

# The Epistle *E-news*

## GRACE CHURCH

### in New York City



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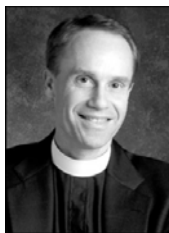
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### Special Seasonal Music

**Monday, DEC 24 - THE ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE, A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols** will be offered by The Choir of Men and Boys with The Girls' Choir on Christmas Eve at 8 pm. This service was the first of its kind to be live broadcast on Television at the beginning of the new communication era. Please bring Family and

## Sunday, December 23, 2012

The Fourth Sunday of Advent



Dear Friends,

In the next few days preachers across the land will be preparing Christmas sermons, many of which might be titled, "No Room at the Inn." They will focus on Mary and Joseph, homeless and harassed as they arrive in Bethlehem, only to have the callous innkeeper deny them a place to stay, and send them out back to the barn. Christmas congregations will then be encouraged to make room in their hearts for Jesus, which, by the way, involves making room for people today who find themselves on the streets. You just never know who it might be who shows up on your doorstep.

Although I don't think my Christmas sermon will be entitled "No Room at the Inn," the message is always one we need to hear. What are we at Grace Church doing about the problem of homelessness in the city? For many years now we have been devoting our entire Christmas offering to the work of outreach. When the offering plates pass through the pews on Christmas Eve at 4, 8, and 11 pm, and then again on Christmas morning at 11 am, every dollar you give (except those in pledge envelopes) goes to help alleviate the misery caused by poverty and homelessness.

How do we spend it? Sadly, it is possible to respond to the homeless in such a way that perpetuates their life on the street. I don't mean to sound like Scrooge, but every dime that goes into the tin can of the homeless person with the cardboard sign actually encourages that person to stay on the street, rather than take the difficult steps to get off it.

Friends and enjoy listening to and singing some of your favorite Christmas Carols.

**Sunday, JAN 6 - AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS**, the beautiful seasonal opera by Menotti will be offered as part of Choral Evensong on Sunday 6 January at 4 pm. in the Church. Menotti originally wrote this work as a Television piece, and after 50 years it has become a loved part of the Season. Please join us for this special offering.

## Advent Collections Are a Success!

**THANK YOU to all who participated!** You contributed 103 hats, 136 pairs of gloves, 56 scarves, 242 undergarments, and 71 pairs of socks to help homeless neighbors in our city and over 30 pounds of lip balm, hand lotion, and other toiletries to aid mariners in our ports. Your participation and your prayers are appreciated.

## STORM OUTREACH

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

Our goal should be to respect the dignity of these folks and truly help them reach for a better life. At Grace Church the Christmas offering goes into what is called "The Vestry Fund for Outreach," and from this fund we make grants to the agencies of mercy throughout the city - most especially the shelters that have programs to help homeless people reclaim their lives. Every year the fund is becoming a stronger instrument, able to do more and more good.

When you give on Christmas, you will be helping to make room at the inn. Please be generous. And you don't have to wait until Christmas. If you have any end-of-the-year giving to do for tax purposes, you can make a donation right now [online](#). Click DONATE, and select Outreach. Remember, you just never know who it is you might be helping.

See you in church.

The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Rector



## This Sunday, December 23rd

### 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. Stephen Holton  
Music: The Adult Choir

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

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

## CHRISTMAS @GRACE

### DEC 24 - Christmas Eve

### 4 pm Christmas Pageant

Featuring 109 talented beasts, shepherds, and villagers.  
Doors open at 3:30 pm.

**7:30 pm Seasonal Prelude of Music**

Stephan Tharp, organ.

**8 pm Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols**

With The Choir of Men and Boys with the Girls' Choir.

Sermon by the Rector.

**10:30 pm Seasonal Prelude of Music for Baroque**

**Trumpet & Organ**

John Thiessen, trumpet, Patrick Allen, organ.

**11 pm Candlelight Choral Eucharist**

With The Adult Choir.

Sermon by the Rector.

**DEC 25 - Christmas Day**

**11 am Holy Eucharist with Carols**

With The Adult Choir.

Sermon by the Rector.



**Coming Soon**

**DECEMBER 30, 2012**

**The First Sunday After Christmas Day**

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

Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton

Music: The Parish Choir

**11 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I**

Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton

Music: The Adult Choir

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

Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton

Music: Hymns with instrumentalists

**JAN 6 -THE SUNDAY FORUM RETURNS** - Adult Education plans for January include an "Instructed Eucharist" during services

on January 6th and Sunday Forum topics to further support the theme of worship. Cranmer's evolving Eucharistic theology, an examination of the Book of Common Prayer and a discussion of the Creeds are among the offerings to come.

**JAN 6 - AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS** - see description in the box at left.

*The next Epistle E-news will arrive in your inbox during the week before the Sunday of the Epiphany - January 6, 2013. Merry Christmas from all of us at Grace Church!*

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