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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**The Church of Our Lady of Peace Open Its Doors to the Community during New York Landmarks Conservancy's "Sacred Sites Open House Weekend" (May 16 & 17)
Organized as Part of the 50th Anniversary of the City's Landmarks Law**

The **Church of Our Lady of Peace**, which recently celebrated Founders Day in place of the centennial it may not see, will be open to the public during regular hours and hold special programs for the **New York Landmark Conservancy's "Sacred Sites Open House Weekend."** The church, a designated landmark, is located at 237 East 62nd Street in Manhattan's Treadwell Farm Historic District. It is scheduled to be closed by the Archdiocese of New York by August 1, 2015, pending an appeal to the Vatican.

"New York's religious institutions are often the most beautiful buildings in their neighborhoods," said **Peg Breen**, president of **The New York Landmarks Conservancy**, "but they are often seen only by their members. The Sacred Sites Open House Weekend allows everyone to enjoy the architecture, art, and history of these remarkable structures."

"Our Lady of Peace is a centerpiece of the landmarked Treadwell Farm Historic District, one of the oldest designated landmark neighborhoods in New York City. On April 19, 1965 Mayor Robert F. Wagner signed the New York Landmark Law and created the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission," said **Julianne Bertagna**, president of the **Treadwell Farms Historic District**. "Within the first two years of its existence, the commission designated Treadwell Farm, the two blocks of East 61st and East 62nd Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenue, as a landmark because of its architectural importance, and specifically for its 'consistent, residential character, its uniform cornice height, and in the style of its buildings and care with which the buildings are preserved.' We are eager to share the art, architecture, and history of the Our Lady of Peace Church as we continue to preserve the church."

"Parishioners and friends of Our Lady of Peace Church are extremely proud to have their beloved and endangered church included in the New York Landmarks Conservancy 5th Annual Sacred Sites Open House Weekend," said **Tami Ellen McLaughlin**, **Our Lady of Peace Special Events Chair**. "We are thrilled to welcome preservationists touring the Upper East Side, and invite the community to learn about our rich history, founded by Italian immigrants nearly 100 years ago."

"Around the city and state, our local preservation partners have done a fabulous job helping the Conservancy recruit additional sacred sites this year – our 5th year of the Conservancy's Sacred Sites Open House Weekend," said **Ann-Isabel Friedman**, **Sacred Sites Program Director**. "This May 16th and 17th, over 60 historic New York City churches, synagogues, and meeting houses will open their doors – more than ever before. On the Upper East Side, the Treadwell Farm Historic District Association and our co-sponsor, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic

Districts have signed up more than 10 Upper East Side landmarks and landmark-eligible churches and synagogues to open their doors to the public.”

The Church of Our Lady of Peace will be open during regular hours and Masses will be held during regular hours during the weekend. Special programs will include the following events:

Saturday, May 16, from 1-4 p.m. at Our Lady of Peace

1-2 p.m. **Armed Forces Day Concert**

The Patriot Brass Ensemble, an organization that provides music for Veterans, will feature an historical selection of sacred, secular, and military music, starting with music from the First World War, the era when the parish Our Lady of Peace was formed. The concert will include a narration between selections.

2-4 p.m. **Historical Lecture and Docent Tours**

Denise De Vito is an educator with the New York City Department of Education’s Professional Studies Program, where she has extensive experience teaching courses to educators on New York City’s history and culture, based on a variety of themes, through museum education. Ms. De Vito is currently on the faculty of the St. Francis of Assisi Education Program and teaches various courses on women of the bible, women saints, and holy women from the ancient world through the Renaissance and New York City’s historic houses of worship.

Sunday, May 17, from 2-5 p.m.

2-4:30 p.m. **Historical Lecture and Docent Tours**

Gregory Dietrich, a preservation consultant, will present talks based on his recent historic architectural investigation prepared for the Friends of Our Lady of Peace. Mr. Dietrich specializes in architectural history, preservation planning and law, and cultural resource management. Mr. Dietrich has won several awards for his work including the Austin, Nichols & Company Warehouse Local Designation Coalition Historic Districts Council Grassroots Preservation Award and the New Jersey Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Research Award.

4:30-5 p.m **Charismatic Prayer Community Choir**

Other participating sites cover a broad spectrum of faith traditions, historic periods, and architectural styles, from the magnificent Moorish Central Synagogue and Park East Synagogues, to the unusual Scandinavian inspired Trinity Baptist; from the small, Renwick-designed Gothic Episcopal Church of the Resurrection to the enormous Romanesque and neo-Byzantine Temple Emanu-El and Christ Church United Methodist. Additionally, several Roman Catholic churches representing a range of periods and styles will participate, including Our Lady of Peace, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and St. Jean Baptiste.

For more information and a complete list of sacred sites participating in the Landmarks Conservancy’s Open House Weekend, visit www.nylandmarks.org.

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