

# The Epistle *E-news*

## GRACE CHURCH

### in New York City



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**NOV 21, 22**

**THANKSGIVING**

**SERVICES OF HOLY EUCHARIST**

will take place in the Chantry at 6 pm on Wednesday evening, Nov 21, and at 11 am on Thanksgiving Day, Nov 22. The Rev. J. Donald Waring will preach.

**HAVE YOU MADE  
YOUR PLEDGE?**

## Sunday, November 18, 2012

The 25th Sunday after Pentecost

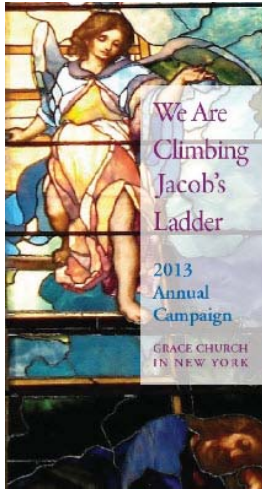


Dear Friends,

At the November vestry meeting earlier this month I presented for review a revised wedding customary. This document that sets forth our guidelines for those

wishing to be married at Grace Church, now reflects the recent developments in both the State of New York and the Episcopal Church. If you recall, it was in June of 2011 when the Marriage Equality Act passed through the House and Senate of New York State, was signed by Governor Cuomo, and became the law of the land. In essence, the bill declares that gay couples now have equal access to the civil and legal protections that the state has always provided to male-female couples through marriage. Many quarters of the Episcopal Church - certainly in the Diocese of New York - supported the measure and rejoiced when it passed.

The challenge for the church then became this: now the state and the church are saying something different about marriage. You see, in the church, marriage is not a civil right but a sacramental act. The marriage liturgy in The Book of Common Prayer traces its meaning back to Genesis 1:27: So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male



**Many parishioners have already pledged** (thank you), and now pledging is easier than ever! Just click on the image above or click on the PLEDGE HERE! button on our smartphone-friendly site, or mail in your pledge envelope. It takes less than a minute (really); it helps us (and you) to budget for 2013; and it's a great way to show your thanks and commitment to Grace Church, our community, and our ministries.

**Remember that pledging is simply a promise** of what you plan to give for the year 2013; you have all year to pay your pledge on a schedule that suits you. So what are you waiting for? Pledge now! (and thank you)

## **ADVENT @GRACE**

### **DEC 2 - ADVENT WREATH**

**MAKING** On the first Sunday of Advent, after the 9 am, 11 am

and female he created them. Thus, as men and women, we each represent an incomplete piece of what it means to be made in God's image. In marriage, a man and a woman pledge to spend a lifetime giving to and receiving from each other something of God that neither possesses alone. The sacramentality of marriage is that it becomes a doorway into God's life; it draws a man and woman more deeply into the fullness of God's nature.

What then does the church have to offer people whose natural affections are to those of the same sex? Personally, I have long believed that the church has needed to find a way to say good things about faithful, lifelong gay relationships. What is more, when the church says something, we usually say it liturgically; in other words, we say it with a worship service. The passage of the Marriage Equality Act has only made our need more pressing and evident for a rite to bless the lifelong commitments that gay people are already living in or wish to enter. However, for the theological reasons briefly outlined above, what does not work is merely to change the pronouns of the marriage liturgy and assume we are saying the same sacramental thing regardless of the configuration of the couple.

The Episcopal Church has long been engaged in conversations about human sexuality, and last summer the General Convention authorized a rite we have developed for the blessing of same-sex unions. It is called The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant. This is a liturgy with an integrity all its own, and I am pleased that we now have a resource to offer when gay couples wishing to be married in the State of New York present themselves to us. Check out our revised wedding customary on the Grace Church website at <http://gracechurchnyc.org/weddings-baptisms/>.

See you in church.

The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Rector

and 6 pm services, all are welcome to make Advent wreaths. Volunteer helpers at this event are always needed and appreciated. If you wish to help, contact Melissa Spindler at [mspindler@gracechurchnyc.org](mailto:mspindler@gracechurchnyc.org). (Please note there is a minimum suggested donation of \$15 per wreath.)



**DEC 2 - AN ADVENT SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS** with works by Byrd, Gibbons, Palestrina, Tallis and others. Sung by The Adult Choir at 4 pm in the Church.

**DEC 12 @12:15 pm COMMUNITY CAROL SING!** If you live or work near Broadway and 10th St, come to Grace Church during your lunch break and join the *The Combined Boys' and Girls' Choirs* in a festive half hour of song!

### HURRICANE RELIEF

Please continue to keep the victims of hurricane Sandy in your prayers during the long process of recovery. Remember you may also visit [www.erd.org](http://www.erd.org) or [www.episcopalcharities-newyork.org](http://www.episcopalcharities-newyork.org) to find out how you can help further.

## This Sunday, November 18th

### 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton  
Music: The Parish Choir

### 11 a.m. Morning Prayer, Rite I

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Music: Alumni of the Choirs with  
The Choir of Men and Boys with  
The Girls' Choir

### 6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II, in the Chantry

Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton  
Music: Hymns with instrumentalists

**GRACE CHURCH SCHOOL SUNDAY** - Today we celebrate the common history and mission shared by Grace Church and Grace Church School. **At 10 am** George Davison, Head of GCS, Hugo Mahibir, Head of GCS, High School Division, and Sarah Wood, GCS Chaplain will give a Sunday Forum report on the inaugural class of the new High School Division. **At the 11 am service**, music will be offered by The Choir of Men and Boys, The Girls' Choir, and the Alumni of the Choirs. Our guest preacher will be the Rev. Timothy Morehouse, Chaplain of Trinity School in Manhattan. **After the service**, please come to Tuttle Hall for a festive reception!

### SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AGES 9-12

**TODAY** during the 11 am service in the Reception Room. (No class next week.)

### ALTAR GUILD MEETING 12:30 - NEWCOMERS

**WELCOME** Please join the Rev. Stephen Holton and AG Co-Chairs Helen DuBois and Jennifer San Cartier in the Reception Room after the 11 am service to review the upcoming season. *We always need "many hands" to share this "light work," so newcomers are very welcome to come and learn more (no pressure)!*

## COMING SOON

### NOV 30, DEC 1 - CHORAL SOCIETY ANNUAL

**CHRISTMAS CONCERTS** - The Choral Society and Orchestra of Grace Church, under the musical direction of John Maclay, have at last returned to

Grace Church! Performances are on Fri, Nov 30<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm and Sat, Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> at 3 pm and include Mozart's "Coronation" Mass with other festive works as well as an audience carol sing to start off the season. Tickets at [www.thechoralsociety.org](http://www.thechoralsociety.org) (click on "Concerts" and follow instructions for payment) \$25 general admission, \$150 prime reserved seating. Tickets are expected to sell out, so don't delay!

**DEC 9 - THE SUNDAY FORUM 10 AM - THE CHURCH AND STATE SERIES** continues with Freedom of the Church: Religious Organizations and the Law led by Nelson Tebbe, *Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School*. Do religious organizations have special constitutional protection from government regulation? Professor Tebbe will explain and lead discussion on recent Supreme Court rulings on employment discrimination and challenges to the Affordable Care Act.

**DEC 9 - ALL USHERS ARE ASKED TO ATTEND** a brief meeting (45 minutes) to plan the season ahead, exchange ideas and celebrate this important ministry of hospitality and welcome. A light lunch will follow. 12:30pm in the Reception Room. Contact [sholton@gracechurchnyc.org](mailto:sholton@gracechurchnyc.org) for more information.

**JAN 18-20 PARISH RETREAT AT HOLY CROSS MONASTERY** Join fellow Grace parishioners for a quiet retreat along the Hudson River at Holy Cross Monastery on Friday, Jan 18, through Sunday, Jan 20, 2013 (MLK weekend). We'll pray with the monks, enjoy delicious food, and have time for outdoor and indoor reflection and quiet. Take a breather to start your year off right. Suitable for adults 18 and over. \$250 per person; some scholarships are available. Contact the Rev. Stephen Holton at [sholton@gracechurchnyc.org](mailto:sholton@gracechurchnyc.org) by Friday, Dec 14 to reserve your spot.

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[www.gracechurchnyc.org](http://www.gracechurchnyc.org)

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