

Rev. Canon Anne Mallonee

Good Afternoon. I am Canon Anne Mallonee, Vicar of the Parish of Trinity Church and St. Paul's Chapel, and it is with great joy that I welcome you to this very special place, for this very special Service of Remembrance for the families and loved ones of those who were lost on September 11th 2001. We are blessed and honored to have you all with us today.

As most of you know all too well, within days of the attack on the World Trade Center on 9-11, this Little Chapel that Stood - unscathed and untouched through that terrible day - opened its doors to an extraordinary volunteer relief ministry for rescue and recovery workers at Ground Zero. Throughout the following eight months, over 14,000 people of every race and religion would gather in this sacred space and help transform this historic Episcopal church – this parish of George Washington and many of our nation's founding fathers, and the city's oldest public building in continuous use - into a house of prayer and a sanctuary of hope and healing for all people.

Since we re-opened our doors to the public in September of 2002 – close to 3 million more people of every faith, from every corner of the earth, have made the pilgrimage to our 9-11 memorial exhibit, to pay their respects to all those who were lost and, perhaps, to help answer the question: Where was God on September 11th? We hope this exhibit responds that God was not present in the unspeakable act of

violence that led to such senseless loss and destruction. But was most certainly seen, felt, touched and heard here, within these hallowed walls, in heartfelt Christian prayers, Buddhist chants, sung verses of the Koran and Torah; and in countless random acts of kindness and grace by people who came as strangers and left as friends.

Today, our growing Episcopal congregation of Trinity Church and St. Paul's Chapel honors their legacy of witness, love and compassion with daily worship services, music and education programs, and special interfaith events of outreach to the community, none more fitting than this one today.

Just this past September 11th, this new chapter of our ministry was also underscored when St. Paul's Chapel became a member of the Community of the Cross of Nails, an international, ecumenical peace and reconciliation movement founded at St. Michael's Cathedral in Coventry, England. The CCN was inspired by acts of forgiveness between the residents of British and German cities bombed during World War II, who later came together to help rebuild the Cathedral. Today, it has 160 chapters working to bring about reconciliation among diverse peoples, cultures and faiths throughout the world.

Wherever you are on your spiritual path, and however you honor the Divine, we welcome you into this vibrant faith community committed to upholding the dignity and preciousness of every human life and of all of God's creation.