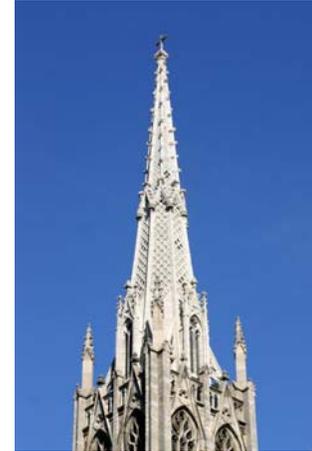


# The Epistle *E-news*

## GRACE CHURCH

### in New York City



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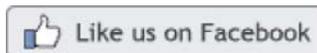
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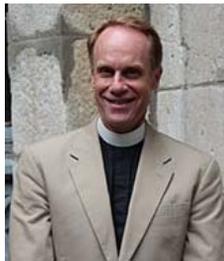


#### CHRISTMAS SERVICES



## December 18, 2016

The Fourth Sunday of Advent



Dear Friends,

Earlier this month I heard a sermon (not at Grace Church) in which the preacher frowned upon the commercialization of Christmas, and even the family traditions that distract us from the pure, spiritual meaning of the season. While the preacher made some good points, there is another way to think about things. Yes, things. I recalled a short piece that I found in my father's files, and have saved for many years. It was written by a priest name Clement Welsh way back in 1958, and is entitled "Gifts at Christmas." I share it with you today in hopes that it will be helpful in the week to come:

*It is high time that a word be said for Things. It can safely be predicted that in 89% of the pulpits of the nation this Christmas, sermons will be preached viewing with alarm "the commercializing of Christmas." "Christmas," it will be said, "should be more spiritual."*

*On the contrary, we view with mild alarm this annual protest. To make anything "spiritual" is to take the first step towards losing it. When God created the world, He watched it move from spirit to matter with approval, and we attempt to reverse the direction of creation at our peril. It is our created destiny to express the spirit always in material terms; artists and scientists both know this, and only an excessive enthusiasm for "spirit" makes the religious person forget it.*

Click image for service times.

**In thanksgiving for all the blessings of this life...**



**COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING**

*Grace Church in New York  
2017 Annual Campaign*

**Don't forget to [make your pledge!](#)**

(You have all of 2017 to fulfill it.)

**REACHING OUT...**

**ANNUAL ADVENT COLLECTIONS - THANKS TO ALL WHO GAVE.**

*"Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open*

*Yes, you say, but what about "idolatry?" But idolatry, we say, errs by timidity; it fears to press on toward sacrament, to move through the image of the golden calf, to all the glories that gold, transmuted by the imagination, can suggest.*

*And so, Christmas: it is a pink and purple tie from a beloved aunt, it is a cheap perfume for mother, bought in adoring ignorance. Let the stores riot with Things, let the wrappings glisten and the ribbon extend for miles; this is the stuff of dreams, and the fault lies in ourselves, not in the things. The Wise Men were wise, indeed; they knew the proper way to salute a God Incarnate, and hastened to brighten the stable with gifts, even before the Child could play with them.*

*May your Christmas be Merry and Holy, both at the same time, and may that large package under the tree, wrapped by small and trembling hands, be more than hands can hold.*

One more week to go until Christmas! See you in church.

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

**This Sunday**

**December 18th**

**9 a.m. Holy Eucharist**

Sermon: The Rev. Chase Danford

Music: The Parish Choir

**11 a.m. Morning Prayer**

Sermon: The Rev. Chase Danford

Music: The Adult Choir

**6 p.m. Holy Eucharist**

Sermon: The Rev. Chase Danford

Music: Hymns with Instrumentalists

***Please note...***

*your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."(Deuteronomy 15:11.)*

**The community at Grace Church has contributed** 169 hats, gloves, and scarves, 366 undergarments and socks, and 863 toiletries, (and 20 bags of treats in our earlier "candy drive") to help provide basic comfort to some of our neediest neighbors.

**With special thanks** to Henry Stevenson, Cathy Minuse and sons Robert and James for spearheading, sorting, counting and delivering the donations to our recipient organizations, as well as Jason Slibeck who delivered our donations to the Seamen's Church Institute.

**JAN 7, 21 – SIGN UP FOR THE NEXT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY/GRACE CHURCH BUILD DAYS.** As you have no doubt been hearing, we are partnering with Habitat for Humanity to **rehabilitate a condemned house in St. Albans, Queens for a family in need.** Volunteers have already

**THE SUNDAY FORUM** is on recess for the remainder of Advent and Christmas. It will resume on January 8, 10 am in the Reception Room.

**FEASIBILITY SURVEY** – All contributing members and friends of Grace Church should have received via email a feasibility survey from the Episcopal Church Foundation. This is to measure our ability and willingness to take on the next critical phase of interior restoration. Responses are due by December 30, but please take time today to complete your survey if you haven't already done so. Check your inboxes (or spam filter) for an email from Erin at Episcopal Foundation. Or, [contact James Romanik here.](#)

### *Coming Soon*

**DEC 21–WED EVE HOLY EUCHARIST @6PM** – Please note that **our usual Wednesday evening service will be held in the CHURCH this week** due to the arrival of Christmas flowers. We will return to the Chantry next week.

**DEC 21– 20'S AND 30'S-ish 'SMALL GROUP'** – Join us on Wednesday, Dec. 21st at 7:15 pm for the next meeting of our new spiritual formation and fellowship opportunity for young adults. The Rev. Chase Danford will lead a discussion about violence in the name of religion, scapegoating, and other ideas presented by theologian James Alison at the Trinity Institute the week before (come whether you are able to attend that event or not). Held in the Reception Room; Christmas cookies and light refreshments will be provided. Questions? [Email the Rev. Chase Danford.](#)

**DEC 22 – GREENING OF THE CHURCH** – A few good souls are needed to help dress the church on Thursday, Dec 22, for the joyous celebration of

been hard at work since July and would love to have you join them! *Next build dates: Jan 7, and Jan 21. For more information, photos and to sign up, please visit [HERE](#).*

**Please pray for...**



***Those who suffer***

Families of the victims  
of the Oakland  
warehouse fire  
Nora Webb  
Johanna Bell  
Walton E. McLeod  
Leroy A. McLeod  
Julia Harvey  
Josephine Ferraiuolo  
Howard Small  
Trish Lawrence

***and those who have  
died.***

Christmas. If you would like to sign up, you must contact Ellen McElduff [here](#).

**THE CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS AT ALL SERVICES** will go to support the Vestry Fund for Outreach, which makes grants to help alleviate hunger and homelessness in our city. In 2016, grants from the Fund supported the food pantry at Church of the Village (13th St at 7th Ave) and Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing. Please give generously this Christmas!

**DEC 25 and JAN 1 – SUNDAY SCHOOL AND NURSERY NOTES** – Please note that Sunday school will not meet Dec. 25 or Jan. 1, but child care will be provided in the nursery on Jan. 1. No child care will be provided at Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services, but there will be fun activities for kids at the back of the church on the children's bookshelf.

**and CHRISTMAS!**  
**Service times [HERE](#).**

***To find service information,  
you may visit [www.gracechurchnyc.org](http://www.gracechurchnyc.org), updated weekly.***

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[www.gracechurchnyc.org](http://www.gracechurchnyc.org)

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