

# The Epistle *E-news*

## GRACE CHURCH

### in New York City



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## Sunday, December 9, 2012

The Second Sunday of Advent



Dear Friends,

On a recent Sunday at the 11 am service I was sitting in my usual seat, leading the prayers in the usual way. One of the prayers - the Collect of the Day, found in the Book of Common Prayer on p. 184 - seemed more than the usual theological mouthful. It mentions Jesus' being manifested to destroy the works of the devil, prays that we may be made like him in his glorious and eternal kingdom, and then finishes with an especially ornate Trinitarian flourish: *"where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth ever, one God, world without end. Amen.* I finished reading the prayer. The congregation dutifully said the amen. Then, perfectly timed in the brief instant of silence that followed, a little girl a few pews in the front said to her mother, but loud enough for all around her to hear: *"WHAT!?!"*

It often takes a child to alert us that not everyone understands the things we say and do in church. Last Sunday we began the season of Advent, we lit the first candle in the Advent wreath, and many in attendance took advantage of the opportunity after the services to make an Advent wreath to use at home. During the cutting and placing of evergreens I heard more than a few people wonder what it was all about, even as they enjoyed the activity. Thus, what follows are a few

Christmas flower envelope (found in this week's Sunday service bulletin and around the church and parish house) to offer your cash or check (payable to Grace Church), and place it in the collection plate, the wooden box in the Parish House hallway, or the mail to Grace Church.

We recommend donation amounts beginning at \$50, but are grateful for any amount you can give. Thank you! **For your donation "in honor of" or "in memory of" to be listed in the Christmas bulletin, it must be received by Monday, December 17th.**

### Seasonal Music

#### Wednesday, DEC 12 - ANNUAL COMMUNITY CAROL SING

**@12:15 PM** 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!*

#### Sunday, DEC 16 - CEREMONY OF CAROLS BY BENJAMIN

**BRITTEN** will be offered by The Girls' Choir with Alumni of the Choir and members of The Adult and Parish Choirs at 4 pm in the Church.

#### Sunday, JAN 6 - AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS BY GIAN

**CARLO MENOTTI** Offered by The Adult Choir at 4pm in the Church.

## HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLEDGE?

thoughts about one of our traditions at this time of year.

The Advent wreath is meant to give visible expression to our faith that Christ's light is coming into the world. Candle by candle, we count down the weeks until Christmas. The custom actually has its roots in pre-Christian Europe. In those days people yearned for the return of the sun in the darkest time of the year by lighting candles placed on a cartwheel decorated with evergreens. As early as medieval times we Christians had baptized this pagan symbol to dramatize not the victory of the sun in the sky, but the Son of God's coming into the world. Using the same symbolism as the pagan fire and light wheel, the Christian Advent wreath became a sign of our waiting and hopeful expectation of the return of Christ. The wreath, being a circle, came to represent the eternal victory of light and life through the resurrection of Jesus. The evergreens are a sign of God's faithfulness to his people; he keeps his promises forever. The lighted candles are a reminder of the light of Christ that shines in the darkness and comes into our lives.

In my home we keep the Advent wreath on the kitchen table, and we light the candles before we say grace over dinner. Whether or not you observe this custom, my prayer this Advent is that you grow in awareness of the living God, who is forever drawing near.

See you in church.

The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Rector

### This Sunday, December 9th

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

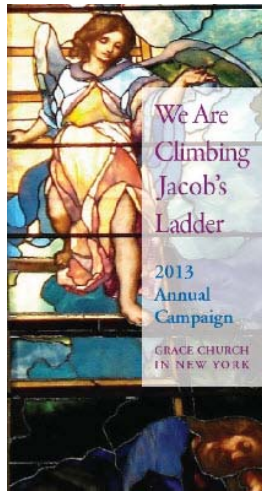
Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Music: The Parish Choir

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

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Music: The Girls' Choir with Adults

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

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring  
Music: Hymns with instrumentalists



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)

### OUTREACH PROJECTS

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



**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.

**ECW CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE FUNDRAISER immediately following the 9 and 11 am services!** Delicious and beautiful Christmas cookies, brownies, quiches and more will be for sale. We'll also have a children's cupcake table, and plenty of good things to buy today and freeze for your holiday entertaining. Please come out and support the good works of the ECW!

**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.

**20s30s SUNDAY BRUNCH** - Parishioners in their 20s and 30s are invited to brunch on December 9th after the 11am service. Location has been changed to Jack Bistro at University and 11th. RSVP to Melissa is required by Friday Dec. 7: [mspindler@gracechurchnyc.org](mailto:mspindler@gracechurchnyc.org).

**THE ANNUAL ADVENT COLLECTIONS for local charities continue today**, with a collection of unscented, uncolored lip balm and travel-

[www.episcopalcharities-newyork.org](http://www.episcopalcharities-newyork.org) to find out how you can help further.

**STATEN ISLAND STORM RECOVERY** -the Grace Church Outreach ministry has partnered with Saint John's Episcopal Church in Staten Island, to bring aid to those suffering from storm damage to their homes. To find out how you can help, please contact the Rev. Stephen Holton at [sholton@gracechurchnyc.org](mailto:sholton@gracechurchnyc.org).

**"DON'T WALK BY" HOMELESS OUTREACH** Volunteers for this annual outreach and rescue mission seek to offer every street person food, warm clothing, blankets and the opportunity to get off the streets. This year we will send a group from Grace Church to cover our local neighborhood. For detailed information, and to register, go to: <http://dontwalkby.org/volunteer/>. You may choose "street engagement" or "hospitality." Select "Downtown - Feb 2 2013, 2:30 - 8:00PM." On the registration form, be sure to request "group Grace Church/team Leader Mike Watson."

sized hand lotion for Seamen's Church Institute. **NEXT WEEK, DEC 16** we'll collect new men's boxers, t-shirts, and tube socks (larger sized) for the NYC Rescue Mission. Donations will be collected in the baskets at the back of the church. Please give generously this Advent!

### Coming Soon

**DEC 16 - THE SUNDAY FORUM 10AM - A CITY OF JUDAH**, Ein Kerem or "spring of the vineyard," was the village of Elizabeth and Zechariah and the birthplace of John the Baptist. Along with images from a recent visit, Seminarian Rebecca Myers will tell us more about this holy site, including its place as the setting for Mary's poetic response to Elizabeth, which we know as the Magnificat. *(Note: This concludes the Forums for 2012. The series will continue in January 2013 - see JAN 6 below.)*

**DEC 16 - 4 PM CHORAL EVENSONG - CEREMONY OF CAROLS BY BENJAMIN BRITTEN** The Girls' Choir with Alumni of the Choir and members of The Adult and Parish Choirs will sing the much loved work of Benjamin Britten as the primary musical offering at Evensong. Invite a friend and plan to attend this moving Advent offering at 4 pm in the Church.

**DEC 22 - GREENING OF THE CHURCH** - A few good souls are needed to help dress the church on Saturday, Dec 22, for the joyous celebration of Christmas. If you would like to sign up, please contact Ellen McElduff at [ellenmcelduff@aol.com](mailto:ellenmcelduff@aol.com).

**JAN 6 -THE SUNDAY FORUM/ADULT EDUCATION PREVIEW** - 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.

## 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 pm Holy Eucharist with Carols**

With The Adult Choir.  
Sermon by the Rector.

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