



The Messenger

Grace United Methodist
Church

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Rev. Kim Krause, Pastor

Working together to put our faith and love into practice.

**Services are held at 9:30am - Parking Lot Grace FM-89.7,
Temporary Sanctuary & Facebook**

DECEMBER 2024

FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR

Dear Family and Friends of Grace UMC,

What a year it has been! At this time last year, we believed that we would be holding our last Christmas Eve service up on the hill and be celebrating Advent and Christmas this year in a new place. Unfortunately, the process with the conference moved slower than we had thought. Fortunately, we now have all the paperwork we need to be able to sell and move. It's been a hard journey with frustration, anxiety, hopefulness and continued dreaming and becoming, but we are still on that journey!

When I looked at some of the options for Advent this year, one of the ones that stuck out was *On the Way to Bethlehem*, which is based on a Bible Study of the same name. With input from Ad Council (One Board) – we landed on this one as a good choice for where we are...looking at the journey we have been on – what have we learned, how have we grown; looking forward to where we want to end up, and finding hope along the journey. This is what the creator of this series says about the journey we will be taking together:

We are so often focused on the destination in our travels. "Where are you going?" is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the impetus for deciding to "go," it is often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments—frustrating or delightful. This Advent season, we will pay attention not just to the destination of Christmas, but also to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which a child was born who would change the world. And we will ponder our own milestones—the progress and the potholes "on the way."

I hope you will join in this journey, and perhaps we can learn from each other, sharing from our individual lives, as well as our communal life.

Part of our Advent journey will include an opportunity for those that may have a difficult time during this holiday season to have a quiet worship service on Saturday, December 21st, at 7pm in Fellowship Hall. Known as a *Longest Night* or *Blue Christmas* Service, we will gather and make space for all those feelings.

Christmas Eve will be on Tuesday, December 24th, at 4pm in Fellowship Hall. I look forward to traveling this Advent season with you as we continue to work together to put our faith and love into practice and action.

Peace for the Journey
Pastor Kim



December

Birthdays and Anniversaries

9 Edna Rominger
11 Pdraig McTigue
16 Sarah Bliss
18 Druhan Gordon-Stacey

22 Rick Robertson
23 Ray Bradshaw
31 Al & JoAnne Burrill

Some of the special days celebrated in December are:

First Sunday of Advent — December 1, 2024

Second Sunday of Advent — December 8, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent — December 15, 2024

*First day of Winter — December 21, 2024 – Blue Christmas Service
at 7:00pm*

Fourth Sunday of Advent — December 22, 2024

Christmas Eve — December 24, 2024 – Service at 4:00 pm

Christmas Day — December 25, 2024

New Year's Eve — December 31, 2024

GIVING TREE



With the holidays approaching, we have reached out to three local families from last season. Each family, unfortunately, is still in need of our assistance in order to get through the holidays.

The generosity of our small congregation never ceases to amaze me! And the organizational efforts of Sharon and Brian makes all the difference!

Below is a breakdown of the families we have adopted this year:

- (1) 1 Girl age 11 and 3 Boys ages 3 1/2, 7 and 17
- (2) 2 Girls ages 8,9 and 2 Boys ages 4,17
- (3) 3 Boys ages 8,13,16

The Christmas lists for these families will be posted in the fellowship room soon. Food collection has already begun for Thanksgiving dinners; please see the sign-up sheets on the collection table. Please return wrapped presents by December 17.

As always, we truly appreciate everyone’s support of this holiday outreach ministry. We also appreciate the generous support of many folks from the Book Nook and Bargain Shed.

TAX INFO

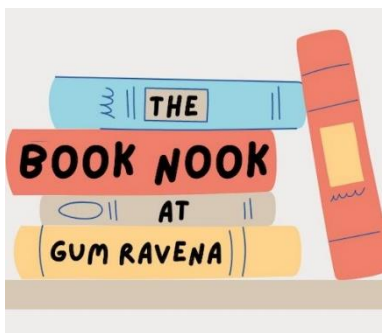
Don’t forget if you would like a statement of your donations to Grace UMC for 2024, please see Cindy Bliss (or email us at graceumcravena@statetel.com) and we will be happy to supply that for you.

BARGAIN SHED



The Bargain Shed is open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9:00am-Noon. Bargains Galore!!! Check out our Christmas items! The Bag Sale is still on! \$5.00/bag.

BUY 2, GET 1 FREE SEMI-ANNUAL SALE



Books, CDs, and DVDs. Stock up on your favorite authors for the winter and maybe find a few holiday gifts. Also a room full of up-to-10 books for \$1 and 5 for a \$1 select DVDs and CDs. All during our regular Tuesday and Saturday 9 to Noon hours. Thanks to everyone who help us further our

education mission.

GOFUNDME CAMPAIGN

 <p>GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH RAVENA</p>	<p>\$52,000</p>  <p>Our Goal To Pay Off Roof Loan and Moving Expenses</p>
<p>gofundme CHARITY</p> <p><u>Donate Online,</u> at the Book Nook/Bargain Shed, or by mail 16 Hillcrest Drive, Ravenna 12143</p>	<p>No Donation is Too Small</p> <p><i>Thank you</i> </p> <p>And Bless You</p>

You all have some connection to or interest in Grace UMC, or you wouldn't be receiving this newsletter. We'd love you to remember that connection and fond memories and see if you have it in your heart to contribute to the church's GoFundMe campaign to pay off our old loan for defective roof repairs and moving expenses. So, we're asking you to help us raise these funds so that we

can move forward offering services and programs needed in our community while we share Jesus's word and love.

You can donate online at: <https://gofund.me/1b303812>, mail donations to the church, or drop them off at our 9:30 Sunday Service or at the Book Nook/Bargain Shed. Be sure to indicate that are for the GoFundMe Campaign.

**BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE - Saturday - Dec. 21st
7:00pm**



Blue? Yes, blue as in the blues. As in "I am feeling blue."

Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other dis-ease that puts a question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for many people in our congregations and communities.

There is a growing attentiveness to the needs of people who are blue at Christmas. Increasing numbers of churches are creating sacred space for people living through dark times. Such services are reflective, accepting where we really are, and holding out healing and hope.

This event is open to all. Please consider inviting a friend, coworker or relative who might find this service especially meaningful.





The Season of

Advent

READING PLAN

Hope

- ◇ Day 1: Jeremiah 29:10-14
- ◇ Day 2: Romans 15:8-13
- ◇ Day 3: 1 Peter 1:3-12
- ◇ Day 4: Hebrews 10:19-39
- ◇ Day 5: Psalm 33
- ◇ Day 6: Titus 2:11– 3:8

Joy

- ◇ Day 13: Philippians 4:4-9
- ◇ Day 14: Psalm 16
- ◇ Day 15: James 1:2-18
- ◇ Day 16: Psalm 30
- ◇ Day 17: Luke 2:8-20
- ◇ Day 18: John 15:1-11

Peace

- ◇ Day 7: Isaiah 9:1-7
- ◇ Day 8: John 14:1-7, 25-31
- ◇ Day 9: John 16:25-33
- ◇ Day 10: Romans 5:1-11
- ◇ Day 11: Ephesians 2:11-22
- ◇ Day 12: Colossians 3:1-17

Love

- ◇ Day 19: Micah 7:18-20
- ◇ Day 20: Romans 8:31-39
- ◇ Day 21: John 3:16-21
- ◇ Day 22: 1 John 4:7-21
- ◇ Day 23: Philippians 2:1-11
- ◇ Day 24: 2 Thessalonians 2:13 – 3:5
- ◇ Day 25: Ephesians 2:1-10



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JOIN US ON FACEBOOK

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