

news

WEST END COLLEGIATE CHURCH

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New York, New York
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NEWSLETTER for December, A.D. 2009

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

“I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.” -*Charles Dickens*

FOUR VERY SPECIAL EVENTS in DECEMBER (All Events are FREE)

Community Christmas Carol-Sing
Tuesday, December 8, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Decorating Party
Friday, December 11 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The Christmas Concert
Sunday, December 20 at 3:00pm

A Christmas Eve Pageant of Lessons and Carols –
Thursday, December 24 at 6:30 p.m.

CONSISTORY

Local Consistory will meet on Monday, December 14, at 6:45 pm.

CHURCH BUILDING CLOSURE

On Fridays, December 25 and January 1 the Church Office and programs will be closed in observance of Christmas Day and New Year's Day

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE THEMES

- December 6 THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT THE LORD'S SUPPER
*Saint Nicholas Day Service
Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79
Sermon: “Breaking Out of the Ordinary, Part 2: Preparing for Change”
- December 13 THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
Zephaniah 3:14-20, Luke 3:7-18
Sermon: “Breaking Out of the Ordinary, Part 3: Coming Home”
- December 20 THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT
Psalm 80:1-7, Luke 1:39-45
Sermon: “Breaking Out of the Ordinary, Part 4: It's Holy Out There”
- December 27 THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
Psalm 148, Luke 2:41-52
Sermon: “What to Do While We Wait”

SAINT NICHOLAS DAY SERVICE*...

...will feature Chris Moore, telling the Dutch version of the Saint Nicholas (Sinter Klaas and Schwarte Piet, or Santa and Pete) story and possibly Gajus Scheltema, Consul General of the Netherlands, reading a biblical Christmas lesson.

SERVICE PROGRAMS

Tuesdays - SUPPER CENTER for the hungry and homeless
4:00 p.m. – Bible Study
4:30 p.m. – Supper

Saturdays - SATURDAY CENTER for the mentally and emotionally healing
12 Noon to 3:00 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

It is hard for me to believe that I have finally returned to the U.S. and have officially joined the West End Church family. Thank you for all you have done to make me feel welcome. It would be an understatement to say that I am in the midst of transition—moving from Oman to New York, beginning a new position, living apart from family for the next six months, and soon joining the ranks of “empty nesters.” We keep telling ourselves that if we can just make it through this next year, all will be ok. Strangely, however, we are experiencing *coincidentia oppositorum*. It is a phrase that means “agreement of opposites,” and in spirituality it expresses how contradiction and opposition can dissipate to reveal unity and wholeness where none seems possible. My family anticipated our stress level would be off the charts. Yet we feel that God’s presence is quietly weaving together the disparate parts of our lives so that we feel whole and at home in a time of great change.

With Christmas soon upon us, I may need a fresh infusion of *coincidentia oppositorum*. It is a time for all of us when the demands at work continue, social obligations increase, and the holidays bring out the quirks of our family histories. It is also a time we can embrace anew the gift of God through Christ. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.” These simple words reveal the possibility of a new way of seeing and a new way of being wherever we find ourselves in life. May God pull together the many pieces of our lives in a way that we experience peace this Christmas. — *The Reverend Michael S. Bos*

COMMUNITY CAROL-SING

The West End Collegiate Church invites neighbors to join in singing Christmas Carols at a Community Carol-Sing on Tuesday, December 8. From 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., we will gather in the sanctuary to sing everyone’s favorite carols, led by Wendy Realmuto and Cynthia Powell. This outreach to our community is sponsored by the Hospitality and Worship Committees in an effort to make ourselves and our celebration of the season more visible and welcoming to the neighborhood. Please join us — come when you can — stay as long as you like.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Adult Christian Education continues Sunday mornings from 9:45 to 10:45. In December, the major themes of the Belhar Confession, which the church is considering adopting as a new standard (the first since the 16th century!), are unity and reconciliation. During Advent, as we anticipate the birth of the Prince of Peace, we continue to study the scriptures that support that call to peace and reconciliation with our neighbors, in all the communities in which we live.

For four weeks beginning January 10 Jocelyn Camp will lead the Adult Christian Education class in a study of the literature of faith. The subject is “Songs of Innocence and Experience: Poems by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Blake and Charles Causley.” We will look at the poets’ use of simple verse forms to convey profound ideas. Readings will be available at the back of the sanctuary a week before each class, and participants are encouraged to read the texts before attending class. Please join us in room 25.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Sunday, January 3, 2010 at 11:00 a.m. will be our Epiphany Festival of Light. At 3:00 that afternoon we will gather in the sanctuary to celebrate the Installation of The Reverend Michael S. Bos as the Fifty-Fourth Minister of the Collegiate Church of New York in line of succession since Jonas Michaëlius in 1628 and as the Fifth Minister-in-Charge of the West End Collegiate Church. This will be both a solemn and a joyous milestone in the life of our congregation, and we hope all members can be present.

In January, the Hospitality Committee will arrange Small Group Gatherings with The Reverend Michael S. Bos and members of West End Collegiate Church. If you would like to host a gathering, please speak to Katherine Charapko. Once the holiday bustle has settled, sign-up sheets will be available in the back of the sanctuary.

PLAYSCHOOL

Preschool Limits and Boundaries: “Who Is in Charge?”

On Monday, December 7 from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. we invite the parents of preschool age children to join the Playschool Director, Jenny Butch, and an educational colleague in a discussion of the value and necessity of setting appropriate limits and boundaries for young children. The forum will be held in the Parlor.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING PARTY

Please plan to join us on Friday evening, December 11 for our Christmas Decorating Party. Supper will be available from 6:00 to 7:00. After the meal we will dress the sanctuary for Christmas-tide, fashioning wreaths, hanging swags and garlands of greenery, and decorating the Christmas trees. This will be an evening of fun for the whole family.

A CONCERT FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

The Ministry of Music will present the Advent and Christmas Concert on Sunday afternoon, December 20 at 3:00 in the sanctuary, conducted by Cynthia Powell. Performing classical and jazz seasonal works including Gaetano Schiassi’s *Christmas Symphony for Strings and Harp*, Mendelssohn’s *Weihnachten*, Daniel Pinkham’s *Christmas Cantata*, and the world premiere of *In The Bleak Midwinter* by Dennis Anderson, the choir and soloists will be accompanied by members of The New York Philharmonic, with special guests The New York Saxophone Quartet. Admission is free, and a reception will follow. This is a wonderful way to introduce friends, relatives and colleagues to West End!

ACUPUNCTURE AT WEST END

In December, Greg Fessenden, a New York State Licensed Acupuncturist, will provide acupuncture treatment sessions on Sundays starting at 12:30 p.m. in our Worship Center. The fee for a one hour session is \$50. Many insurance carriers will cover acupuncture for reimbursement. Please look for sign-up sheets at the back of the sanctuary or call the church office for more information or to schedule appointments.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

Looking for an unusual gift for the person who has “everything”? How about *Liber A 1628-1700*? According to Chris Moore “*Liber A* is very quietly among the most important documents in American history. Freedom of religion, separation of church and state (and even colonial instruction on how-to-build-a-church, beer included!) are within this informative, well-crafted, documentary window frame into our past. *Liber A* is eyewitness to some of the very first changes in America. This masterful translation by Francis J. Sypher, Jr. brings much history to light.”

We have several copies of *Liber A* available at a cost of \$20.00 each. Please make your check payable to “The Collegiate Churches of New York” and forward it to Patricia Whitsett at the West End Collegiate Church.

CHRISTMAS GIVING

It’s a sad fact that many inner-city children are afflicted with asthma. Often the parents of these children have little left from their paychecks for toys at Christmas. This Christmas season, West End Collegiate Church will join with the Harlem Children’s Zone Asthma Initiative (HCZAI) to provide toys for the children who benefit from their program, mostly children from Central Harlem who are 12 years of age and younger. When you are making your Christmas list this year, please remember the children of HCZAI and add a toy for a child who will be very grateful. More information and a sign-up list will appear in the sanctuary in December, or speak to Clarice Graham or Sandy Klihr-Beall for more information.

OUR ARTISTS AT WORK

Julia Turner and Albert Watson will sing in Handel’s *Messiah* on December 14 in Carnegie Hall with the Oratorio Society of New York. For tickets, speak to Julia or Albert, or go to the website www.oratoriosocietyofny.org.

CHILDREN’S HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Children’s Church School, Young Disciples, God Squad, and Children & Worship will not meet on December 27 and January 3. The Church School and the Worship Programs for the children will resume on January 10. The Church School for Children is from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. The Worship Programs commence immediately after the Children’s Message during worship. We are seeking volunteers to serve as special greeters for our three worship programs. If you can be a special greeter for one or more Sundays, please sign up at the back of the sanctuary.

CLUB FOR KIDS/YOUTH GROUP

Club meets each Friday evening from 6:00 to 8:30 in the Church Parlor. Youth Group meets from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. in The Gorsuch House (306 West 77th Street). Club is for kids from first grade through eighth grade who like pizza and play, fellowship and fun. In December we will devote part of our precious time to rehearsing our Christmas Pageant. Club and Youth Group will not meet on Friday, December 25, nor on Friday, January 1, because of the Christmas/New Year holidays. In January we look forward to a long-awaited overnight and another fun Ice Skating Party in Central Park. If you would like to chaperone any of our Club events, please call Jim Sterner at the church office.

PAGEANT REHEARSALS

Rehearsals for all children participating in this year’s Christmas Eve Pageant of Lessons and Carols will take place during the Church School hour, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., on the three Advent Sundays beginning December 6 and during Club and Youth Group, 6:00 to 8:30 (Youth Group until 10:00) on Friday evenings December 4 and 18. Jim Sterner will lead the boys and girls through their parts of the Pageant, while Tim Mathis will lead the music rehearsals for the Pageant during Worship. Bring your child to Arlene’s room on Sunday mornings for exact instructions on where to go for costume fittings, scene study and regular class with their teachers. There will be a *REQUIRED DRESS REHEARSAL* for all Pageant participants on Tuesday, December 22 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. (Parents are most welcome to stay and shepherd our incredibly well-behaved children.) If your child doesn’t attend Church School at 10:00 a.m. but would like to be in the Pageant, call Jim Sterner at the church office. If your child will be out of town Christmas Eve, come anyway to enjoy our regular Church School class with our great teachers.

CHOIR SCHEDULE

The Choir will be rehearsing Wednesday nights from 7:00 to 9:00 and Sunday mornings from 9:00 to 9:45 in preparation for the annual Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 20 at 3:00 p.m.

