

# The Epistle *E-news*

## GRACE CHURCH in New York City



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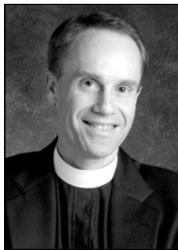
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## 2015 Annual Campaign!

## November 30, 2014

Advent Sunday



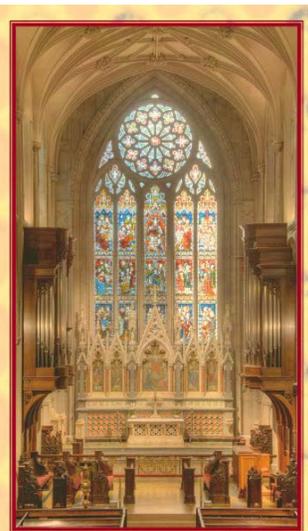
Dear Friends,

As millions of people across the country prepare to gather at Thanksgiving tables, perhaps some words from the Epistle of James (1:19) will be helpful:

*You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness.*

Stories abound of Thanksgiving dinners dissolving into angry shouting matches when certain taboo topics pop up somewhere between the second helping of turkey and the pumpkin pie. Someone at one end of the table can't resist making blinkered pronouncements about politics, religion, race, the economy, social mores, or some combination thereof. The room goes silent until someone else at the other end of the table can't take it anymore and rises to the challenge. Here we go again.

What happens at your Thanksgiving table may be in microcosm what is happening on the national stage. It's no secret that our country has grown increasingly polarized over the past decade. The current unrest over the events that have come to pass in Ferguson,



## ENTER INTO GOD'S JOY!

2015 Annual Campaign  
Grace Church in New York

MO is a case in point. Recognizing that we have simply lost the ability to hear each other across the divide, people with differing viewpoints turn up the volume and take yet one more step to the right or the left.

Ferguson, MO will likely be a topic of conversation over many dinners tomorrow, as well it should be. The answer to what ails us does not lie in avoiding discussion of the headlines. Rather, it is how we talk about them that matters. Here's a sobering thought: you are not likely to win converts to your cause tomorrow, especially after everyone has had 2-3 glasses of wine. The words that James wrote two-thousand years ago remain wise and true still today: *You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness.*

## Don't Miss the Final Sunday Forum of the Season!



Popular Forum speaker and Grace Parishioner Nicholas Birns, on John MILTON'S NATIVITY ODE. Sunday, Dec 14th.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone. And don't forget, the season of Advent begins on Sunday. Come make a wreath!

[The Reverend J. Donald Waring](#)  
Rector

November 26  
Thanksgiving Eve

6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry  
Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

November 27  
Thanksgiving Day

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry  
Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

## This Sunday, November 30th

## A Call for Christmas Flowers & Greens!

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton  
Music: The Parish Choir

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist



Every year at Christmas time it is the generous donations from our parishioners that enhance the beauty of Grace Church. You may donate online [here](#) or you may use a Christmas flower envelope (found in the Parish House hallway) to offer your cash or check. We recommend donation amounts beginning at \$50, but are grateful for any amount. Thank you!

*For your donation "in honor of" or "in memory of" to be listed in the Christmas bulletin, it must be received by Tuesday, Dec 16<sup>th</sup>.*

**FROM NOW  
UNTIL  
CHRISTMAS,  
pick up your  
copies at coffee  
hour after the  
9 and 11am  
services!**

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

6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry  
Sermon: The Rev. Stephen Holton  
Music: Hymns with Instrumentalists

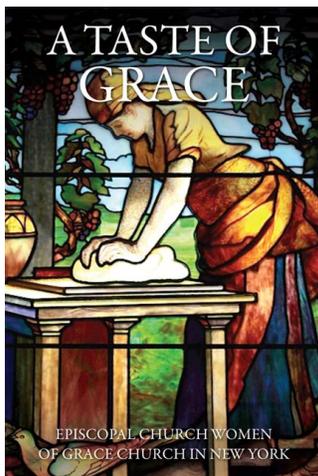
THE LITURGICAL SEASON OF ADVENT begins today. The word Advent derives from the Latin *adventus*, meaning arrival, or approach. In our worship, the hymns and Scripture readings take on a mysterious, urgent tone as we anticipate the coming of Christ. One-by-one we light the four candles of the Advent wreath. The Gospel readings shift to Mark, the liturgical color is purple and we begin a new Church Year.



THE SUNDAY FORUM is on recess, and resumes for a final session on Dec 14 (see description below).

ADVENT BEGINS – COME AND MAKE A WREATH!  
Celebrating with an Advent wreath during the weeks prior to Christmas is a great way to keep our thoughts focused on the coming of Christ, and to help teach our children the real meaning of Christmas. On the first Sunday of Advent, Nov 30<sup>th</sup>, after the 9 am, 11 am (in Tuttle Hall) and 6 pm (in the Honor Room) services we'll have all the materials ready for you. All are welcome! Experienced wreath-makers are encouraged to help others! (Minimum suggested donation per wreath: \$25.)

NOV 30, DEC 7, 14 – THE ANNUAL ADVENT COLLECTIONS for local charities will begin on Sunday, Nov 30<sup>th</sup>, with a collection of hats, scarves, and gloves for the *Church of the Ascension food pantry*. On Sunday, Dec 7<sup>th</sup>, we will collect travel-sized



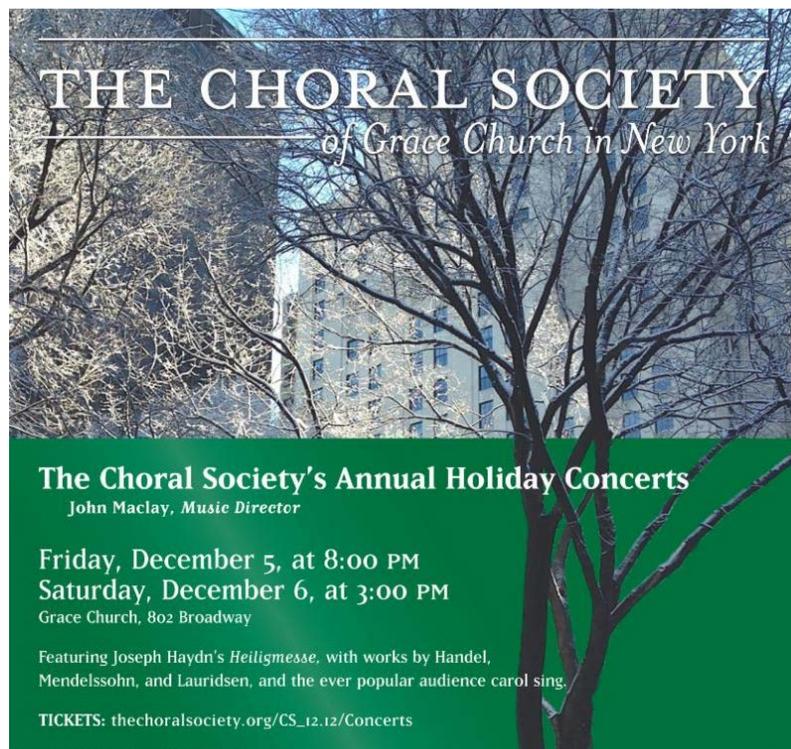
This fabulous book of over 330 recipes from the people of Grace Church, compiled, edited and designed by the ECW is already a hit! A unique and special gift for everyone on your Christmas list! \$30 each. Purchase yours at Sunday coffee hour (9 & 11 am), every Sunday until Christmas, or by contacting [Elana Foundos](#).

toiletries for the *women's shelter at New York City Rescue Mission*. (Please bring *travel-sized* shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, powder, shower caps, lotion, soaps, and/or washcloths). And finally, on Sunday Dec 14<sup>th</sup> we'll collect new men's boxers, t-shirts, and tube socks (larger sized) for the *men's shelter at NYC Rescue Mission*. Donations will be collected in the baskets at the back of the church. Please give generously this Advent!

NOV 30, DEC 7, 14, 21 – ADVENT BOOK DISCUSSION: WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO *BE* A CHRISTIAN—and why does Christian community matter? Join us after the Sunday 6 pm service to discuss what it means to be a Christian (as opposed to think about, know about, or even talk about Christianity) using Rowan Williams' new book, *Being Christian* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014). Formerly Archbishop of Canterbury, Williams (now Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge) offers a four-part meditation on Christian discipleship, focused on Baptism, Eucharist, Scripture, and Prayer. *Held in the Honor Room, directly after the 6 pm service. This four-part class is ideal for people new to the Christian faith or long-time Christians who are curious about why Christian practice and community matter. Copies of the book are available from Fr. Stephen Holton or for order online. [E-mail Fr. Stephen Holton](#) for more information, to sign up, or to reserve a copy. Please read Chapter 1, *Baptism*, for our first discussion Nov 30.*

**COMING SOON**

Click image for tickets!



DEC 5, 6 – THE CHORAL SOCIETY ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERTS Tickets are still available for Friday, Dec 5 at 8 pm and Saturday, Dec 6 at 3 pm at Grace Church. Featuring Joseph Haydn's Heiligmesse with seasonal works by Handel, Mendelssohn, Lauridsen and the ever popular audience carol sing. Tickets available online at [www.thechoralsociety.org](http://www.thechoralsociety.org) click CONCERTS.

DEC 7 – ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS Readings of scripture foretelling the coming of Christ are interspersed with beautiful music of the season. Sung by The Adult Choir at 4 pm in the Church.

DEC 10 – THE COMMUNITY CAROL SING All are welcome to come and sing with The Combined Boys' and Girls' Choirs in this festive annual event! 12:15 – 12:45 pm in the Church.

DEC 13, JAN 10, FEB 14 – HELP REBUILD STATEN ISLAND More than two years after Hurricane Sandy, thousands of homes remain in some form of distress. Join teams from Grace Church for three parish work days, Saturdays Dec 13, Jan 10, and Feb 14. Many jobs for multiple skill levels are available--including insulation installation, sheet rocking, painting, and cleanup. We'll schedule a celebration dinner and party after our work days, so sign up now by contacting Fr. [Stephen Holton](#). TO SEE HOW YOUR WORK ON STATEN ISLAND IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE click [here](#).

DEC 14 – GINGERBREAD HOUSE DECORATING – Families are invited to come decorate a gingerbread house after the 9am and 11am services. Houses will be pre-assembled and read for you to help your little ones decorate. RSVP is required by Wednesday, Dec. 10th to make sure we have enough supplies. \$15 minimum suggested donation per house.

DEC 14 – 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.

DEC 14 –THE SUNDAY FORUM @10 AM – MILTON'S NATIVITY ODE: IN SEARCH OF THE SACRED with Nicholas Birns, PhD, Associate Professor of Literary Studies, The New School – John Milton wrote "On The Morning of Christ's Nativity" when he was 21, as a Cambridge undergraduate, It is one of the great poems of the Advent season, lauding the birth of Christ and its promise of salvation. The poem is movingly communicates core Christian doctrine, yet, in its daring, brio, and occasional downright weirdness, inimitably Miltonic. Here we see a great poet testing his fledgling talents while coming to grips with how the birth of Jesus truly changed the world. *This concludes our fall series. Please watch for announcements of our next series which begins in January 2015.*

Subscribe to a Digital Advent Calendar!



We thought we'd pass this on... Created by the Brothers of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist (Cambridge, MA), a daily word and meditation, accompanied by a stunning image, delivered daily to your inbox. Invite friends and members of your congregation to subscribe to a daily email so they can tune into the the true meaning of this Christmas season. Visit [www.SSJE.org/adventword](http://www.SSJE.org/adventword) to subscribe or follow @adventword on Twitter, Pinterest or Instagram.

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