offertory and during Communion, presenting an eclectic range of compositions by a wide variety of composers, from Thomas Tallis to Johannes Brahms to Ralph Vaughan

Lay Support

Preparing the Lord’s table, reading Scripture, serving the Host—Heavenly Rest has no shortage of lay volunteers assisting at our worship services, a spiritual practice that some describe as “transformative” and “transcendent.” A rotating list of 45 lay readers take turns reading Scripture and leading prayers for the people at the lectern; 17 individuals are also trained to serve as chalice bearers, usually two or three per service. An active Altar Guild of about a dozen members, and a separate linens committee, tend to altar linens and vestments, burnish the silver service ware, and lay out the bread and wine for Communion. These sacramental roles

are provided by the Heavenly Rest handbell choir; this group also plays at outdoor events such as Museum Mile in June and our Fall Parish Picnic.

are cherished by those involved.

New Yorkers sometimes think they are too cool to reveal their spirituality. Maybe that's why we need music so badly – it's okay to cry at a lovely anthem, but not a sermon.

are cherished by those involved.

Heavenly Rest’s children’s choirs are equally strong. Four children’s choirs range in age from preschool through high school, led by Mollie Nichols with the assistance of two dedicated choir members. The children’s choirs and older choristers participate in a number of Sunday services, and occasionally offer a musical drama during the 10:30am service. These choir children form the core group for Heavenly Rest’s **Christmas Pageant**; for loyal choristers, choir essentially functions as their

are cherished by those involved.

Heavenly Rest’s usher team – currently 42 strong, with 28 rotating regularly in four teams – performs a vital role in greeting congregants at the church entrance; during the service, the ushers receive the offertory collection and guide worshipers to Communion. About 16 young people also participate on our four teams of acolytes; ranging in age from eight to 18, they carry crosses and torches in procession and assist with Communion, interacting with the service in ways that make it more meaningful to them than just sitting in the pews.

own version of a youth group. In recent years, the choristers have performed on choir trips to England, Florida, and Washington, D.C., as well as at Carnegie Hall and the Metropolitan Museum. Choristers are also offered a Royal College of Music certificate program.

To accompany our musical events, we are immensely lucky to enjoy the rich sonorities of a magnificent 137-rank Austin Organ, with a console built for us by Guilbault-Theiren of Quebec, and a wonderful nine-foot Steinway concert grand piano.



The Christmas Pageant

It's standing-room-only every Christmas Eve at Heavenly Rest, when crowds mass on the sidewalk, waiting to get in to see over 100 children ages two to 14 appear in the Heavenly Rest Christmas Pageant. Every role is sung by children, with children narrating the Christmas story from the pulpit. With two shows—one at 3:30pm and a repeat performance at 5:00pm—the Christmas Pageant has enjoyed a 40-plus-year seasonal run on Fifth Avenue, packing the pews not only with parents and parishioners but also Carnegie Hill neighbors and others for whom the Pageant is an essential holiday tradition.

Pageant participants return year after year, beginning as toddler pages and trumpeters, taking their turn as little angels and shaggy shepherds, hoping eventually to earn a solo as one of the Three Kings or even Mary or Joseph, who make their spectacular entrance with Giorgio the donkey. Teens graduate to backstage work, wrangling squirming live lambs and an imperious llama, and assisting with the youngest performers. A third of last year's pageant participants have been involved for 11 years or more.

Production values are simple—a homemade stable set, gold tinsel halos, and a hodgepodge of hand-me-down brocade cloaks, pastel gowns, and wool tunics—but on the afternoon of performance, they seem wondrously transformed. Pageant traditions run so deep, it's not uncommon to find a former baby Jesus taking the spotlight as Mary or Joseph, or a long-ago teenage Mary now laying her own infant in the crèche.



Preparing for the Christmas Pageant offsets the frenzied commercial build-up of the season and literally places Christ at the center of our family's Christmas.

A COMMUNITY OF SERVICE

Sunday School and Youth Programs

Despite dedicated efforts by clergy, staff, and lay teachers, there is a widespread sense that our Christian education program is not yet accomplishing what it should. Spiritual formation is our bedrock goal, of course, but a truly successful Sunday School program could also bring in more young families, which are the lifeblood of any church's future.

New York City family culture, however, presents a daunting challenge. In our city, children lead hectic lives; weekend sports and visits to weekend homes often conflict with Sunday School. In 2012, as a response to this challenge, youth minister/director Caren Miles initiated a Sundays-on-Monday program as a way of offering Christian education during the week. A more intractable problem is the fact that our kids attend a wide variety of public and (mainly private) schools and—unless they also participate in choir or acolyting—they barely know one another when Sunday comes around. We need to create activities devoted to forming bonds between kids who may live in the same neighborhood, but otherwise never see one another. In 2010, Caren Miles led an inspiring youth mission to New Orleans with eight teenagers, but response to other planned teen outings has been spotty.

We should have a thriving, overbooked Sunday school, given our location.

Our **confirmation** classes attract a respectable number of teenage confirmands, who receive good general instruction in the church. Yet instructors face a challenge to awaken real interest in what is basically a captive audience (even non-churchgoing Episcopalian parents believe Confirmation is important for their children) and the church is still strugg-



ling to find the right model for teen confirmation. In past years, our year-long confirmation program attracted a flock of confirmands with no prior experience in our youth programs; once confirmed, those young people rarely resurfaced. More recently, a six- to eight-week mixed class of adults and teenagers was devised, but teens felt the lack of peer contact, and were sometimes outnumbered by adult confirmands. All involved agree that work remains to be done.

Sunday School is held at 9:30am, to allow children to worship with their families at either the 9:00am or the 10:30am service. Children are divided by age into four classes, from pre-school through eighth grade (we also provide a nursery for infants and toddlers); combined attendance can run anywhere from 15 to 40 children. Heavenly Rest has developed its own customized curriculum to give our children essential Bible literacy and instruction in faith. We recognize that in our increasingly secularized society, students—even well-educated ones—do not pick up even the most elementary knowledge of the Bible or Christianity from mainstream culture. It is commonplace for a 12- or 13-year-old to show up for the first time at Heavenly Rest unable to identify the difference between the New and Old Testaments. Though most have heard of the Ten Commandments, they are very vague indeed about what those commandments might be. Few are clear about the difference between a Catholic, Protestant, or Jew; fewer still are aware that Jesus and his disciples were Jews. And so on. On one hand, this underscores the vital importance of what we do to provide Bible education; on the other, it presents a practical challenge for those dedicated parishioners who volunteer to teach. Addressing this task ought to be a very high priority for the new rector.

Rector's Forums and Other Educational Programs

Our congregation is very well educated and people like discussion and debate.

Although Heavenly Rest has its fair quotient of “Christmas/Easter” worshippers, many others are always eager to explore our Christian heritage. More than half of the survey respondents—typically the older segments of the parish population—report that they have attended adult education programs or participated in outreach programs over the past 12 months; adult education drew the survey’s second-highest vote as a desired area for expansion. The most popular outlet is the Sunday-morning Rector’s Forum, which is held at 9:30am, a timely bridge between the 9:00am and 10:30am services. These Forums, led by the clergy, have proven to be inspirational on both an intellectual and a spiritual level. Guest speakers, from the congregation and outside, have included spiritual leaders as well as authors.

For years, adult education programs were held on Wednesday evenings, following the 6:30pm healing service. Early on during the tenure of rector Jim Burns, Heavenly Rest hosted two evan-



gelical programs in this time slot: DOCC (Disciples of Christ in Community) and ALPHA. These programs attracted an enthusiastic group of parishioners; once this “core” moved on, however, interest waned, and the programs were dropped. Wednesday evenings then turned to clergy-led programs on topics of interest; turn-out consisted of virtually the same parishioners—even with a change of evening, to Tuesday. Wednesday evening classes now rarely occur, and only for special occasions such as Lent. Thursday night’s Education for Ministry (EfM), which drew upon the congregation for a number of years, is now attended only by interested adults from outside our parish (the New York diocese requires those

preparing for the vocational diaconate to complete this four-year course).

A number of parishioners have asked that an evening program of adult education be reinstated, along with instruction in Stephen Ministry, which trains parishioners to be a prayerful “ear” and helpmeet during a crisis, such as illness, divorce, or loss of a job.

I am not asked to leave my frontal lobe thinking at the door in order to be deeply religious. I am allowed both faith and doubt.

Performing Arts Programs

As an ever-more-important aspect of Heavenly Rest’s cultural outreach, myriad music and arts events draw audiences into our soaring sanctuary space. The most long-standing of these are thrice-yearly concerts by the Canterbury Choral Society, under the direction of Heavenly Rest’s former organist/music director Charles Dodsley Walker, who founded the Society at Heavenly Rest 60 years ago. The St. Cecilia Chorus also performs in our space, as do the Heavenly Rest Players, with their annual seasonal

reading of Dylan Thomas’ *A Child’s Christmas in Wales* and Truman Capote’s *A Christmas Memory*, and a spring theatrical production featuring parishioners in the cast. Beginning in 2011, Heavenly Rest has made itself even more a cultural presence in the neighborhood by establishing a regular Sunday afternoon music series, attracting non-parishioners as well as church members to weekly free one-hour concerts performed by talented musicians and singers from around the New York City area.



Pastoral Care

At Heavenly Rest, parishioners who are in trouble or who have health concerns are often willing to come to church to share their grief, worries, and needs. There is a sense of closeness among many regular members of the church, and a willingness to “share” without embarrassment.

Much counseling and pastoral support is given on a day-by-day basis by the clergy, upon request. When necessary, clergy members can refer parishioners to agencies within the city to address their needs. In certain cases of dire financial need, a modicum of support may be available from the Rector’s discretionary fund.

Heavenly Rest has occasionally also developed programs to prepare lay members of the congregation to offer support through intercessory prayer. A small group of trained parishioners offer prayers for healing in the chapel; these prayers and laying on of hands occur during Communion at the 10:30am service. Those who lead this healing ministry would like to build this program further, possibly drawing on some of the training programs previously used to prepare parishioners for this work.

In 2011, the Rev. Elizabeth Garnsey introduced a program of silent meditation (also known as Centering Prayer), which meets in the chancel on Monday evenings from 6:15pm to 7:00pm. This ministry has proven sustaining for a regular group of 15 to 20 participants.



New York is a tough place and it is hard to get used to living here ... Church is not the center of people’s lives. It is a fast-paced way of life and can seem cold and resistant.



Volunteerism and Outreach



Outreach is cited by parishioners as the number-one thing they'd like to expand—yet there is always a need for more volunteers and for more involvement, especially from younger members. Again, it is a core of devoted parishioners who engage in many of our outreach activities. Our full-time clergy, facing so many other demands, cannot always carve out the time to work closely with all these efforts. Many people have dynamic ideas for further outreach activities and for strengthening what we already have: In a city like New York, the need is great, and Heavenly Rest may wish to grow in this direction.

Outreach can take many forms. Financial support for community groups is one strategy: The Vestry's Outreach Committee awards annual grants totaling approximately \$80,000 to many community groups, ranging from Health Advocates for Older People to the East Harlem Neighborhood Alliance. Grants range from \$500 to \$8,000. This work is largely funded by restricted endowment funds earmarked for outreach. In other cases, donations are solicited from individual parishioners for programs such as the Carpenter's Kids program in Africa, organized by the Diocese of New York, or the Episcopal Church's earthquake relief efforts in Haiti.

Other outreach programs offer parishioners a more personal, face-to-face engagement with those we serve. Chief among these are the festive **Holiday Meals** we offer to all comers at Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Numbers—recently 350 to 400 people—prove that these holiday meals meet an urgent community need. Parish volunteers contribute food, from dyed Easter eggs to Thanksgiving pies and Christmas cakes, or contribute time to set up (or clean up), cook, and serve these meals. Volunteers also serve a **Friday Lunch Program** at the Church every Friday to senior citizens from the neighborhood. Parish volunteers



staff our **Shelter** program, organized through Main Chance, which provides a clean, safe, peaceful sleeping place for up to ten women in our narthex three nights a week. Our periodic **Thrift Sales** offer bargains to neighborhood residents (and others) while raising money for the church. Teams of parishioners also regularly deliver Meals on Heels, assist at the Yorkville Common Pantry, or join Habitat for Humanity work days.

Another form of outreach is to provide space for community programs. Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon hold weekly meetings here; a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farm co-op distributes fresh produce each week from spring through fall. A Girl Scout troop meets in church space, as does a parents and babies group; a music education program for young children is held weekly. From time to time, electronic recycling collections are held at Heavenly Rest, as is a hat and scarf drive at Christmastime.

Outreach is often also a matter of strengthening bonds within our own parish community. Volunteer opportunities within the church include working on annual fundraising events such as the Christmas Festival or our Gala Dinner, hosting and/or attending once-a-month Friday Flings (which always welcome new members), joining bi-weekly men's and women's breakfast groups at a coffee shop around the corner, and serving as docents to welcome visitors at the Fifth Avenue entrance.

Living in the midst of wealth, it is always good to be reminded how much we can still do for the less fortunate around us. I wish more people would get involved with these programs.

The Thrift Sale

Madison Avenue in the 80s and 90s may be lined with charming boutiques, but Carnegie Hill residents in the know will tell you: One of the neighborhood's best shopping opportunities happens three Saturdays a year, when the 90th Street doors of Heavenly Rest are flung open and buyers swarm in to browse for bargains in clothing and shoes for adults and children (including designer labels and some jewelry and accessories), as well as home furnishings, literary best-sellers, and quality toys.

A major effort on behalf of our outreach ministry to the community, Heavenly Rest's periodic Thrift Sales offer a rare win-win-win situation. Parishioners get a chance to clear their closets (who knew we had so many fashion mavens in our congregation?). Customers literally line up before the doors open to pick up high-end merchandise at rock-bottom prices. And Heavenly Rest's coffers are enriched to the tune of \$40,000 per year. Nothing goes to waste—unsold items are packed up after the sale and donated to social services organizations upstate. Given more storage space and more mirrors and racks for merchandise display, the Thrift Sale could grow exponentially.

Add in the fellowship experience for Heavenly Rest volunteers—both in pre-sale sorting/pricing sessions and the 40 or so men and women who work the sales floor on Thrift Sale Saturdays—and the Heavenly Rest Thrift program is an unparalleled outreach/inreach/fundraising success.

Thank God and Heavenly Rest for the great, warm winter coat I found at their Thrift.



OUR RESOURCES

Our Church Building and the 2 East 90th Street Foundation

Landmark buildings—even those from as recent an era as the 1920s—require constant vigilance, and the Church of the Heavenly Rest is no exception. Determined to preserve this gem in the best condition possible, the Vestry prudently allots 10 percent of our annual income for repair and maintenance. This doesn't leave much to spare, however; special donations have been solicited for major projects, such as the nave's new pendant lighting and air-conditioning, both recently completed. In the fall of 2011, the Vestry established the **2 East 90th Street Foundation**, with its own 501(c)(3) designation. This entity makes it possible for Heavenly Rest to solicit donations for architectural upkeep from organizations that are otherwise restricted from contributing to religious institutions.

All told, this vintage building is in moderately good shape. Upcoming expenses will include a phased replacement of the thirteen roofs that cover both the church and the Parish Hall, which are now in the 17th year of their 20-year warranty: this work will make a major call on our endowment. The stained-glass windows are being carefully monitored, and sidewalk replacement projects are in progress. Some parishioners cite a need to clean our exterior limestone walls; the elevators in the Parish Hall, which have been unchanged since they were built in 1926, will need replacement in the near future. The newer of our two gas boilers was installed seven years ago. Unlike many other churches, we have no steps to the front doors; therefore, Heavenly Rest has always been handicapped-accessible. This fall we removed some pews to enable people with wheelchairs or walkers to worship from the central portion of the nave rather than from side aisles.

The connected Parish Hall houses staff offices, but most of that building, as well as the undercroft below the nave, is currently occupied by the Trevor Day School—which leaves the parish severely limited in its space for in-house programs and parish activities. The parish also owns an eleven-room apartment, our official Rectory, in a doorman building three blocks up Fifth Avenue. In the past, this apartment has been used to host new-member gatherings, discussion groups, and other activities. A number of parishioners have expressed the hope that the Rectory might find use as a parish gathering site in the future.



Trevor Day School

Trevor Day School's connection to Church of the Heavenly Rest began modestly in 1930, with nine kindergartners in a classroom in the Parish House at 4 East 90th Street. What was then the Day School of Church of the Heavenly Rest continued to add grades over the next three decades, occupying more and more of the parish house and church building. A traditional kindergarten-through-fifth-grade private school for years, it became more and more progressive by the 1960s; in the late 1960s, grades six through eight were added. Following the secularizing trends of the day, the Day School declared itself completely independent in 1969, but continued to rent its original space in the church.

In September 1991, a merger with the progressive Walden School allowed the Day School to add an upper school, with grades six through twelve moving to Walden's site across Central Park. In January 1997, the school's board of trustees voted to rename the institution **Trevor Day School**, further distancing itself from its Heavenly Rest roots. Whereas the school once drew families to the church, in recent years there has been only incidental overlap between the student body and parish membership.

The 90th Street building currently houses grades one through five, and connects internally to a townhouse at 11 East 89th Street, which houses Trevor's nursery school through kindergarten. Over the years, Trevor installed two gymnasiums, a library, and a cafeteria/kitchen, as well as more classrooms. In 2007, wishing to consolidate and expand, Trevor purchased a site on East 95th Street on which to construct a 105,000-square-foot building to house grades seven through twelve. Upon completion of this facility, pre-kindergarten through grade six will vacate their Heavenly Rest space and relocate to the West Side building—a move projected to take place by the opening of school in September 2013. By the time Trevor Day School finally leaves, Heavenly Rest must have decided how best to utilize the 30,000 square feet the school currently occupies.



Parish Offices and Staff

Heavenly Rest has been conservative in allocating budget for staff positions, since this is the largest financial commitment in our budget. In general, the tendency has been to tilt toward understaffing, in order to adequately compensate the excellent staff we do have. The church spends approximately \$1,500,000 each year on the salaries and total benefit packages of its clergy and staff. Besides the clergy, the staff consists of 12 people: a director of finance and administration; a director of music; a director of children and family ministries; a communications director; an associate

organist; a vergers and three sextons; a financial secretary; a parish secretary; and a receptionist. This is barely enough to meet the demands of a large and dynamic urban parish.

As regained space is allocated after the departure of Trevor Day School, there is a pressing need to create new office space for church staff. The offices of our communications director and youth minister, for example, are windowless rooms originally used for storage, while our financial secretary works from a desk set up in the sacristy.



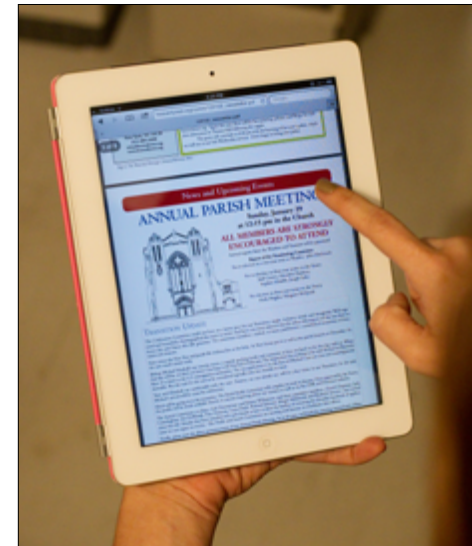
Communications

The church's communications efforts serve many purposes: marketing, community-building, and providing spiritual resources. The whirlwind nature of New York City life makes it imperative to remain in constant communication with parishioners. Much of this effort is electronic nowadays. A weekly bulletin of announcements, inserted into the Worship Service leaflet, is also posted on our website and emailed to all parishioners. The bi-monthly *Messenger* newsletter is emailed to as many readers as possible, while a printed copy is still mailed to those who prefer a paper version. Weekly meditations are sent out by email as well, and digital recordings of sermons and selected choral music are posted on-line for those who may have missed the Sunday service. Updating the church's website, writing a **Heavenly Rest blog**, and keeping a presence on **Facebook** require constant effort; maintaining an accurate email list is essential.

Heavenly Rest's Communications Director, Kara Flannery, who also functions as our talented in-house photographer, has developed an elegant, inviting, uniform aesthetic for everything from postcard announcements and posters to our annual report and stewardship materials. Heavenly Rest's logo replicates the Celtic Cross incised into the front of the altar, to indicate that Heavenly Rest is more than "just a building."

Complementing the *Messenger* are a variety of coordinated brochures, covering everything from Heavenly Rest's family offerings to music and arts programs to volunteer opportunities. Special seasonal meditation booklets are offered during Advent and Lent. These are all available to parishioners and passersby on a rack at the church's Fifth Avenue entrance. A weekly line-up of

church events is posted in façade vitrines, and a sidewalk sign promotes upcoming programs to pedestrians on Fifth Avenue.



We should be able to link in to Heavenly Rest for comfort 24/7, anywhere I can boot up my computer or turn on my cell phone.



Parish Governance

For the past several years, Heavenly Rest has been blessed with a vestry-clergy relationship of extraordinary collegial harmony. As in any Episcopal Church, the Vestry serves as the responsible fiduciary body for the management of the business affairs of the parish, but the clergy and staff are engaged in all decision-making. The Rector normally chairs Vestry meetings, with our associate rectors and the senior business manager participating fully.

At Heavenly Rest, the Vestry consists of 17 members: 15 vestrypersons plus two Wardens, known respectively as the Senior (or Rector's) Warden and the Junior (or People's) Warden. Vestry members typically serve for six years (two three-year terms), while Wardens normally serve for three two-year terms. A third of the group is elected or re-elected each year at the annual parish meeting, normally in late January. Elected from the body of the vestry, other Vestry officers include a Treasurer, who prepares regular reports on

parish finances, and a Parish Clerk, who keeps minutes of Vestry meetings.

Much underlying work is performed by standing committees that report to the Vestry. These include Outreach, Building, Budget, Finance, Stewardship, Fundraising, and Christian Education. Ad-hoc working groups are established for short-term projects, often drawing upon the expertise of highly qualified non-Vestry members (or former Vestry members). A good example is the Real Estate Task Force, which has been laying the groundwork for Trevor Day School's anticipated move out of the church's buildings. The church is exceptionally fortunate—and has been so for many years—in being able to draw on the expertise of highly qualified parishioners in such vital areas as financial management, real estate, legal matters, art, architecture, and buildings management, among others.



Parish Finances

A new Rector can rest assured of being given business advice of the highest quality by the various committees formed in or by the vestry, and by our strong and dedicated staff. Nonetheless, the buck will stop on the Rector's desk. Whoever sits at that desk must expect to preside, as a chief executive officer would, over a series of planning decisions, real estate negotiations, construction projects, and organizational changes, which will be considerably more challenging than routine business in most parishes.

Heavenly Rest is not exempt from the financial worries that plague most modern churches. Our endowment in January 2012 was valued at around \$8,650,854—hardly a cushion upon which we can rest easy, considering that our 2012 budget is \$3,000,200. A breakdown is shown in the **Treasurer's Report of January 2012**.

Among the Diocese of New York's roughly 200 parish churches, we have historically been one of the Diocese's top six financial supporters through our annual assessment. Aiming to

consistently support the Diocese, we have fully paid our assessment each year through 2010, even when occasional operating deficits required draws on our endowment. In 2011, we sought temporary relief, due to anticipated operating deficits for 2011-2014, during our rector search and real estate negotiations. We are working with the Diocese to continue payment on a reduced basis during this transition and plan to restore full support thereafter.

The parish knows that individuals will each need to contribute more towards the church's support. Equally, the church needs to grow, to increase not only the body of worshipers but also its base of financial support. In all this work the new Rector will play a crucial role. We pray for and hope for an inspiring pastor who will energize our levels of giving and commitment

HOPES ASPIRATIONS AND TASKS

The Heavenly Rest Stop

In 2010, Heavenly Rest successfully launched a new sidewalk café, the Heavenly Rest Stop—thus finding a creative way to repurpose an under-used chapel space off the narthex. The café has been a great neighborhood hit, offering a “door of hospitality” into the church for all comers, regardless of religious background—welcoming anyone who desires refreshment, whether browsing Museum Mile or strolling through Central Park. While the café has proven financially sustainable, more importantly it is intended as a dynamic daily invitation to visit our sacred space to rest, pray, or find out more about connecting with Church of the Heavenly Rest. With its bright-red umbrellas outside, and French park-style tables and chairs inside and out, the Café offers a wide array of beverages and foods, from 8:00am coffee or tea through lunchtime salad and panini to a glass of wine or beer before closing at 5:00pm (6:00pm in the warmer months).



The Need for Growth

Attracting new members and increasing church attendance: these are the two priorities for Heavenly Rest that surveyed parishioners ranked highest. Both go hand-in-hand with another frequently cited priority: to improve the church’s finances and replenish the endowment. Stewardship is not just a matter of fundraising; it must be accompanied by spiritual commitment and a sense that the church serves a core purpose to a parishioner’s life. To this end, the Vestry recently voted to hire a stewardship consultant to analyze and advise us in increasing stewardship in effective ways.

Growing numbers might also give the parish a much-needed wider pool of volunteers. Heavenly Rest is blessed with a dedicated core of volunteers, but all too often it’s the

same people doing all the jobs. Given the graying trend of our demographics, it’s fair to say—as one parishioner noted—that “our core is strong but aging.” Over and over again, parishioners have emphasized that “we need an infusion of young families.”

We have a far smaller congregation than our space calls for, possibly even a diminished one in comparison to recent history.

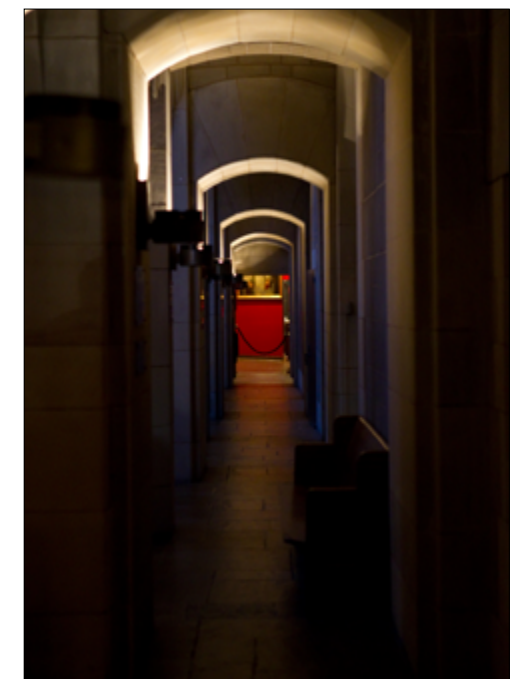
New Opportunities

The leading challenge confronting the parish in 2012-2014 will be in real estate. Payments by our long-time tenant, **Trevor Day School**, have typically made up around 25 percent of our yearly revenue (over \$662,000 in 2010), and replacing that revenue is critically important to the church. Equally important is the decision concerning how to use the 30,000 square feet of real estate that Trevor will vacate, which consists of three discrete sections: a six-story tower (also known as the Parish Hall); an expansive undercroft; and a large gathering space in Darlington Hall. The Vestry’s Real Estate Task Force—a committee consisting of five parishioners with architectural expertise—has hired a commercial real estate firm, Jones Lang LaSalle, to analyze our options

and help the Vestry chart the best possible course. The parish has no shortage of opinions on what should be done with this space—a new school? a center for non-profit organizations? a magnet space for arts and culture?—and how much of that real estate can be retrieved for parish use. Mindful of the projected mid-2013 deadline, the Vestry is moving toward making an informed decision, attempting to make the process as transparent and professional as possible. Whatever decisions are made, the process will be time-consuming, disruptive to the physical plant, occasionally controversial, and risky—and it cannot be delayed or postponed.

The building is prime real estate and should be leveraged for its income potential.

We have a wonderful opportunity to make Heavenly Rest a spiritual center for the community and should keep that in mind as we consider what to do with our regained space.



Things to Conserve, Deepen, Enrich

As members of Church of the Heavenly Rest, we are grateful for the gifts we receive in Christ, through our neighbors, friends, and those who have gone before. We give thanks for and rejoice in the abundant good things of this community. However, we are not complacent. Talking with each other while preparing this profile has given us all fresh insights into how much we wish to do, and need to do. We know that the best that we can do will never be—and should never be—enough.

This place can rock, like a great wedding. All it needs is someone to turn the Pellegrino into Champagne.

There is much that we all love about this church, and we passionately wish to preserve these elements to the glory and service of God. We hope that a new rector will continue Heavenly Rest's historic tradition of strong, thoughtful, and thought-provoking preaching. We hope that he or she will cherish and share the congregation's love of church music, with its unique power to raise the spirit.

We hope to call someone who will shape, direct, and focus the church's energy and commitment for service to the community, both near at hand and in a more global context. We have a willingness and desire to serve, and an open spirit to be directed to ever-new channels for service.



To the new Rector: We have faith. We are here. We await your innovative ideas. We also require that you will listen to us as we will to you.



Church of the Heavenly Rest

2 East 90th Street, New York, NY 10128
visit our website at www.heavenlyrest.org
212-289-3400 info@heavenlyrest.org

Vestry

Wardens: Andrew Horrocks, John Hitchcock
Treasurer: Caroline Williamson

Vestry: Gray Boone, Richard Buonomo, David Chapman, Judi Counts, Jack Cunningham, Clara Dale, Evan Davis, Meredith Hawkins, Holly Hughes, Karen Hughes, Margaret McQuade, Stephen Schaible, Joseph Seiler, Judith Washam.

Search Committee

Co-chairs: Robert Williamson, Gail Zimmermann
Committee: David Chapman, Jack Cunningham, Jim DeWoody, Tina Donovan
Liana Doyle, Richard Johnson, Margie McKittrick, Elizabeth Stevens

Parish Profile Committee

Co-Chairs: Euan Cameron, Holly Hughes
Committee: Molly Grose, Stephen Koch, Marion Morey, Bill Niles, Bo Niles, Janet Robertson

Celebration Committee

Co-chairs: Jo Dare Mitchell, Judi Counts
Committee: Melissa Bernstein, Patty Bigelow, Susan Binger, Ruth Anne Cary, Joanna Cawley, Ann Collins, Ninna Denny, Amanda Frei, Jane Havemeyer, Karen Hughes, Valerie Kekana, Tim Lively, Marjorie McKittrick, Marion Morey, Cheryl Mwaria, Molly Parkinson, Janet Robertson, Leslie Rupert, Allison Saxe, Aleta Shipley, Margot Spelman

Clergy and Staff

Clergy

The Rt. Rev. Michael Marshall, Priest in Charge
The Rev. Thomas N. J. Synan, Associate Rector
The Rev. Elizabeth Garnsey, Associate Rector
The Rev. Caroline Boynton, Deacon

Supply Clergy

The Rev. Kristin Kopren, Assisting
The Rev. Rhonda Rubinson, Assisting

Music

Mollie Nichols, Director of Music
Steven Lawson, Assisting Organist

Staff

Ruth Anne Cary, Director of Finance & Administration
Caren Miles, Director of Children & Family Ministries
Kara Flannery, Director of Communications
Krys Valentin, Parish Secretary
Elinor Loveridge, Financial Secretary
Patricia Gibson, Receptionist
Roger Chavannes, Verger
Craig S. Sibbles, Sexton
José Barahona, Sexton
Elmer Barahona, Sexton

