



Weekly E-News from Grace Episcopal Church

December 23, 2016

## Spotlight on Grace: The Rector's Christmas Message



The two days of the year that draw the most people to church are, hands down, Easter and Christmas. Of the two, Christmas is by far the more celebrated in our cultural life.

There are many reasons for that, but one of them may be that while Easter celebrates triumph or victory (in this case, the victory of Christ over death), Christmas celebrates hope (in this case, the hope for peace and redemption in the birth of Jesus). As human beings, perhaps we gravitate more easily to hope than victory.

Hope is sustaining, and all of us need sustaining. Hope allows us to take to our beds at the end of a bad day with, as the old Prayer Book says, "a reasonable and holy hope" that there is a better tomorrow ahead of us. When our hearts sink at news of attacks on churches in Egypt or Christmas markets in Germany, it is hope that keeps us from falling into grief or despair. If we fear what lies ahead for our own country, the spirit of hope that pervades the Christmas story ought to lift our spirits to know that God will be with us in the years to come, just as we ought to be with, and for, each other. Martin Luther King, Jr. famously said, "The arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice."



Wherever we are as a people on that arc right now, we will continue to set our eyes on the horizon that brings justice and peace. And the Prince of Peace, whose star shone to give light to travelers from near and far, whose birth gave light to the world, will continue to light our

way forward.

Merry Christmas,  
Jonathan+

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## This Week at Grace

### Christmas Worship Schedule:

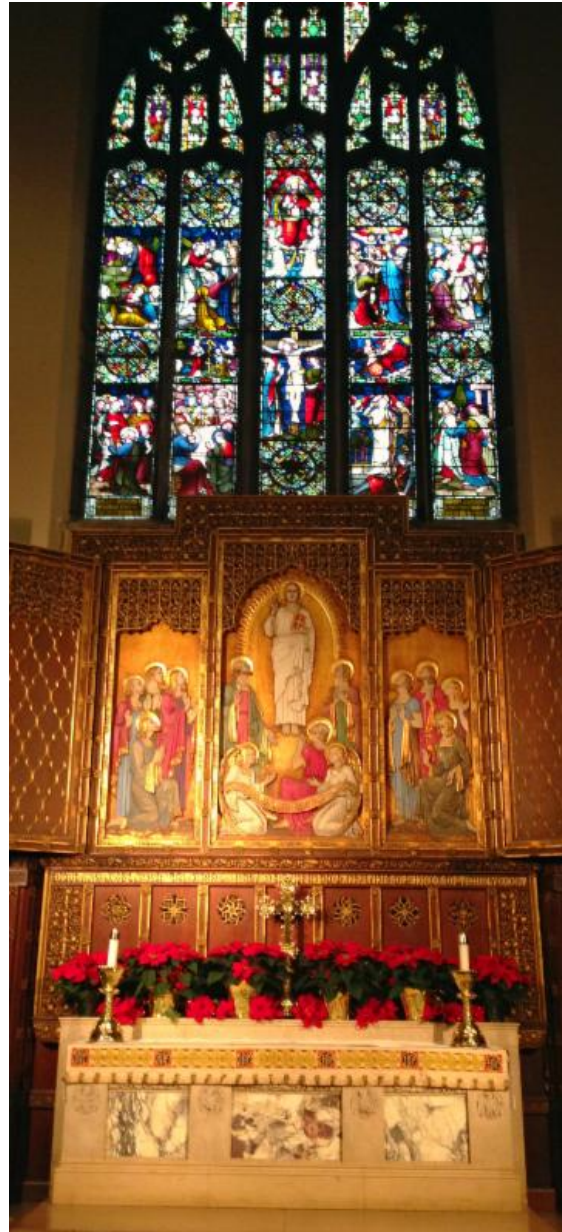
Christmas Eve Musical Prelude at 4:30pm  
Christmas Eve Service at 5:00pm\*  
Christmas Eve Musical Prelude at 9:30pm  
Christmas Eve Service at 10:00pm  
Christmas Day Service at 10:00am\*\*

\* **Nursery** is available for 5:00pm service.  
Also, thank you for returning your bulletins for use at the 10:00pm service.

\*\* **Please note:** There will be no 8:00am Sunday service on Christmas Day.

**Parking for Worship:** Parking for Sunday worship is provided in the lot diagonally across Westminster Street, on the NW corner of Westminster and Snow. A small number of spaces are available on the portion of the Grace Church lot facing Snow Street, along an inset section of the construction fence. For all other times, please [check with the parish administrator](#) for availability.

**Wheelchair Access and Accessible Parking:** Please find wheelchair access from the sidewalk on Westminster Street into the church. Handicapped parking spaces have been posted for Sundays on Mathewson Street near Westminster.





## Music at Grace

### Thank you for warming our hearts

Grace Church parishioners, friends and delighted passers-by gathered on and around the front steps of Grace Church last Saturday afternoon for a wonderful old-fashioned Carol Sing. With hot cider in one hand and song lyrics in the other, we formed a merry crowd of revelers who raised their voices in celebration of approaching Christmastide.



By the hour of our gathering the temperatures had climbed substantially from their early-morning lows, though remained cool enough for us to maintain a fitting backdrop of fresh snow underfoot.

We here at Grace would like to thank everyone who came out to take part in this festive and fun musical experience, and for ensuring even on the coldest days that the warmth of this community radiates out into our downtown community. Thank you also to parishioner Michael DeGrandpre for

taking some great photos of the event.

### Noontime Organ Concert January 5

Please take time out from your day at Noon on Thursday, January 5 for a special concert featuring Fred Jodry on the Grace Church organ. He will perform *La Nativite du Seigneur* by Olivier Messiaen, which features a series of meditations on the birth of our Lord.

Fred Jodry is the Director of Choral Activities at Brown University, founder of Schola Cantorum (a 12-voice ensemble dedicated to the performance of Renaissance sacred music), and Music Director at First Unitarian Church in Providence. On April 7, 2017, he will conduct a special performance here at Grace Church of [Bach's St. Matthew Passion](#) featuring the Brown University Chorus and Schola Cantorum together with the Choristers of Grace Church. This will be the Gala Finale of the 50th Season of *Museum Concerts*.



## December 24, 2016 - Christmas Eve

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

For the text of the Christmas Eve readings, [please click here](#):

[Isaiah 9:2-7 ~ Psalm 96 ~ Titus 2:11-14 ~ Luke 2:1-14](#)

Would you like to add someone to the prayer list? [Please click here](#) to submit a name, or call the church office at (401) 331-3225. Names are kept on the list for a month, and can be renewed at any time. Those received by Wednesday will appear in the same week's bulletin.

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## December 25, 2016 - Christmas Day

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born this day of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

For the text of the Christmas Day readings, [please click here](#):

[Isaiah 52:7-10 ~ Psalm 98 ~ Hebrews 1:1-4 ~ John 1:1-14](#)



## Bishop Knisely's 2016 Christmas Message



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## Connect with Grace

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Sincerely,



Your Grace Church Clergy & Staff  
401-331-3225

*The Mission of Grace Church is to build, by the grace of God, a loving and joyful community which lives the gospel through worship, proclamation and service to each other, to downtown Providence, and beyond.*