

Advent & Christmas

at *Grace Church, Scarborough*

A Message from our Incumbent.....

Advent sounds like Advent. Advent means “to come towards..” and Advent means “to turn your attention towards...” “Towards” for us Christians, is towards the beginning of the story of Jesus.

Jesus is the little peasant baby, the refugee kid, growing up in the messy Middle East, in countries with soldiers and insurgents, with militias and religious extremists and a superpower growing frustrated and about to strike. Often Jesus’ life seems so far away, but as I write these words, it is as if little has changed.

The story of Jesus, begins with his conception, with the prophecies of a Messiah coming, point to him, not as peasant, but as the Christ. We, who are Christians, know this, because we read the story backwards, or in hindsight. We only know about Jesus historically because we already know him as Lord, as Saviour, as Teacher, as Friend and as Christ, the revealer of the heart of God.

Every year, as our religious New Year begins, Advent call us to *turn our attention* towards Jesus. For me that means diverting my whole attention from family’s visit, food preparations, present buying, going to see another installment of Tolkein! And Advent calls me *to turn my heart* towards prayer, meditation, discipleship, Lordship, love and redemption. All those words which recall to me how Jesus changed and changes my life, again and again.

For us, Grace Church, as a community in South Scarborough we need to be public. We need to Advertise Advent! We need to turn people’s attention: *“Hey, did you know that my church is now a year old and we are having so many things happening for Christmas! You should come with me! Look! I have a list in this newsletter!”*

And we need to turn towards Jesus in our hearts and our lives. Gifts given to the poor and those who cannot return a gift to you are gifts to God. Help to the helpless and prayers for the powerless are part of coming towards Jesus, as we look to see him in the unexpected face.

The story of Jesus is our story. It is the one we tell to make sense of a chaotic world. It is the one we tell ourselves as we worship and grow through study. It is the story we tell, in parts, to others as we offer help for them to find sense, love, redemption in their lives too. It is the gift we received “for Christ-mass” that we give away again and again. So bring you attention back to the story, and bring yourself back into the story, then take the story and make it a model for your life and for others.

David.

“David's New Year's Eve Challenge”

If 30 or more people sign up to say they will attend a 11:00 p m service on December 31st, he will, with their help, design and run a service.

Come celebrate
Christmas
with us
@ Grace Church!

CHRISTMAS SERVICE SCHEDULE

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS:

A Children's Christmas Pageant

Christmas Eve - December 24th at 4:00 p.m.

An informal family service with Communion, featuring a Christmas pageant.

Midnight Mass

Christmas Eve - December 24th at 10:30 p.m.

Eucharistic Celebration announcing the birth of the newborn King! Join us as we sing traditional carols of the season!

Holy Communion

Christmas Day - December 25th at 9:30 a.m.

A Said Eucharist celebrating the birth of Christ.

Christmas Cantata - "Appalachian Winter" *By Joseph M. Martin*

Saturday, December 13, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Presented by: The Combined Choirs of Grace Church Scarborough and The Barbados Ex-Police

"Composed in the spirit of folk music, the cantata combines traditional sounds with more rustic elements, creating a blend that is fresh and pleasing!"

\$20 Adults, \$10 Children (12 and under).

Tickets available at the door or by calling the Church.

What is a Christmas Cantata? "A Christmas cantata or Nativity cantata is a cantata, music for voice or voices in several movements, for Christmas. The importance of the feast inspired many composers to write cantatas for the occasion, some designed to be performed in church services, others for concert or secular celebration."



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