

The Epistle *E-news*

GRACE CHURCH

in New York City

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DEC 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE

4 PM CHRISTMAS PAGEANT - Featuring 88 talented beasts, shepherds, and villagers.

Doors open at 3:30 pm.

7:30 PM FESTIVAL MUSIC FOR THE ORGAN -

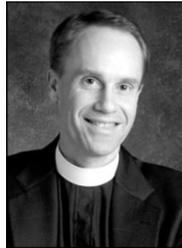
Patrick Allen, *organ*.

8 PM FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS -

The Choir of Men and Boys with the Girls'

December 22, 2013

The Fourth Sunday of Advent



Dear Friends,

It happens like clockwork. Every year at this time I receive a letter from a person who purports to be a young girl named Naomi. Naomi addresses her letter "Dear Grace Church," and she describes not only her difficult life due to poverty, but also her valiant attempts to rise above it. Then she asks if it would be possible for us to make her Christmas dreams come true, and send her a gift card to be used at some local retailer. One year it was for the American Girl Doll store, last year it was Barnes and Noble, this year it is the Burlington Coat Factory. The letter is obviously a scam. I imagine every church in Manhattan receives one just like it. Rest assured, we will not be sending any gift cards to Naomi.

It's easy to become cynical in a world full of scam artists, and overlook the reality that many people truly are living below the poverty line. The question is, what are we at Grace Church doing about poverty 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 poor in such a way that perpetuates the problem. 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. 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

Choir.
Sermon by the Rector.
10:30 PM FESTIVAL
MUSIC FOR ORGAN
& BAROQUE
TRUMPET
Patrick Allen, *organ*,
John Thiessen, *baroque*
trumpet.
11 PM
CANDLELIGHT
CHORAL
EUCHARIST -
The Adult Choir,
sermon by the Rector.
**DEC 25 - CHRISTMAS
DAY**
11 AM HOLY
EUCHARIST WITH
CAROLS -
The Adult Choir,
sermon by the Rector.
(No 6 pm Eucharist
today. Merry
Christmas!)

**HAVEN'T
PLEGGED YET
FOR 2014? PLEASE
TAKE A MINUTE TO
DO SO NOW!** Click
[HERE](#).

It's fast and easy!
Remember, you can
take all of 2014 to fulfill
your pledge, so make
your pledge now!

**Outreach
Update...**

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 that have programs to help the poor reclaim their lives. Every year the fund is becoming a stronger instrument, able to do more and more good.

Please be generous with a Christmas offering this year. And you don't have to wait until Christmas to give it. If you will be out of town, or have any end-of-the-year giving to do for tax purposes, you can make a donation right now [online](#). Select "Outreach" in the pulldown menu. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said it is more blessed to give than to receive.

See you in church.

[The Reverend J. Donald Waring](#)

Rector

This Sunday, December 22nd

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Sermon: The Rev. Sarah Anne Wood

Music: The Parish Choir

11 a.m. Morning Prayer

Sermon: The Rev. Sarah Anne Wood

Music: The Adult Choir

6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry

Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton

Music: Hymns with instrumentalists

(Service times are updated
weekly on the [website](#).)

THE SUNDAY FORUM 10 AM is on recess until January 5th, when we will resume exploring the themes of *Compassion in Action* and *Belief in the 21st Century*.

THE CHANCEL AND SANCTUARY today are filled with props for this afternoon's pageant rehearsal. We hope the stable and hay help to heighten your anticipation of Christmas!

Next Sunday, December 29th

The First Sunday after Christmas Day



**2013 ADVENT
COLLECTIONS A
SUCCESS - THANK YOU**

to all who participated! You contributed 158 hats, gloves and scarves, 340 undergarments and socks, and over 160 toiletries including lip balm and hand lotion to aid the homeless in our city and the mariners in our ports. Your participation and your prayers are appreciated.

FEB 8 - "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. If you are interested in joining a group from Grace Church on Saturday, Feb 8, [contact Team Leader Mike Watson](#). For details and a video click [HERE](#).

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6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry

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COMING SOON

JAN 5 @10 AM THE SUNDAY FORUM RETURNS -The Rev. Canon Dr. Titus Presler will speak on the opportunities and challenges of his work as Principal of Edwardes College in Peshawar, Pakistan as part of our *Belief in the 21st Century series*. This season, the Sunday Forums will continue to explore themes established during the fall: Compassion in Action and Belief in the 21st Century. *The Rev. Canon Dr. Titus Presler is Principal of Edwardes College, an undergraduate and graduate church institution in Peshawar, Pakistan. A scholar of Christian mission, he has been President of the Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Academic Dean at General Seminary in New York, Rector of St. Peter's in Cambridge, Mass., and pastor in several other parish ministries. He and his wife Jane were Episcopal missionaries in Zimbabwe, and Titus grew up in India in a mission family.*

AM AHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

by GIAN CARLO MENOTTI

SUNDAY 5 JANUARY
AT 4:00 P.M.

THE ADULT CHOIR

Featuring

TAMI PETTY, ALVIN CRAWFORD,
JOSHUA PARRILLO AND
ARAM TCHOBANIAN

GRACE CHURCH
IN NEW YORK
EPISCOPAL

FREE ADMISSION

10TH STREET AT BROADWAY
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The Reverend J. Donald Waring, Rector
Patrick Allen, Organist and Master of Choristers



JAN 8, 15, 22 -DIETRICH BONHOEFFER: FILM AND

CONVERSATION with the Rev. Sarah Wood. (Wednesdays, Jan 8, 15, 22 directly after the 6 pm Eucharist.) Join the group as we view the documentary *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Pacifist, Nazi Resister* and some pieces from his letters and papers from prison, and reflect theologically upon these together. In a highly conflicted time during WWII, Bonhoeffer studied in New York City, returned to Germany to shepherd a seminary, and, ultimately, strove ardently against Hitler's power. Bonhoeffer's faith led him to some inspiring and also challenging ends. Join us for some reflection on this beloved and undaunted human life.

The next Epistle E-news will arrive in your inbox during the week before Sunday, January 5, 2014. Merry Christmas from all of us at Grace Church!

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www.gracechurchnyc.org