

## **White Elephant Christmas**

Week One

*We want perfect Relationships and Circumstances BUT*

*We get conflict and struggle*

***Jesus is our Prince of Peace***

John 14:1-27

Pastor Steve Treichler

December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (8:30 and 10:30am), FB Live (10am)

*For His Glory and our joy!*

### *Online Description of Message:*

Often at Christmas we have an expectation that things will be perfect, that everyone will practice “peace on earth and goodwill towards all mankind.” And, most always, that is not the case, in fact, it can often heighten our stress, anxiety and cause more strife! Come hear how Jesus is our real Prince of Peace, in spite of our circumstances!”

### Message Notes:

Financial Update

### **Introduction – A new series!**

White Elephant Christmas - The old “switcheroo”  
Expectation Management

### **This week’s message:**

*“We want to live in a conflict free world – INSTEAD, we get strife”*

John 14:1-27

### **How does our culture tell us to get peace?**

### **Where does our desire for a conflict free world come from?**

Genesis 1:26, 27

Genesis 2:18, 25

### **Where does this strife come from?**

Genesis 3:6-10, 16-19

Genesis 3:23-24

Revelation 21:3-4

Revelation 22:1-3a

### **How is Jesus Christ the “Prince of Peace” (shalom) for us, here and now, in the in-between time?**

*A look at two passages:*

John 14:1-27

Philippians 4:1-7

Trike's story

Spurgeon Quote

Trike's twist of the Spurgeon Quote

**Gospel Application** – “Are you coming to the Prince of Peace, or seeking to have peace at all costs?”

Scripture Passages used (New International Version)

**Genesis 1:26-27**

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” <sup>27</sup>So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

**Genesis 2:18, 25**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

<sup>25</sup>Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

**Genesis 3:6-10, 16-19**

<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup>He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

<sup>17</sup>To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup>It will produce thorns and thistles

for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

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<sup>23</sup>So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup>After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

### **Revelation 21:3-4**

<sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

### **Revelation 22:1-3a**

<sup>1</sup>Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup>down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup>No longer will there be any curse.

### **John 14:1-27**

<sup>1</sup>“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. <sup>4</sup>You know the way to the place where I am going.”

<sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

<sup>6</sup>Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup>If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

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<sup>11</sup>Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup>Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup>And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

<sup>15</sup>“If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—<sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. <sup>18</sup>I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. <sup>19</sup>Before long, the world will not see

me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup>On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup>Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

<sup>22</sup>Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

<sup>23</sup>Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. <sup>24</sup>Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

<sup>25</sup>“All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup>But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

### **Philippians 4:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

<sup>2</sup>I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. <sup>3</sup>Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup>Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### Quotes (used or referred to):

The term derives from the sacred white elephants kept by Southeast Asian monarchs in Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. To possess a white elephant was regarded (and is still regarded in Thailand and Burma) as a sign that the monarch reigned with justice and power, and that the kingdom was blessed with peace and prosperity. The opulence expected of anyone who owned a beast of such stature was great. Monarchs often exemplified their possession of white elephants in their formal titles (e.g., Hsinbyushin, lit. 'Lord of the White Elephant' and the third monarch of the Konbaung dynasty). Because the animals were considered sacred and laws protected them from labor, receiving a gift of a white elephant from a monarch was simultaneously a blessing and a curse. It was a blessing because the animal was sacred and a sign of the monarch's favour, and a curse because the recipient now had an expensive-to-maintain animal he could not give away and could not put to much practical use.

~ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White\\_elephant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_elephant)

### **Overcome Fear and Anxiety with These Helpful Tips**

Find Your Hakuna Matata



[Stacy Brookman: Real Life Resilience](#)

[Feb 14, 2018 · 5 min read](#)



Photo by [Jackson Hendry](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strength.

Charles Spurgeon

Do you know how to deal with your day to day fears and anxieties?

*One of the curses of being able to think and reason is the ability to feel fear and anxiety, even when neither are warranted.*

Fear and anxiety can serve as helpful cues that there may be a situation that deserves caution, but after this is accomplished, they actually cause more harm than good.

**You create your own fear and anxiety.**

**You can also create your own peace and serenity.**

Learn how to put a stop to anxious thoughts and free yourself from worrying.



Photo by [Marion Michele](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Choose to minimize the effects of fear and anxiety in your life, when you do these tips you'll never be the same again:

1. Breathe in. Breathe out

Simple as that? Nope, it isn't but you can start from there.

When faced with fearful thoughts or situations, we begin breathing quickly and shallowly. This begins a cascade of physiological events that result in feelings of fear and anxiety.

It's possible to circumvent this anxiety process by breathing deeply and slowly.

Release the negative energy and take in new ones to properly circulate blood around your body. Try breathing quickly and shallowly for 60 seconds and see how you feel. Now try breathing slower and deeper. Notice the differences.

2. Be Yourself

*There's no point pretending to be somebody else.*

Continue behaving as you would if there were nothing to fear. You can communicate to the fearful part of yourself that everything is okay.

3. Spend time with supportive friends and family

*A night on the town can work wonders to relieve stress and anxiety.*

A long, meaningful talk over a cup of coffee can be very beneficial.

The most simple solution to fight off fear and anxiety is to surround yourself with people who will love and support you for who you are.



Photo by [jens johnsson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

4. Have positive expectations

*Fear and anxiety are the result of expecting the worst.*

When you expect the best, you can't feel afraid. You'll feel excited instead. Hope is an embrace of the unknown.

5. Start small

Afraid of spiders? Look at photos of small, harmless spiders until you feel calm and relaxed.

*To overcome your fear gradually expose yourself to that object or person.*

6. Let it go

Elsa in the movie Frozen sang this when she wanted to leave her dark past behind and move forward to begin a new chapter in her life.

If she can do this, so can you.

*It's common for fear and anxiety in one part of your life to bleed over into other parts of your life.*

A rough morning meeting with the boss could ruin the rest of your day if you let it.

Once the event is over, decide to let it go and move on. Move forward with all that you can and life will give you more than what you expect.

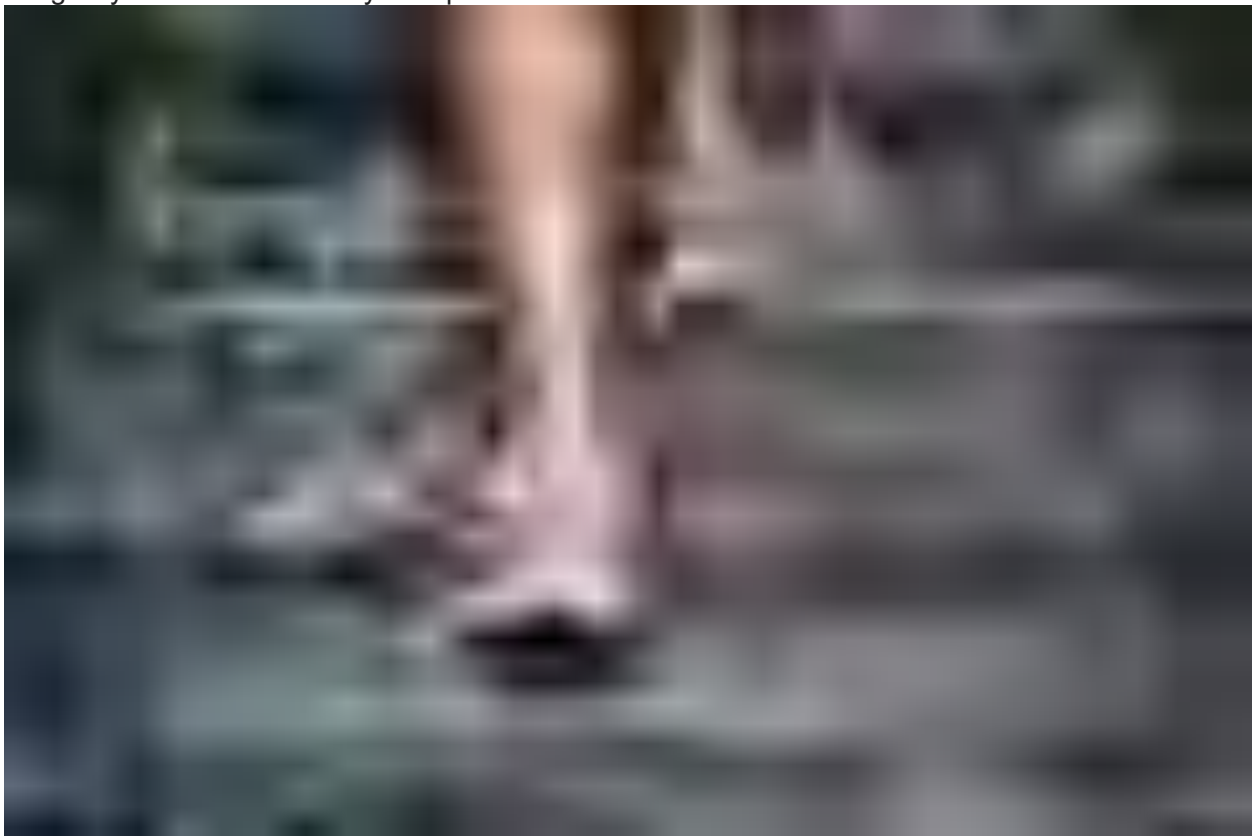






Photo by [Bruno Nascimento](#) on [Unsplash](#)

#### 7. Sweat

*The chemicals that your body releases during times of fear and anxiety can last quite a while.*

One easy way to get rid of them is to exercise.

Work up a sweat and watch your fear and anxiety melt away. This is also a much healthier way to deal with unpleasant feelings than drugs, alcohol, or overeating. Exercise is one of the best ways to combat fear and anxiety.

Hit the gym anytime and see a big difference in the way you react or respond to certain situation.

#### 8. Reward yourself

*After dealing successfully with a challenging situation, celebrate.*

This will help teach your brain that these stressful situations have a positive outcome.

Buy yourself something small or do something enjoyable. Anything that puts you in a good mood is a good choice.

Tell yourself, "I deserve a reward!"



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#### 9. Take action

*If you're worried, do something to resolve the source of your worry.*

By taking action, you're taking responsibility.

You also become more focused on your plan, which takes your mind away from your worries. The more you do to resolve the situation, the less fear and anxiety you'll feel.

It's better to do something about your fears and anxieties than do nothing at all.

Don't be a coward.

#### 10. Distract yourself

*There are a thousand and one ways to divert your attention and seek for temporary or long lasting pleasure.*

Sometimes there's nothing you can do about the situation. In those cases, distractions can provide relief.

Ensure that your distractions are positive, such as reading something beneficial or getting some exercise. It's up to you how you can deal with problems. At the very least, avoid distractions that are unhealthy or lead to additional challenges.

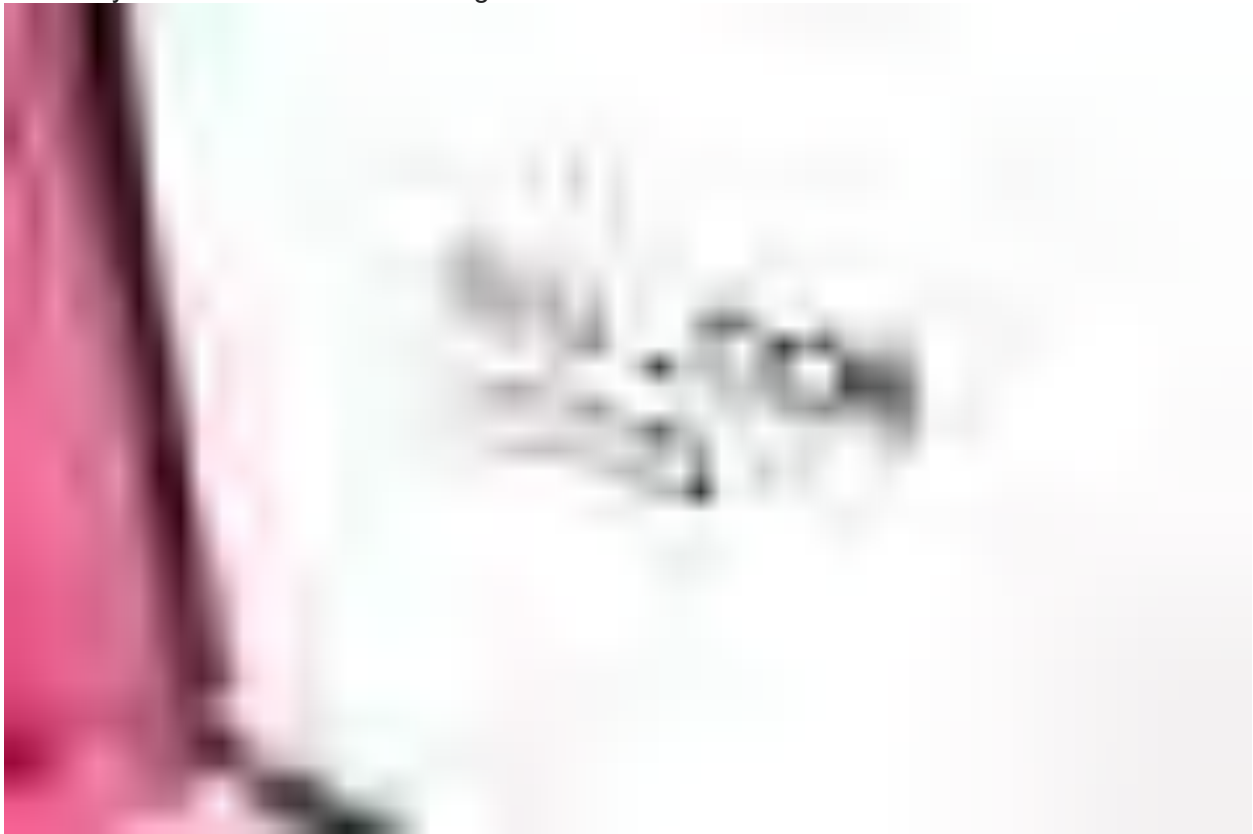




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#### 11. Use positive affirmations

*Keep your mind focused on positive thoughts by saying positive things to yourself. How you talk to yourself affects your mood and experience.*

There are many affirmations on the internet that you can use. Print out some of them and memorize everyday when you wake up while looking at yourself on the mirror.

Fear and anxiety can be crippling if allowed to go too far and only those who aren't willing to make changes will continue being inside the bubblesphere of fear and anxiety.

There are many techniques for minimizing these negative emotions. Those that feel fear and anxiety on a regular basis are experts at generating these feelings.

Become an expert at generating feelings of peace and comfort, instead. It just takes practice.

"Hakuna Matata" it means no worries for the rest of your days. Be problem free!



Stacy Brookman is a Resilience and Life Storytelling Expert and produces the [Real Life Resilience](#) podcast.

She helps smart, outwardly confident women who secretly have low self-esteem issues due to an emotionally abusive partner to take back control and begin to develop the resilience they need to be themselves again. Her free monthly webinar will give you [4 Simple, Proven Methods to Writing the First Chapter of Your Life Story in Just 7 Days](#).

Life is a story...it's never too late to start telling yours.

~Article found at <https://medium.com/real-life-resilience/overcome-fear-and-anxiety-with-these-helpful-tips-fdff31174c>

## Look to Christ, Not to Self by C. H. Spurgeon

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It is ever the Holy Spirit's work to turn our eyes away from self to Jesus; but Satan's work is just the opposite of this, for he is constantly trying to make us regard ourselves instead of Christ. He insinuates, 'Your sins are too great for pardon; you have no faith; you do not repent enough; you will never be able to continue to the end; you have not the joy of his children; you have such a wavering hold of Jesus.' All these are thoughts about self, and we shall never find comfort or assurance by looking within. But the Holy Spirit turns our eyes entirely away from self: he tells us that we are nothing, but that 'Christ is all in all.'

Remember, therefore, it is not your hold of Christ that saves you—it is Christ; it is not your joy in Christ that saves you—it is Christ; it is not even faith in Christ, though that be the instrument—it is Christ's blood and merits; therefore, look not so much to your hand with which thou art grasping Christ, as to Christ; **look not to your hope, but to Jesus, the source of your hope; look not to your faith, but to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.** We shall never find happiness by looking at our prayers, our doings, or our feelings; it is what Jesus is, not what we are, that gives rest to the soul. If we would at once overcome Satan and have peace with God, it must be by "looking unto Jesus." Keep thine eye simply on him; let his death, his sufferings, his merits, his glories, his intercession, be fresh upon your mind; when you wake in the morning look to him; when you lie down at night look to him. Oh! let not your hopes or fears come between you and Jesus; follow hard after him, and he will never fail you.

'My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness:

I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.'

- Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), Look to Christ, Not to Self, from: *Morning and Evening*,  
Morning devotion for June 28.

Found at <https://www.monergism.com/look-christ-not-self-c-h-spurgeon>

HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH

# November Giving FY22





## Giving

\$206,084.02 received in November.

\$51,521.01 was the weekly average.

Our FY 2022 weekly need is \$49,061.50

FY YTD income was \$757,496.07.

## Donors

372 donor units gave to the General Fund across all locations in November. A unit can represent an individual, family, or an organization.

Fifteen donors gave for the very first time!

## Budget

For November, our YTD budgeted income was \$1,079,352.98. Compared to our YTD giving, this leaves us short budget \$321,856.91.

Thank you for faithfully giving to Hope! Your gifts enable us to adapt to the challenges of reaching and caring for the people of the church and our surrounding communities.

Please join us in praying for continued trust in God's provision for our church. Pray wisdom and opportunities for us to continue to live out the Gospel in community on mission!



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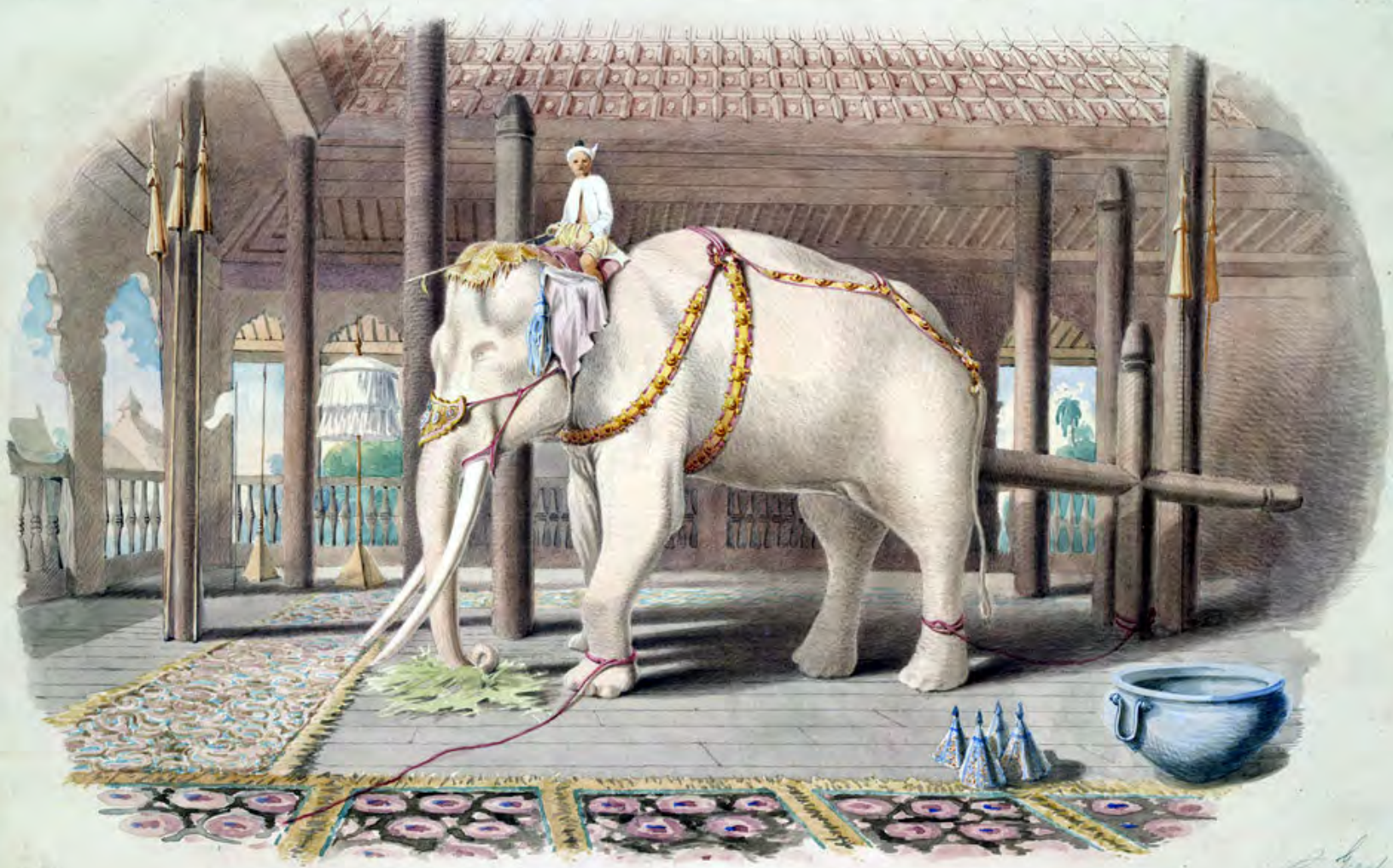
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In 2019 - \$445,542 (all locations) was raised

In 2020 - \$388,830 (DT only)



A  
*White Elephant*  
Christmas







**OFFICIAL**

**White  
Elephant**

**RULES**



DA-LITE





**UNIVERSAL**



Norman  
Rockwell





# A White Elephant Christmas

**Today's Message:**

*We want to live in a conflict free world  
INSTEAD we get strife!!*

What does our culture tell us  
about how to find Peace?





# Overcome Fear and Anxiety with These Helpful Tips

Find Your Hakuna Matata



Stacy Brookman: Real Life Resilience Feb 14, 2018 · 5 min read



## Stacy Brookman: Real Life Resilience

Resilience resources for professional women. See Resilience This Week and more at:

<http://www.stacybrookman.com/>

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2



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HE WILL BE CALLED  
*Prince of Peace*



**KNOW**  
**JESUS**  
**KNOW**  
**PEACE.**

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**HOW is Jesus our Prince of Peace,  
here, now,  
in this fallen land?**



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<sup>15</sup>“If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever — <sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. <sup>18</sup>I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

## John 14:1-27

<sup>19</sup>Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup>On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup>Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

<sup>22</sup>Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

## John 14:1-27

<sup>23</sup>Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. <sup>24</sup>Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

## John 14:1-27

<sup>25</sup>“ All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup>But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.



# Philippians 4:1-7

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

<sup>2</sup>I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

## Philippians 4:1-7

<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup>Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

It is ever the Holy Spirit's work to turn our eyes away from self to Jesus; but Satan's work is just the opposite of this, for he is constantly trying to make us regard ourselves instead of Christ. He insinuates, 'Your sins are too great for pardon; you have no faith; you do not repent enough; you will never be able to continue to the end; you have not the joy of his children; you have such a wavering hold of Jesus.' All these are thoughts about self, and we shall never find comfort or assurance by looking within. But the Holy Spirit turns our eyes entirely away from self: he tells us that we are nothing, but that 'Christ is all in all.' Remember, therefore, it is not your hold of Christ that saves you – it is Christ; it is not your joy in Christ that saves you – it is Christ;

it is not even faith in Christ, though that be the instrument – it is Christ's blood and merits; therefore, look not so much to your hand with which thou art grasping Christ, as to Christ; **look not to your hope, but to Jesus, the source of your hope; look not to your faith, but to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.** We shall never find happiness by looking at our prayers, our doings, or our feelings; it is what Jesus is, not what we are, that gives rest to the soul. If we would at once overcome Satan and have peace with God, it must be by "looking unto Jesus." Keep thine eye simply on him; let his death, his sufferings, his merits, his glories, his intercession, be fresh upon your mind; when you wake in the morning look to him; when you lie down at night look to him. Oh! let not your hopes or fears come between you and Jesus; follow hard after him, and he will never fail you.



‘My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness:  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus’ name.’

~ Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), Look to Christ, Not to Self, from: *Morning and Evening*, Morning devotion for June 28.  
Found at <https://www.monergism.com/look-christ-not-self-c-h-spurgeon>



Do not look to your peace,  
But to your Prince of Peace.

~ Steve Treichler, fan of Charles Spurgeon









# Gospel Application

# Gospel Application

*“Are you coming to the Prince of Peace,  
or seeking to have peace at all costs?”*

Hope Community Church- Downtown  
Presents



**RESCHEDULED TO  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14**



**A NIGHT OF  
CAROLS**