Throughout John’s Gospel, Jesus’ revelatory language is often captured in “I am, you are” language. Through this language Jesus speaks to both his identity as the son of God, the Word made flesh, as well as to our identity as God’s beloved. In discussing his relationship with the disciples in chapter 15, Jesus refers to himself as the vine and his disciples as the branches. This agrarian imagery speaks to the deep interconnection that Jesus has with the disciples and they with him and each other, as together they are rooted, bound together in love. In the same chapter (vs 12), Jesus commands them to love another, and to share that love with the world.

At this point in the Gospel, Jesus is preparing for his arrest and subsequent death and is preparing the disciples for the journey ahead, where they as the vines will bear the fruit of God’s kingdom through the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus will send to them in his absence. One verse in particular (and there are so many!) that has always intrigued and inspired me is verse 19. In this verse, Jesus says, “If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world...” Truth be told, I have often felt like the odd man out, a “stranger in a foreign land.”

As far back as I can remember, I have had a sense that the paradigms and systems of this world, the rich lauding over the poor, the racial, geo political and political divides, the us versus them, tit for tat, shop till you drop, greed is good, hedonistic, fleeting and frivolous world, was truly foreign. I have never felt comfortable plugging in this matrix, and as such, Jesus’ words have resonated deeply in my heart and soul as they have served as a sobering reminder and a vehicle to understanding who we are and whose we are and what our purpose is here on this earth.

In other words, Jesus is saying that as Christians/disciples we are to live in the world, but not be of the world, and as such we are to live and order our lives differently; counter to, if need be in defiance of, the ways of the world and the powers and principalities which “corrupt and destroy the creatures of God” (BCP 301). In short, we are to be God’s people living in and living for the kingdom of God, where the principles of the beatitudes (i.e. peace, justice, humility, love, compassion) are reflected, readily evident, and at the forefront of our lives, defining the ways in which we live and move and have our being.

Indeed, like many of you, I have been taken aback, as well as deeply troubled and saddened by the seemingly entrenched divisiveness and tribalism that has engulfed our nation like a brush fire over the years, reaching fever pitch over these past few years in particular. The dynamic of us versus them and tit for tat, with name calling, bullying, predation, willful ignorance and daily deceitfulness, the stoking of fears, etc. can certainly take a toll on one’s soul and obstruct one’s hopeful vision of and for humanity. And that brings me to this wonderful seasons of Advent and Christmas that are upon us (quicker than I thought!).

Advent/Christmas are those seasons in the life of our faith that remind us of the dawning, the present-coming of God’s kingdom, God’s new world in Jesus Christ. Advent sounds the clarion call for us to keep alert, to stay awake, to prepare, and to repent (change our hearts). Advent/Christmas reminds us that Jesus is coming to set this upside down world right side up with love of God, and that through him, the nightmare of this world will be transformed into God’s dream of a world reconciled, healed, and liberated from the bonds of hate, fear, evil, and death. Christmas, we know, reminds us that Jesus is our Emmanuel, God with us. Christmas was God’s rescue mission, where Jesus came to remind us that we are the beloved and to show us how to live out and live into that identity; to be in the world, yet not of the world. In other words, we are part of God’s divine plan. God is alive and acting in our world, in our lives now, daily, and Advent/
Christmas beckons us to awareness, stillness, hope, joy, and light.

Therefore, as we go through this season of Advent and on to celebrate Christmas day, it is my hope and prayer that Jesus’ words resonate in our hearts and souls, “You do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.” I hope and pray that you will fix your heart and mind upon those things that matter to the heart of God; that all of us will “seek first the kingdom of God and God’s righteousness.” During these trying times, I hope that we will commit or recommit ourselves to daily prayer/meditation. As everyone is caught up in the rush of the season, I hope that we will create sacred space, where we may be still and be with our God, who loves us and wants to be in full communion with us. I urge you to turn off the deluge of bad news and noise of social media and spend time, real time being present with your loved ones (I’m going to try!). I pray that we will not fall prey or be discouraged by the divisive and hateful rhetoric that surrounds us, but rather will lean on God in Christ, knowing that he is the Good News, knowing that he is with us and is coming again for us and for this sinful and broken world.

In short, this Advent and Christmas season(s), let us keep our eyes on the prize, which is Christ and the kingdom of God. And may the God who has chosen us out of the world, bless you and keep you now and always. May you have blessed Advent and truly Merry Christmas!

In Christ, Fr. Owen+

CHRISTMAS FLOWER & MUSIC MEMORIALS
Each year as we gather to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, our worship is enhanced by beautiful Christmas flowers and festive music with additional musicians. Your generosity makes this possible. Please join in the time-honored tradition of making a donation for our Christmas celebrations in memory of loved ones or thanksgiving for God’s blessings. Offering envelopes are available at the church entry — or use the link on the home page of our website: gracechurchnyack.org (leave names in comment section). Memorial Names must be received by Tuesday, December 17 for inclusion in the Christmas bulletins.

Advent Home Gatherings
Wednesday, December 4 (Blauvelt) & Wednesday, December 11 (Nyack) 7-9:00pm
Advent Home Gatherings are festive evenings with songs, games, a home Eucharist, and potluck supper. We hope you will join us for fun, fellowship, and some quiet time with God and each other.

Please call (845-358-1297) or email (parishoffice@gracechurchnyack.org) for location details, and to let us know what you’ll be bringing to share.

PARISH ADVENT PARTY
Saturday, December 21 from 5-7:00pm in Memorial Hall
Festive Light Fare & Desserts
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1—First Sunday of Advent
8:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite I)
9:30am Holy Eucharist (Family Service)
10:10am Church School/Refreshments/Bible Study
11:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite II w/choir)
4:00pm Lessons & Carols

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4
7:00pm Advent Home Gathering (Paskowski Home)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5
7:00am Grace’s Kitchen (Team 8) (Memorial Hall)
12:00pm Brown Bag & A Bible (Patterson Hall)
6:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6
6:00pm Graceful Rainbows Cookie Exchange (Memorial Hall)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7
2:30pm Girl Scout—service project (Memorial Hall)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8—Second Sunday of Advent
8:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite I)
9:30am Holy Eucharist (Family Service)
10:10am Church School/Refreshments/Bible Study
11:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite II w/choir)
4:00pm GraceMusic: Messiah Sing
6:30pm Senior Youth Group (Fenton)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11
7:00pm Advent Home Gathering (Hodder home)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12
7:00am Men’s Prayer Breakfast (Patterson Hall)
7:00am Grace’s Kitchen (Team 9) (Memorial Hall)
12:00pm Brown Bag & A Bible (Patterson Hall)
7:30pm Choir (Choir Room)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14
10:00am Midnight Run (Memorial Hall)
2:00pm Wreath Making Workshop (Memorial Hall)
3:00pm Imperial Brass concert
5:00pm SYG Midnight Run prep & departure

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15—Third Sunday of Advent
8:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite I)
9:30am Holy Eucharist (Family Service)
Church School/Refreshments/Bible Study
11:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite II w/choir)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17
7:00pm Vestry (Patterson Hall)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19
7:00am Grace’s Kitchen (Team 10) (Memorial Hall)
12:00pm Brown Bag & A Bible (Patterson Hall)
7:30pm Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20
4:00pm Pageant Rehearsal (Memorial Hall/Church)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21
5-7:00pm Parish Advent Party (Memorial Hall)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22—Fourth Sunday of Advent
8:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite I)
9:30am Holy Eucharist (Family Service)
10:10am Church School/Refreshments/Bible Study
11:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite II w/choir)
2:00pm Christmas Pageant

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24—Christmas Eve
4:00pm Holy Eucharist (Family Friendly)
6:00pm Silent Night Service
10:30pm Feast of the Nativity & Holy Eucharist

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25 - Christmas Morning
10:00am Holy Eucharist & Carols

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26
7:00am Grace’s Kitchen (Team 1) (Memorial Hall)
12:00pm Brown Bag & A Bible (Patterson Hall)
7:30pm Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29 —The 1st Sunday after Christmas
8:00am, 10:00am - Holy Eucharist (two services only)

Please note: The Grace Church Office will be closed Tuesday, December 24—Wednesday, January 1.
Email and phone will be monitored periodically.
FROM THE CHURCH SCHOOL

PAGEANT DATE CHANGE: The pageant will now be on Sunday December 22 at 2:00pm and the rehearsal will be on Friday December 20 from 4-6pm. We will provide pizza and drinks at the Friday rehearsal. We will be assigning pageant roles beginning Sunday December 8. All kids are welcome to join us. If your child can’t make it on December 8 for the role assignment, please contact me and I will hold a role for them.

Thanks to the kids and parents for helping out on Service Sunday and the mass production of Caregiver Care packages. The kids made over 50 bags filled with a personalized card from them, water, games, pretzels and candy kisses.

The JYG kids also shared in a community gathering at this year’s Interfaith Service project at the First Reform Church on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. It is heartwarming to see all of the kids from various places of worship come together to share a meal and to give back to their beloved community. As a result I would like to organize a youth interfaith picnic in the spring. If anyone is interested in helping me pull that together, please reach out.

We have lots of events happening during the Christmas season such as a kids Christmas caroling at Nyack Manor Senior Home on Friday December 13 at 5:30pm. If your family can attend, please meet us in the lobby of the Nursing Home on the 13th.

We are still registering for Church school and Bread For Life (1st-5th graders) so please contact me to register if you haven’t already! (Annie Hekker Weiss at annieheker@me.com)

And again, the biggest event of the year is the Annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 22 at 2pm.

ALL ARE WELCOMED.

Peace. ~Annie

SENIOR YOUTH GROUP MIDNIGHT RUN
The SYG will be going their first Midnight Run of the year on Saturday, December 14. Clothing and toiletry donations can be dropped at the entry to the church on December 1 or 8. We especially need men’s winter coats, sweatshirts and pants (preferably darker colors). Belts, shoes, backpacks and blankets are also much appreciated. For more information, contact Joe Paskowski (jpaskowski@msn.com).
### REVISED GRACE CHURCH SCHOOL SCHEDULE 2019-2020

**as of 11/2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Sept 22</td>
<td>1ST DAY OF CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Sept 29</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - SCHOOL HOLIDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Oct 6</td>
<td>BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS</td>
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<td>Sunday Oct 13</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - PARISH HIKE</td>
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<td>Saturday Oct 19</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL BOWLING OUTING</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Oct 20</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - MINISTRY FAIR</td>
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<td>Sunday Oct 27</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday Nov 3</td>
<td>SERVICE SUNDAY- ALL SAINTS DAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Nov 10</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - VETERANS DAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Nov 17</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday Nov 24</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - SERVICE SUNDAY</td>
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<td>Tuesday Nov 26</td>
<td>INTERFAITH SERVICE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Dec 1</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday Dec 8</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - PRAGEANT ROLES GIVEN OUT - PRACTICE</td>
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<td>Sunday Dec 15</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - PAGEANT PRACTICE</td>
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<td>Friday Dec 20</td>
<td>MANDATORY PAGEANT REHEARSAL 4-6pm</td>
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<td>Sunday Dec 22</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS PAGEANT (NEW DATE)</td>
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<td>Sunday Dec 29</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday Jan 5th</td>
<td>SERVICE SUNDAY</td>
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<td>Sunday Jan 12th</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - JESUS’ BAPTISM</td>
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<td>Sunday Jan 20th</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - MLK HOLIDAY</td>
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<td>Sunday Jan 26</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday Feb 2</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday Feb 9</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - ANNUAL MEETING</td>
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<td>Sunday Feb 16</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - PRESIDENT’S WEEK</td>
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<td>Sunday Feb 23</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Tuesday Feb 25</td>
<td>SHROVE TUESDAY - PANCAKE DINNER</td>
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<td>Sunday March 1</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Sunday March 8</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>Friday March 13</td>
<td>JYG NIGHTWATCH</td>
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<td>Sunday March 15</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - EASTER PUPPET SHOW REHEARSAL</td>
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<td>Sunday March 22</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - EASTER PUPPET SHOW REHEARSAL</td>
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<td>Sunday March 29</td>
<td>THE VERY MESSY EASTER PUPPET SHOW</td>
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<td>Sunday April 5</td>
<td>EASTER FAIR</td>
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<td>Sunday April 12</td>
<td>EASTER SUNDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday April 19</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - EASTER BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday April 26</td>
<td>EARTH DAY PLANTING</td>
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<td>Sunday May 3</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday May 10</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - MOTHER’S DAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday May 16</td>
<td>BREAD FOR LIFE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday May 17</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL - BREAD FOR LIFE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday May 24</td>
<td>NO CHURCH SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday May 31</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday June 7</td>
<td>CHURCH SCHOOL PICNIC</td>
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**Questions?? Can you help & teach?**

Please contact Annie at anniehekker@me.com
CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING PARTY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14
2-4:00pm

Join us in Memorial Hall for our wreath making party to benefit our Garden and Columbarium Trust.

Enjoy holiday tunes and treat, go home with a beautiful fresh evergreen wreath of your own!

$20 materials fee.

Email Jennifer at nyackbackyard@gmail.com to register.
ATTEND THIS FREE NON-PROFIT WORKSHOP WITH ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING SOCIAL LOBBYISTS

THE NYACK HUNGER COALITION PRESENTS

A NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY WORKSHOP WITH FAMOUS SOCIAL LOBBYIST & ROCKLAND COUNTY NATIVE

Thomas F. Sheridan
Author & Founder/President of The Sheridan Group

Thomas Sheridan's The Sheridan Group is described by The Hill Newspaper as a "Powerbroker for those without a voice".

"Stopping the Bad from Making Things Worse!!! is another title for this book. That's one of the reasons I held on to Tom Sheridan quite tightly in the early days of the ONE Campaign, when we were fighting despair and deprivation in the poorest places on the planet.

He is rich company.

~ BONO

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12th
9:30 - 11 am
RSVP preferred to maureen.sheridan145@gmail.com

This is a FREE workshop but donations of thanks to the Nyack Hunger Coalition for hosting the event will be gladly accepted at the door

Event held at:
Grace Episcopal Church’s Memorial Hall
130 First Ave
Nyack, NY
www.NyackHunger.com

Light food & beverages will be served

Copies of Thomas' book Helping The Good Do Better will be available and a portion of the book sale proceeds at this event will benefit PLAG Rockland
There is no place like GRACE for the Holidays!

SUNDAY, DEC. 1, 4:00PM  Choral Evensong: Advent Lesson & Carols

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 4, 7 – 9:00PM  Advent Home Gathering – contact office for details

FRIDAY, DEC. 6, 6:00pm  Graceful Rainbows Annual Cookie Exchange – Memorial Hall

SUNDAY, DEC. 8, 4:00PM  Messiah Sing

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11, 7 – 9:00PM  Advent Home Gathering – contact office for details

SATURDAY, DEC. 14, 2 - 4:00PM  Christmas Wreath Making Party – Memorial Hall

SATURDAY, DEC. 21, 5-7:00PM  Parish Advent Party – Memorial Hall

SUNDAY, DEC. 22, 2:00PM  Christmas Pageant (Note the new date!)

TUESDAY, DEC. 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE

Holy Eucharist at 4:00pm
A service that attracts families – but while titled a “Family Service,” all are invited to attend and celebrate the love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ.

Silent Night Service & Holy Eucharist at 6:00pm
With the Parish Choir
A service designed for those who want a more contemplative and meditative approach to Christmas, featuring lessons accompanied by carols/solos, and poetry reading by the priest in place of a homily.

Midnight Mass beginning at 10:30pm
With the Grace Church Choir
The service begins with carols sung by the choir and congregation, and continues with a traditional festive liturgy with Holy Eucharist.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25 - CHRISTMAS
Holy Eucharist with carols at 10:00am

CELEBRATE WITH US!
WHO WAS MARY MAGDELENE?

On Nov. 6 the Adult Spiritual Formation commission sponsored a supper/discussion on Mary Magdalene led by Pat Reynolds. A near-record 33 people were in attendance at the lively event. The next ASF supper/discussion is on January 8, with a look at Vatican astronomer Guy Consolmagno and the Star of Behlehem.

GRACE’S KITCHEN - Thanksgiving Morning

Team 7 and members of the Senior Youth Group joined forces to prepare a festive breakfast on Thanksgiving morning. Grace’s Kitchen open every Thursday morning from 7-8:30. All are welcome! If you’d like to join a team or substitute on one, contact the office: parishoffice@gracechurchnyack.org

YOU CAN HELP

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

If you picked up a tag from the Christmas Giving Tree for the children at Nyack Center, please make sure to bring your **unwrapped gifts to Grace** by Sunday, December 15 (allowing time for sorting, wrapping, and distribution at the Nyack Center.)

SENIOR YOUTH GROUP MIDNIGHT RUN

The SYG will be going their first Midnight Run of the year on Saturday, December 14. Clothing and toiletry donations can be dropped at the entry to the church on December 1 or 8. We especially need men’s winter coats, sweatshirts and pants (preferably darker colors). Belts, shoes, backpacks and blankets are also much appreciated. For more information, contact Joe Paskowski (jpaskowski@msn.com)

DROP OFF FOR NYACK HOMELESS PROJECT

Through December we’re collecting coats & warm clothing for distribution by [Nyack Homeless Project](http://nyackhomelessproject.org). Bring your new and gently used winter coats, hats, gloves, new socks and underwear, blankets, new toiletries, canned/boxed foods as well as financial donations to purchase additional warm coats and food, especially for children, to church on Sunday or to the office during the week.

GIFT CARDS NEEDED

Occasionally individuals and families come to us with very basic immediate needs, like food and diapers for their children. When possible we try to help with small gift cards for stores like ShopRite, Target, or Walgreen’s. We welcome donations of gift cards so we are prepared when the need arises — just bring them to the office or drop in the plate on Sundays.

LOOKING FOR A UNIQUE GIFT? REMEMBER THE THRIFT SHOP!

Don’t forget to check out Grace’s Thrift Shop which, in addition to its usual times, is open Sunday afternoons from 12:30 until 4:00pm until Christmas. It’s a great place to find eclectic gifts and holiday finery or a special set of china for your entertaining needs! Call the shop at 845-358-7488 for information. Volunteers are welcome too!
JOIN US

Resolution Run NYACK

Kick your resolution into high gear and join us for a 4 mile fun run/walk/stroll

On Saturday, January 4th
- 9am step off -

Event Day check in from 8-8:50am
INSIDE @ Grace Church – 130 First Ave, Nyack
Ideal for families & large groups . . .
This is not a timed event, go @ your own pace and distance!

All proceeds go to the
NYACK HUNGER COALITION

Register @ www.nyackhungry.com

This event will take place rain, snow or shine. If we need to close the course due to weather, we will have a community activity inside at 130 First Ave in Nyack for anyone who can attend.

Adults: $25
Under 18: $15
Admission goes up $5 on Event Day.
December 1, 2019 – Advent 1 (A)  
First Week of Advent: Saying “Yes” to the Journey

As Advent begins this week, we invite you to orient yourself to the coming of Jesus at Christmas through the practices of journeying the Way of Love. This journey begins by saying “yes” to God’s call to birth new life into the world—a call that is both powerful and gentle, a call that will, if fully embraced, grow beyond our imaginations, spilling out of ourselves and into our family, friends, community, and the whole world. Over the course of this holy season, we invite you to respond to that call using these daily practices, and encourage you to offer them to your friends, family, and neighbors.

Sunday, December 1  
WORSHIP  
What word or words from worship today have found a home in your heart? Share these words with a friend or family member.

Monday, December 2  
GO  
Take time to listen closely to someone you may not ordinarily take seriously, or who has a different perspective than you. Pray to hear them as God hears them.

Tuesday, December 3  
LEARN  
Read Luke 1:30. What are you afraid of that keeps you from saying “yes” to God?

Wednesday, December 4  

PRAY  
Set a timer for three minutes. Silently repeat this prayer: "Here I am, God.”

Thursday, December 5  
BLESS  
The angel blessed Mary with the gift of presence. To whom can you give the gift of presence this week?

Friday, December 6  
TURN  
In giving generously, St. Nicholas turned from a sense of scarcity to a posture of abundance. What do you need to turn from in order to be generous of heart?

Saturday, December 7  
REST  
From what could you rest in order to receive renewed life? Take as long as you are able to find that rest today.
#AdventWord

For the sixth year in a row, #AdventWord will gather prayers via its global, online Advent Calendar. Virginia Theological Seminary is offering 24 meditations and images during this holy season beginning Sunday, December 1. Images and meditations can be experienced via www.AdventWord.org, through direct daily emails, and on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Join an international, ecumenical community in prayer to explore the mystery and wonder of Advent. You’re invited to help create this global, online Advent Calendar by participating in any of the following ways:

- Sign up on www.AdventWord.org to receive a brief visual and written meditation from December 1 through Christmas Eve
- Share this bulletin insert with a friend, and encourage each other to prayerfully reflect throughout the Advent Season
- Post images or reflections on your own social media accounts—remember to use #AdventWord and the #word of the day, and

The words for 2019 are listed below. Please share them with friends and family who would enjoy participating—#AdventWord is an ecumenical project! We welcome posts that resonate with #AdventWord from all persons. You can find the words in various formats as well as other resources to share at www.AdventWord.org.

1 December - #Unexpected
2 December - #Visit
3 December - #Time
4 December - #Humble
5 December - #Raise
6 December - #House
7 December - #Unity
8 December - #Worthy
9 December - #Root
10 December - #Grace
11 December - #Confess
12 December - #Harmony
13 December - #Water
14 December - #Gather
15 December - #Turn
16 December - #Learn
17 December - #Pray
18 December - #Worship
19 December - #Bless
20 December - #Go
21 December - #Rest
22 December - #Restore
23 December - #Message
24 December - #Beloved

This Advent, participants will deepen their understanding of the coming of Jesus into the world through practices of meditation and prayer. Come pray with us!
Grace Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes: 10/15/19


Following prayer and Sacred Space, the calendar was reviewed.

COMMISSION REPORTS
- **Thrift Shop – C. Pullen**
  Street Fair was an $800 day; looking forward to successful holiday season. Kevin & Barbara doing well in leadership roles.
- **Music - J. Nevill**
  Evensong and recital in October was well attended. The recitalist, Tammy Lum, noted that one of her colleagues, who is connected with the Metropolitan Opera, was in attendance and highly complimentary of the service. Cabaret planning is underway; event will offer a diversity of music/performances.
- **Youth Ministries – T. Perry**
  Pancake Breakfast on 9/29 raised over $400 toward the service trip. 10/6, Blessing of the Animals, was classic! Everything from a guppie Gary to a live donkey.
  For 10/13 Parish Hike we had 14 adults and 3 kids.
  10/26 is Grace Church Haunted House, Nyack Halloween Parade. The theme for this year is a haunted summer camp, tentatively named Camp Spook-a-lot. On 11/3, SYG is planning a hike and on the 17th will offer a French Toast breakfast.
- **Graceful Friends/Graceful Rainbows – C. Pullen**
  Graceful Rainbows will do cookie exchange in December.
- **Fellowship – K. Olsen**
  Met last week and several new members have joined commission. There was discussion regarding low key approaches to asking people to join. Welcome brunch is coming November 3. There were 17 people for the Parish Hike.
- **Adult Spiritual Formation – L. Johnson**
  Talking about doing a local parish retreat rather than something at a distance and offering a wide variety of options including yoga, meditation, reiki, worship etc.
- **Services Ministers – E. Starling**
  Funds are low after cleaning acolyte robes at close of summer. New torches are needed after several damaged by flooding. There are new lectors recently signed on and five parishioners attended diocesan eucharistic ministry training.
- **Episcopal Charities – C. Pullen**
  Family Connections - Met with E. Starling to get oriented to the background of organization and our particular programs. Met with K. Cross/Lakisha re Family Connections program and worked through some of previous issues reported. Based on original grant Lakisha is asking for minimal support to provide phone cards to incarcerated women. C. Pullen will follow up with K. Cross regarding the issue and process for implementation (whether from grant funds or from donated funds). There has been support in past from the Thrift Shop in provision of clothing for women before their release and for job interviews; it is hoped that will continue; it was also asked whether it would be possible to provide Shophrite cards. It was agreed this is dependent on specifics of grant.

Final tally of electronic vestry vote to approve grant request for book club and for Grace’s Kitchen is on record.

Grace’s Kitchen - last month served 252 meals, 147 in house/105 to go. Resolution Run will be on January 4.

**Amazing Grace Circus** will continue to reach out to C. Pellegrini to determining future plans of circus.
- **Stewardship**
  Currently have 84 pledges $229,523 total pledged – although ahead of last year at this time, all major pledges are in so the total will grow slowly for here on. Super Hero Sunday will feature opportunity for people to respond to query re what they plan to do for the parish in coming year (time/talent). T. Perry will be asked to talk about stewardship at 9:30 services this week. It is difficult to establish strong stewardship presence when there is so much going on this time of year.

**RECTOR’S REPORT**
- Pastoral Care concerns of the parish were reviewed.
- Asked for vestry members to be conscious of newcomers and to be responsive when parishioners may not welcoming or act protectively of their regular seating location.
- Continues to be mindful of long term planning/visualizing. Frustrated by lack of response from facilitators re mutual ministry review.
- 2020 Bishop visitation at Grace – dates have been requested.
- Highly recommends current temporary sexton (Fr. Owen).
- Stressed again need for security cameras.

**SCOF REPORT/FINANCIALS** distributed & reviewed by P. Cose.
- Has circulated revised August financials via Realm.
- Have seen uptick in pledge income which is much improved. Continue to be under on expenses.
- Recent payment of First Avenue property tax makes the month look temporarily skewed.
- 145 1st Avenue has possible tenant, to be vetted by KA Rosner. Unclear whether tenant qualifies for Section 8.
- Columbarium is doing very well on income. Appropriate transfers to the trust fund will happen at the end of the year.
- Diocesan roofing consultant have been in contact with Cro International re proposed payment schedule and slate has been received by contractor, they will work to acquire building permits. Logistical issues regarding slate storage that need to be planned for prior to initiation of work.
- T. Rock working to get 2nd quote for sound system.
- Bells temporarily repaired; Elderhorst will return to add metal coating to deter squirrels & resolve timing issues.
- Will talk with town re adding speed bumps on Franklin;
- Reported on request from Sheriff department of Niagara County regarding a previous employee named Raymond Barry. We have never had such an employee – the sheriff’s department will be notified.

**SCOP REPORT – J. Marraccino could not be at meeting;**

Property items were incorporated in SCOF report

The meeting was adjourned.
Diocese of New York establishes reparations fund, adopts anti-slavery resolutions from 1860

By Egan Millard
Posted Nov 12, 2019

[Episcopal News Service]

At its annual convention on Nov. 8 and 9, the Diocese of New York established a task force to examine how it can make meaningful reparations for its participation in the slave trade and committed $1.1 million from its endowment to fund the efforts the task force recommends.

It also passed four resolutions condemning slavery, which had first been introduced by John Clarkson Jay — grandson of founding father John Jay, governor of New York and first chief justice of the Supreme Court — in 1860. At the time, the resolutions were met with fierce opposition from the clergy and laity, many of whom were still profiting from the slave trade, and they had been tabled indefinitely until now, according to the diocese.

New York Bishop Andrew M.L. Dietsche has made racial reconciliation a priority in his diocese, which designated 2017-18 a Year of Lamentations, 2018-19 a Year of Repentance/Apology and 2019-20 a Year of Reparation.

“The legacy, the shadow, of white supremacy which flows from our slave past and continues to poison the common life of the American people … continues to impose extraordinary burdens, costs, hardships and degradation upon people of African descent in our country,” Dietsche said in his address to the convention. “The Diocese of New York played a significant, and genuinely evil, part in American slavery, so we must make, where we can, repair.”

Dietsche noted in his address that in the 18th century, a high proportion of New Yorkers were slave owners, and according to diocesan records, some churches owned slaves as parish servants or “property assets.”

“We have a great deal to answer for,” Dietsche said. “We are complicit.” At the 1860 convention, Jay, an ardent abolitionist, introduced four resolutions urging the leadership and laity of the diocese to publicly renounce and oppose slavery and slave trading. Importing slaves had been illegal in the United States since 1808, and the last remaining slaves in New York were freed in 1827. However, the Port of New York was still considered “the largest slave market in the world” as late as 1859, being the home port for ships that sailed across the Atlantic to abduct Africans and generate profits for New York merchants.

Jay wanted his diocese to take a firm stand against the human trafficking that continued “in violation of the statutes of the Republics, of the teachings of the Church, of the rights of man, and the laws of God.”

The reaction? “Enough people rose and left the floor of the convention to deny the action even the possibility of a quorum,” Dietsche said.
Diane Pollard of the diocesan Reparations Committee said it was decided to bring back the resolutions at this convention in part because “it is so painful” to have them still sitting on the table, an unfinished chapter of an ugly history. “It is painful to people who have family that were slaves,” Pollard said in a video produced by the diocese about the resolutions.

Dietsche referred to the passing of the resolutions as “the fruit of the Year of Apology” but noted that “there is a third and final chapter to this movement, which begins now with this convention, and that is the Year of Reparation.” In his address, Dietsche called for a previously unannounced resolution “to set aside $1.1 million from the diocesan endowment for the purpose of reparations for slavery.” Citing Virginia Theological Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary as examples – VTS pledged 1.1 percent of its endowment and Princeton 2.25 percent – Dietsche considered 2.5 percent of the diocesan endowment an appropriate amount, which came to $1.1 million.

“Much smaller, and the resources for significant reparation would be insufficient; much larger, and it might not be something we could do,” Dietsche said. “When I ask that we remove this much money from our modest endowment, I know that this is not a small thing. However, I am sure that any honest process of reparation must require sacrifice and a commitment, not only from our surplus but from our seed corn.”

The resolution included the creation of a task force that will determine how best to structure the reparations effort and make recommendations at the next diocesan convention. Dietsche emphasized that the effort is about more than simply spending money, but he brought up several specific possibilities.

“This money could produce five $10,000 college or seminary scholarships every year in perpetuity,” Dietsche said. “This money could establish and fund an education and advocacy library and resource center in this diocese dedicated to racial justice and reconciliation. This money could support a first-step program in this diocese to invite, nurture and prepare black young people, and men and women, to explore the possibility of ordained ministry. $1.1 million isn’t so much money, but it’s not nothing either, and I look forward with anticipation to the creative possibilities that might come from this initiative.”

– Egan Millard is an assistant editor and reporter for the Episcopal News Service. He can be reached at emillard@episcopalchurch.org.

For more about the 2019 Diocesan Convention, including recording and full text of Bishop Dietsche’s address and resolutions passed, go to: https://www.dioceseny.org/2019-convention-report/
Parish Funnies

SILENT NIGHT

I love the way we end our midnight mass!

Yeah, it looks like the rector is sleeping in heavenly peace.

It's only his fifth service of the day.

THIS YEAR JUST TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT

I DECIDED TO STEAL THE LAST WEEK OF ADVENT

WANT TO KEEP "CHRIST" IN CHRISTMAS?

FEED THE HUNGRY, COMFORT THE AFFLICTED, LOVE THE OUTCAST, FORGIVE THE WRONGDOER, INSPIRE THE HOPELESS

Hail, Mary.