

# Grace Notes

VOLUME 87

RYE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • 882 BOSTON POST ROAD • RYE • NY • 10580

DECEMBER 2008



## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Christmas is the most gentle and joyous of holidays. It has been celebrated in caves and castles, in isolated monasteries during the Middle Ages, in Krakow's crowded Stare Miasto, in brimming African village churches, in the splendor of renaissance Florence, in the bombed out ashes of Dresden and Coventry, in Boulder and Birmingham, in the beauty and majesty of Washington National Cathedral, and in the drafty warmth of white frame churches on snow- and ice-covered prairies.

Not even the distortions and vulgarities that have come to be associated with Christmas in some parts of our culture can extinguish the exquisite hope that it prompts within us. There are sufficient needs within the lives of each one of us that we are filled with longing for the Advent, for God, for a fresh appearance, a substantial experience of Christ's saving presence in our lives.

In Advent, we wait with hope for the appearance of one who is already with us.

*O come thou Dayspring,  
come and cheer our spirits  
By Thine advent here  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
And death's dark shadows put to flight  
Rejoice, rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to thee,  
O Israel!*

With affection and hope,

*Nancy A. De Vries*

The Rev. Dr. Nancy A. De Vries

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Wednesday, December 24



### FAMILY SERVICE

4:00 p.m.

*(Childcare will be available)*



### CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS with soloists and instruments

7:00 p.m.



### FESTIVAL CHORAL COMMUNION SERVICE with choir and instruments 11:00 p.m.

## ◆ JOY \* FAITH ◆ COMFORT \* LOVE ◆

The family of Rye Presbyterian Church  
is most cordially invited to the manse

on Sunday afternoon

December 14, 2008

from 4:00 — 7:00 p.m.

for a festive, fireside Christmas reception

with Dr. Nancy De Vries.

## ◆ PEACE \* HOPE ◆ MUSIC \* GOODIES ◆



SAVE THE DATE  
CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING  
DECEMBER 7TH

## Christian Education, Mission and Fellowship

### Church School

As we begin the season of Advent, we have a special opportunity as parents and teachers to remind our children of the deeper meaning of this sacred time. Advent means “coming.” For Christians, the season of Advent not only marks the four weeks before Christmas, but the beginning of the liturgical and lectionary year.

In the midst of all of the frantic preparation, we need to take time to reflect, pray and simply enjoy the company of one another. In Church School, we are encouraging our children to focus on the preparation, planning and anticipation of the birth of Christ. Each classroom observes the four weeks of Advent with a wreath and a calendar. Our younger children learn about the journey Mary and Joseph took by becoming familiar with our beautiful crèches.

For the second year, we will celebrate the beginning of Advent with a special Advent wreath-making workshop in the Assembly Room after the family service on **November 30**. Come and be a part of this joyful event!

We will also be collecting newborn baby clothing, blankets and accessories for the new mother’s at Open Door Medical Center. Layettes should be new and wrapped in clear plastic. Enclose your Christmas greeting, if you wish, and place your gift under the Christmas tree in the Sanctuary or bring it to the Christmas Pageant.

We will continue our annual gift-giving tradition with the Carver Center by collecting monetary donations to purchase gift cards for the teens who participate in Carver programs. The adolescent population is often forgotten during the holidays. Our young people will be hosting the collection at coffee hour. Make a donation of \$30 and receive an ornament for our paper Christmas tree! In advance, we thank all of the teachers, parents and children for making this Christmas season so full of joy and giving for those less fortunate than we are.

### Middle School Connection

#### Wednesday Afternoons

**December 3 and 17**

**5:30 – 6:45 p.m.**

“What IS the purpose of Connection?” asked one of the middleschoolers on the way to our annual rock climbing adventure in New Rochelle. One of the others in the group spoke up. “Connection!” she said, “to connect with God and to connect with each other.” I couldn’t have said it any better myself.

This month we’ll be meeting twice to further those very connections. All sixth to eighth graders are welcome.

#### Impact:

#### Serving Our Community and Beyond

This past October, Impact teamed up with students from Rye High School to collect and sort winter clothing for the Children’s Collective Drive.

On **December 12**, the group will prep a home in Mamaroneck for interior painting, sanding and washing down walls, as part of the Red Chair Project.

Our holiday projects scheduled for **December 14** will include a party and gift giving at the Seneca House in the Bronx and locally at the 2nd Chance Ministries in Port Chester.

### Women’s Saturday Morning Bible Study

**December 6**

**9:15 a.m. in the Library.**

### Wednesday Morning Bible Study

**December 3 and 17**

**9:15 a.m. in the Library.**

Our reading of the history of Israel’s kings continues.

### Men’s Bible Study

**Sunday Evenings,**

**December 7 and 14**

**8:00 p.m. in the Library**

### Confirmation

It’s the largest class in the last decade – 34 strong! So large that we’ve split into two sections to insure full participation and engagement as we work through some of the key questions of faith: Are we all here simply by accident or are we a part of some more intentional plan? If God made the world and declared it good, what happened? What has God done to set things right? And most importantly, where do I fit in this whole scheme?

To prompt thought and discussion, this year’s ninth graders have written papers reflecting on who they are, their favorite parts of life, and even what they might want their own obituaries to say some day. This month, they will be writing a reflection paper on a passage from Luke’s gospel. They have been assigned readings from the Bible as well as authors like Douglas Miller (Blue Like Jazz) and Bill Bryson.

In an effort to keep up the good work, there will be a regular class meeting on **Sunday, December 7**, after church in the Westminster Room. On **December 14**, the class will be meeting after church to do some creative and artistic preparation for the Christmas Eve family service. Best to wear clothes you don’t mind getting messy! We will share a pizza lunch as well. Reflection papers on a passage from the gospel of Luke are due that day!

The Confirmation class schedule is as follows:

**Sunday, December 7:** Section 2 (I-Z) meets at 9:00 a.m. in the Westminster Room; Section 1 (A-H) meets after worship.

**Sunday, December 14:** the full group will meet after worship to work on the Christmas project.

**2008 Christmas Joy Offering to go to Open Door Medical Center in Port Chester and Doctors Without Borders**

As we enter the holiday season to prepare for Christmas observances and holiday festivities, to reestablish ties with friends near and far, and to prepare shopping lists, it might be a good time to extend our thoughts beyond our own plans and to consider the situations of those less fortunate than we in our uncertain and troubled world. The Mission and Outreach Committee encourages your special consideration of the Christmas Joy Offering, a tradition at RPC for many years.

Again this year we are asking that the congregation respond to the needs of two organizations, one local and one international, which are devoted to providing medical care to and indeed rescuing people burdened by illness, violence and tragedy, sometimes to the point of complete despair. In Port Chester, Open Door Family Medical Center offers “quality health care and human services at affordable prices to the economically disadvantaged.” Doctors Without Borders is an international medical humanitarian organization working in nearly 60 countries to assist people whose survival is threatened by violence, neglect, or catastrophe. It serves to remedy the condition of being “neglected and forgotten.”

Both of these organizations are leaders in their fields and provide solid value for the dollars expended. Contributions to Christmas Joy will be divided equally between the two. Please reflect upon what it means to be without help or hope and give as generously as your heart allows. Christmas Joy envelopes will be placed in the pews during the month of December or regular envelopes can be designated “Christmas Joy” for this offering. We also encourage those who wish to bring layette sets for infants, wrapped in clear plastic, to put under the sanctuary Christmas tree for delivery to new mothers at Open Door. Together, let’s bring as much Christmas joy as we can during this sacred season!

**Be an Angel**

What would Christmas at RPC be without the beautiful array of wreaths, garlands, poinsettias and trees which adorns our historic church? And what would our worship services be without the wonderful music so gloriously presented by our choir, soloists and instrumentalists? Be an angel and help defray the cost of our Christmas decorations and music. You may do so in memory of a loved one, in honor of someone special, or in gratitude for God’s gifts and blessings, family or friends. Just call the church office with your thoughtful donation, or use the envelopes in this issue of *Grace Notes*. To be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin, your donation must be received no later than **December 10**.

**Tree Lighting and Caroling Party Sunday, December 7**

The new tradition continues! All are invited to this special event that ushers in the Christmas season! Bring a favorite Christmas dessert to share in the Assembly Room at 6:30 p.m. After some holiday sweets, hot chocolate or coffee, and a little Christmas craft, the Children’s Choir will lead us as we gather around the tree on the front lawn to sing and welcome the season.



**Dealing with Change**

As we all know, the current economic crisis has affected many members of our church and our community. Job losses, vanishing savings and financial uncertainty have left people feeling stressed and anxious about the future. And the upcoming holiday season with its message of joy and cheer might actually amplify these worries.

RPC’s Stephen Ministry team would like to remind you that there are trained Stephen Ministers ready to walk with you through these difficult times. If you or someone you know could use a confidential, non-judgmental, one-on-one conversation with a Stephen Minister, please contact us. We know that such meetings won’t change your financial situation. But they might give you a new motivation, courage, and faith to move forward into the future, whatever it may bring. That, with God’s help, is change we can believe in.

For more information or a confidential conversation, please contact Dr. De Vries or Reverend Love at 967-0842, or call Stephen Leader Tav Rogers at 921-1809.



The annual tree lighting and caroling at RPC

## Sundays in December



## The Bulletin Board



### December 7 — Second Sunday of Advent

**8:30** Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel.

**9:00** Confirmation Class, Section 2 (I-Z), Westminster Room.

**10:00** Holy Communion Worship, Sanctuary. Reverend Love preaching.

Church School. Children go to Chapel after the children's message.

**11:15** Confirmation Class, Section 1 (A-H) Westminster Room.

**11:15** Thrift Shop Christmas Sale, Assembly Room.

**5:00** Impact, Youth Room.

**6:30** Tree Lighting and Caroling, Assembly Room and Outside.

**8:00** Men's Bible Study, Library.

### December 14 — Third Sunday of Advent "Cantata Sunday"

**8:30** No Service today..

**10:00** Morning Worship, Sanctuary.

No Church School. Children may stay in church or go to the Westminster and Youth Rooms for movies.

**11:00** Confirmation Class Christmas Service Project, Westminster Room.

**4:00** Manse Open House.

**8:00** Men's Bible Study, Library.

### December 21 — Fourth Sunday of Advent

**8:30** Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel.

**10:00** Morning Worship, Sanctuary. Dr. De Vries preaching. Church School, Children attend worship through children's message.

**4:00** Christmas Pageant, Sanctuary.

### December 28 — Christmas I

**8:30** Holy Communion, Crawford Chapel.

**10:00** Family Service, Sanctuary.

Reverend Love preaching. No Church School.

**Please join us for coffee hour in the**

**Assembly Room after ten o'clock worship.**

### A Special Thanks

Thank you to all of the children who so generously donated their beloved Halloween candy for Operation Gratitude. We collected over 200 pounds of it! The Halloween candy request appeared on the wish list for soldiers in Iraq. Seven boxes were shipped to a California military base and will be flown to Iraq as part of their holiday drive. Thank you again!

The RPC Women's Association invites you to a

### Holiday Jubilee and Optional Cookie Exchange

**Wednesday, December 3**

**10:00 a.m. — 12:00 noon**

**at the home of Andrea Stewart  
5 Boxwood Lane, Rye**

During the busy holiday season, this is a fun, relaxing opportunity to make a holiday craft for ourselves and for others in need. Leave the hustle and bustle behind, and come create a gift for 15 women whose loved ones are, or have been, incarcerated. They are known as the Sisters' Circle, which is part of the RPC prison outreach.

**Sunday, December 14**

### Cantata Sunday at Morning Worship

Chancel Choir and Orchestra

*(No 8:30 service today)*

### Francis Poulenc — "GLORIA" Tchaikovsky — SERENADE, op. 48

This annual Advent service of music speaks with a Gallic accent this year. Poulenc's "Gloria" is festive, fun, and beautifully lyrical. Tchaikovsky's Serenade is warm and romantic. All the instrumentalists are members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and are among the finest players anywhere.

RPC's Annual

### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21  
at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

# December Calendar of Meetings, Programs, and Events

## BOARD MEETINGS

**Deacons:** Wednesday, December 10, 6:30 p.m., Love Shack.

**Session:** Wednesday, December 17, 7:30 p.m., Westminster Room.

**Trustees:** Wednesday, December 10. Time and place TBA.

## WORSHIP AND STUDY

**Worship:** Sundays 8:30 a.m., Crawford Chapel; 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary.

**Christmas Eve Services, Wednesday, December 24:** 4:00 p.m., Family Service; 7:00 p.m., Lessons and Carols; 11:00 p.m., Festival Choral Communion.

**Church School:** Sundays: December 7, Regular Classes, children attend worship through the children's message then go to Chapel; December 14, no Church School, children are welcome to stay in church or go to the Westminster and Youth Rooms for movies; December 21, Regular Classes, children attend worship through the children's message then go to their classrooms; December 28, Family Service, no Church School.

**Confirmation:** Sundays, December 7 — Section 2 (I-Z), 9:00 a.m., Westminster Room; Section 1 (A-H), 11:15 a.m., Westminster Room; December 14, 11:00 a.m., Westminster Room.

**Men's Bible Study:** Sundays, December 7 and 14, 8:00 p.m., Library.

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study:** December 3 and 17, 9:15 a.m., Library.

**Women's Bible Study:** Saturday, December 6, 9:15 a.m., Library.

## YOUTH

**Boy Scouts:** Troop #2, Tuesdays (except December 23 and 30), 7:00 p.m., Assembly Room.

**Connection:** Wednesdays, December 3 and 17, 5:30 — 6:45 p.m., Westminster Room.

**Girl Scout Leaders:** Wednesday, December 10, 1:00 p.m., Library.

**Impact:** Sundays, December 7, 5:00 p.m., Youth Room; December 14, Seneca House, Bronx and 2nd Chance Ministries, Port Chester.

## MUSIC

**Cantata Sunday:** Sunday, December 14, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary.

**Chancel Choir Rehearsal:** Sundays, 9:15 and 11:15 a.m., Choir Room; Thursdays (except December 25 and January 1), 7:45 p.m., Choir Room.

**Children's Choir Rehearsal:** Tuesdays, 3:45 p.m., Choir Room.

**Children's Christmas Pageant:** Sunday, December 21, 4:00 p.m., Sanctuary.

## OTHER CHURCH MEETINGS, EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

**Christian Education Committee:** Wednesday, December 10, 7:30 p.m., Library.

**Dinner at Noon:** Friday, December 19, 5:00 p.m., Kitchen; Saturday, December 20, 9:00 a.m., Kitchen.

**Greening of the Church:** Wednesday, December 10, 9:30 a.m., Sanctuary.

**Homeless Overnight:** Saturday, January 3, 5:00 p.m., Assembly Room.

**Manse Open House:** Sunday, December 14, 4:00 p.m.

**Mission and Outreach Committee:** Wednesday, December 3, 7:30 p.m., Library.

**Sandwichmakers:** Thursday, December 18, 11:00 a.m., Kitchen and Assembly Room.

**Stephen Ministry:** Stephen Leaders: Tuesdays, December 2 and 16, 9:15 a.m., Library;

Stephen Ministers Continuing Education and Supervision, Tuesdays, December 2 and 16, 7:00 p.m., Westminster Room.

**Worship and Music Committee:** Wednesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m., Kevin's office.

**Thrift Shop:** Thursdays (except December 25 and January 1), 10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m., Downstairs;

Thrift Shop Christmas Sale, Sunday, December 7, 11:15 a.m., Assembly Room.

**Tree Lighting and Caroling:** Sunday, December 7, 6:30 p.m., Assembly Room and Outside.

**Women's Association:** Board Meeting, Monday, December 1, 9:15 a.m., Library;

Holiday Jubilee and Optional Cookie Exchange, Wednesday, December 3, 10:00 a.m., Andrea Stewart's home, 5 Boxwood Lane;

International Lunch at Chauvin, Friday, December 12, 12:30 p.m.

## OUTREACH AND SUPPORT GROUPS

**AA Group:** Thursdays (except December 25), 7:30 p.m., Westminster Room.

**AA Rye Harrison Group:** Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Assembly Room.

**Mr. Westchester/AIAnon Group:** Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Library.

**Rye Association for the Handicapped:** Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m., Westminster Room.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The church offices will be closed Thursdays, December 25 and January 1, and Friday, December 26.

PHONE: 914 967-0842

Email: [RPC@ryepc.com](mailto:RPC@ryepc.com)

FAX: 914 967-0267

Website: [www.ryepc.com](http://www.ryepc.com)

## God's Green Market

It's second season a growing success story, God's Green Market this summer farmed and distributed over \$36,000 of fresh produce free of charge to scores of needy families in Port Chester. This innovative farm project that RPC's Mission and Outreach Committee helped to launch is now sponsored by the Interfaith Coalition for Community Outreach (ICCO), the Council for Community Services in Port Chester and the Westchester County Department of Health. Farmland is leased in Goshen, NY and farmed by a variety of volunteers, scouts and church groups. All produce, from acorn squash to zucchini, beans to potatoes and corn to cabbage, even okra!, is distributed through a voucher system on Saturday afternoons at St. Peter's Episcopal Church to families less fortunate. RPC recently received an award certificate for its help in providing seed monies (literally). Special thanks goes to courageous RPC members who have volunteered to work the farm or help in the distribution.

### New Church Officers

#### Session

Wayne Atwell  
Andrew Francella  
Lisa Johnson  
George (Pat) McGunagle  
Julie Rohde (Youth Elder)  
Douglas Shanks  
Monte Stubbs

#### Board of Trustees

Frank J. Culross  
Barbara Cummings  
Joan G. Rall  
Christopher Reich  
Kathryn Stack  
Sarah Thompson

#### Board of Deacons

Max Bonsall (Youth Deacon)  
Allison Chader  
Thomas (Tim) Harvey III  
Kate Khanna  
Stephanie McKean  
(Youth Deacon)  
Douglas MacLaury  
Debbie Montalto  
Michelle Robertson  
Eva Spelman  
Howard E. (Trip) Sullivan  
Betty Vecchiolla

## Helping to Save Our Planet: The Preschool Goes Green

There are several ways the preschool community is paying attention to the call for this planet to be "greener" and our need to be aware of the use of our resources. Several examples from our classrooms include the use of natural materials. In our classes you will see baskets filled with pinecones, stones, shells, beans, driftwood used for collage, manipulative play in sorting and counting, and in project work such as the natural materials that were used in the model of the school made for the 50th Birthday. Children also play with traditional puzzles, dolls, blocks, and toys but we find the addition of these natural "props" extends the children's thinking and interaction into unexpected depth. The rooms are remarkably more beautiful as well.

Another example is we regularly "shop" at two recycling centers located in Providence, RI, and on Long Island. This lessens our materials expenditures as well as provides intriguing, beautiful, and unexpected materials for the children to work with. We will be using some of these materials on the light tables again this year for the school-wide holiday project at Christmas time. The shelves in our supply room are stacked with labeled storage bins making these varied materials easily accessible by the teachers and children. We have bins of belt buckles, wooden spools, pieces of sea glass, tiny boxes, rectangular pieces of acrylic for light tables and block areas, and other materials that have no specific name and provide open-ended possibilities that the children discover.

Finally the church and school are exploring "green," environmentally friendly, cleaning products. Working on this initiative from the church are Emily Irving and Alfredo Betancur. From RPNS the committee members are Gretchen Stack, Nicole Gibbs and Deirdre Winters. They have contacted the environmental committees of the Rye public schools and Patti Woods, the head of The Grassroots Organization, Mt. Sinai Hospital, which has long researched this issue.

## Mark Your Calendars and Save These Dates

### Ladies' Night Out Thursday, January 22

Wonda Clyatt has graciously offered to host a Ladies' Night Out Beading Party. Beat those winter doldrums, enjoy some fun and fellowship, and leave with a beautiful piece of jewelry! Look for details in the next issue of *Grace Notes*.

### Empty Bowls Sunday, January 25

Help fight hunger in our area. After morning worship, come to the Assembly Room and purchase a beautiful ceramic bowl created and donated by the Clay Arts Center in Port Chester and our middle school youth. Then enjoy a delicious soup lunch by Cornerstone Caterers. This is the eighth year that Rye Presbyterian Church has hosted this unique event.

### Annual Progressive Dinner Saturday, February 7

Hosted by the Women's Association, RPC's annual Progressive Dinner will begin with appetizers at the home of Robin and George Russell starting at 6:00 p.m. Then move on to the church for a delicious dinner, dessert and — new this year — live entertainment! The theme this year is "Cabaret"; the cost is \$50 per person. Sign up at the Reception Desk in January.

## Mission and Outreach

Please take a look at the Mission and Outreach display on *Safe Passage* on the bulletin board across from the Reception Desk. It is the first in our series of displays on our programs with the goal of better informing the congregation about these activities.

## Christmas Sale

All the Thrift Shop's BEST Christmas donations will be for sale during coffee hour in the Assembly Room on **December 7**. Refresh your Christmas decorations, or find a gift for that special someone, with beautiful donated items — some brand new — priced to go.

**Save These Dates**

The Reverend Dr. Harvey Sindima has accepted Rye Presbyterian Church’s invitation to present a program (lecture and discussion) planned by the Adult Education Committee, *The Islamizing of Africa and the Challenge to Christians*. This lecture will be given on **Thursday evening, December 4, at 7:30 p.m.** at RPC. Dr. Sindima will discuss the Saudi-directed, Wahabi-(fundamentalist) influenced Muslim mission and conversion effort in Africa today, the impact thereof, and the resultant challenge for Christians. There is no charge for this lecture and it is open to the community.

Dr. Sindima holds the Ph.D. magna cum laude from Princeton Theological Seminary in systematic theology and is an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church. Coming from Malawi, in southeastern Africa, Dr. Sindima has lived in the United States for a number of years and has studied, lectured and taught internationally. He is a well-published author, resulting in his being the first to be named Presidential Scholar by Colgate University’s president.

In addition to his scholarship and teaching, Dr. Sindima directs the Blantyre North Relief Project which daily feeds hundreds of African AIDS orphans in the Blantyre region of Malawi, along with his sister, Rebecca Michembo, who is the on-site coordinator. Rye Presbyterian Church supports the BNRP through a grant made by the Mission and Outreach Committee. On **Saturday morning, December 6, at 10:00 a.m.**, here at RPC, Dr. Sindima will speak about the Blantyre North Relief Project.

All are welcome to both events. Please encourage those you know to attend; this is a rare and significant opportunity.

*In Memoriam*

**Alice Wormser**  
November 1, 2008

**MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE  
Stewardship 2009**

**Faith for the Future**

Through the generosity of a member, we are offering a matching gift program for any gift in excess of a pledge made for 2008.

If, for example, a member’s pledge for 2009 is increased by \$500 over the 2008 pledge, that \$500 increase will be matched. This challenge will match increased pledges up to a total of \$100,000. We hope members will increase their pledges this year to meet this challenge. This matching gift program will close as of December 31, 2008.

The 2009 Stewardship Campaign is drawing to a close so please remember to make your pledge if you have not already done so. If you have already pledged, but want to increase your pledge to take advantage of this challenge, please send a note or email to HannahJane Hurlburt at hannahjane@ryepc.com, or Emily Irving at eirving@ryepc.com, or call either of them at 967-0842.

**Church and Justice Sunday — January 11, 2009**

On **January 11** Rye Presbyterian Church will celebrate our 15th annual Church and Justice worship service. This service is led by graduates of the New York Theological Seminary’s Masters in Ministry program at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, a program that our church has supported for more than 14 years. Other participants are members of the congregation, who meet twice a month with NYTS students and graduates at Sing Sing and two other prisons. The service is vivid testimony to the redemptive power of God’s grace, as men of many faiths who have served long years in prison join with our congregation in worship of our common God.

This year, as in the last two, an increasing number of graduates of the NYTS program have “come home” — been released from imprisonment. Many of these men served over 20 years in prison and have come back to society with a burning determination to help ensure that others, especially young people, do not follow the paths that led them to prison. We hope that many of these newly-released prisoners will be able to join us on January 11, so we might congratulate them on their new-found freedom and offer

them our support and prayers in what can be a difficult transition.

Our guest preacher this year will be John Valverde, who graduated with the NYTS class of 1995, the year we began working with that program. After graduation, when New York State pulled funding for college education in prison, John channeled his extraordinary energy, intelligence and creativity into helping to found and design a Certificate in Ministry Program that now provides college credit courses in seven New York prisons. Then he turned those talents to developing Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison—a privately funded, college degree-granting program at Sing Sing that has had ten years of success and is now beginning to be considered for expansion into other prisons. John was released earlier this year, after having served over 16 years, and quickly found employment as a paralegal while he patiently looks for additional ways he can serve others.

Church and Justice Sunday is always a service of unique passion and energy, so we hope you will join us at either the 8:30 or the 10:00 a.m. worship service on January 11.

## Nursery School Registration for 2009-2010

The Rye Presbyterian Nursery School is in its 51st year of educating little ones from the church and community. We are currently serving 320 preschool children between the ages of 2 and 5, from 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. or 12:15 - 2:45 p.m. Registration for current students, church members and siblings will be held in the Assembly Room on **January 7 and 8 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** Church members who enroll during this week are guaranteed entrance. (Church members are those families who have formally joined the church prior to or during the new member seminars to be held this coming March, and who are current contributors to the church.)

We are pleased to announce that through the efforts of our parent organization, friends, the RPC Women's Association, and the RPC Mission and Outreach Committee, we are able to offer full and partial scholarships to families in need of assistance. This year, more than \$70,000 has

been awarded to 35 students currently attending the nursery school. Our application process is totally confidential, and we hope that parents will make use of this wonderful opportunity, if necessary.

## Think Warm — It's Almost Summer in Peru!

**Friday, December 12, at 12:30 p.m.** the International Lunch nomads will travel south of the equator to Chavin. Relax from the Christmas bustle for a few minutes with enjoyable company and delicious Peruvian food. Chavin is at 16 N. Main Street in Port Chester, phone 937-7917. It's near Costco, too, so you can do some shopping before or after! Bring a friend or come solo - it's always a friendly bunch. Please RSVP to Cindy Kuster at CKuster@aol.com or 925-2312. Hasta la vista, baby.

The next lunch is tentatively slated for **Wednesday, January 14.** If the new Tarry Lodge is open for lunch by then, that's where we'll go, and see if it lives up to the hype. If not, chances look good for a return to Nessa.

## Your Charitable Deduction

Church financial records will close at the end of the business day on **December 31.** All checks and securities must be received by that date to qualify for a charitable deduction in the 2008 tax year. If you are transferring securities to the church, please contact Emily Irving in the business office at 967-0842, extension 12, with complete details of your transaction so that we may identify and credit the donor.

## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are always needed for various and sundry jobs around our church. If you would like to usher on any given Sunday, please sign up on the clipboard at the Reception Desk. Volunteers are also needed at the Reception Desk. Call the church office at 967-0842 if you would be able to help out there.

## Grace Notes Deadline

The deadline for the next issue of Grace Notes is **December 10.**

December 2008 Newsletter  
Dated material  
Address correction requested

