



## *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, Zoom & Facebook**

***JANUARY 2023***

### ***FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR***

We've had several hard years, as a world, as a nation, as a community, as a church, and in our own individual families. But we have come through it! We have the hope, joy, peace and love from Christmas, but will it last this year longer than it has in the past? What can we do to continue the lessons from Advent and Christmas?

One thing we can do is be present for each other. Often times, in our society and our work, our minds can be on a million different things or even thinking about what we are going to say next rather than actively listening to others. We are so accustomed to thinking we have to say something, that our minds wander and we are not truly present. This can be a hard thing to recognize and change. But, when we are present for each other, so much more good can come out as we learn the art of active listening and the beauty that it can bring.

Being present with each other can also help us to be more present with God. It's hard to slow down and just be...to be in silence, stilling the mind and heart. But when we take time to do this, we give ourselves a gift – building on our current relationship with God. If you aren't comfortable sitting in silence, try walking (being out in nature – God's creation) or drawing/coloring. Try different ways to connect with God and be present and listen for what God has to say to your heart.

Advent also teaches us that God works in ways we cannot even imagine – through people and places that we would never have thought to use. God comes in the unexpected, the outsider, the lost, the lowly. But God comes! God comes to show solidarity with us – with humanity! This is God's message to us – "I am with you". And God keeps coming to us, in new and unexpected ways...

I decided to focus on being present and listening to others and God, not just because they are good practices. I bring these forth as we have some hard work to do together, as we discern the future of Grace UMC. And we have actual tasks that will need to be completed as well, and those tasks will need to be shared among the church (the people who call Grace their home) so that it doesn't become too much of a burden for any one person or small group of people.

We have much to be thankful for here at Grace, and we can look to the future with hope, peace, joy and love, as we discern what God is calling us to do and be in this community. How is God calling us to be peace, joy, hope and love for each other, in our community and throughout the world? How are we called, in new ways, to show God's love for all? This is our task – to discern and carry out God's call to us in this time and through this place!

May we continue on the journey, as we continue to put our faith and love into practice.

Peace for the journey,  
Pastor Kim

New Year's Day is on a Sunday – so we'll sing more Christmas Carols, hear about Jesus' presentation in the temple, and remember our baptisms.

We will celebrate Epiphany (the coming of the Magi) on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **OTHER STUFF**

Church-wide meetings-

We will need to have a couple of church-wide meetings for information and discussions, including moving to a simplified leadership structure. We plan on holding these on Sunday mornings after worship (so 10:30ish) and will have zoom available. If you would like to participate, but the time on Sunday is not possible for you, please let the office or Pastor Kim know so that we can make adjustments.

“The Work of Christmas.” By Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
    To find the lost,  
    To heal the broken,  
    To feed the hungry,  
    To release the prisoner,  
    To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
    To make music in the heart.



11 Amanda Wolfe  
15 Colin McTigue  
18 Will Robertson

23 Adam Newton  
24 Karin Beswick  
31 Jeffrey Haslett

***Some of the special days celebrated in January are:***

New Year's Day — January 1, 2023

Epiphany — January 6, 2023

Christian Unity Service – January 15, 2023 – 3:00 pm  
at Congregational Christian Church, Ravenna

Martin Luther King Jr. Day — January 16, 2023

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2023



**TAX INFO**

Don't forget if you would like a statement of your donations to Grace UMC for 2022, please see Cindy Bliss (or email us at [graceumcravena@statetel.com](mailto:graceumcravena@statetel.com)) and she will be happy to supply that for you.

## **GIVING TREE**

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Our generous congregation has come through once again for 5 local families this Christmas. We also included a \$50 Shop & Save gift card for each family's Christmas dinner. A special note of thanks to Brian and Sharon for being Santa's shoppers.



### **From one of our Giving Tree Families:**

Merry Christmas! Thank you all so so so very much! Your congregation truly MADE our kids' Christmas. Even Pat, who can be had to do things for, you knocked it out of the park with jerky and everything else. The generosity that your congregation has shown our family means more than I can ever hope to express in words (even if I had Joy by my side with a dictionary and thesaurus.) Please know that we are truly humbled by the kindness and love that you have shown our family.

## NEWS FROM THE BOOK NOOK



## The Best Book Deals Around

Wishing you all a happy and blessed 2023.  
Jean – Wanda – Sandy - Eric - Linda

For the new year, we will continue to be open Tuesday and Saturday from 9 to Noon. All proceeds/donated books benefit Grace and literacy.

### **BARGAIN SHED NEWS**

Saturday, December 10, was closing day for the Bargain Shed. During the last week a \$5/bag sale was held. Thank you all for your donations and patronage. We look forward to reopening in the spring. As of its close on December 10, the Bargain Shed had made **\$6,060!** That's an awesome season thanks to the hard work of everyone who pitched in for this ministry.

### **PURSUE JESUS – AND YOUR PASSIONS**

If you struggle with making and keeping resolutions, you're not alone. It can be discouraging to focus on what you're doing "wrong" and all the difficult changes in store. Yet January offers great opportunities to listen to God's direction. After all, Jesus came to give us abundant life and wants us to pursue him.

As you review the previous year, ask: What brought me joy? How did I grow? How did I help others? What did I do that no one else could have done? Whether your list includes spending time outside, mentoring or coaching young people or making crafts to give away or sell, continue doing what brings you joy. God gives us each unique gifts and circumstances, so live passionately for him this year!

—Janna Firestone

## **LEAVE THE LIGHT ON**

“We’ll leave the light on for you,” a motel chain once promised. In other words, they were expecting you and looking forward to your stay.

During the time of the high priest Eli, “the lamp of God had not yet gone out” (1 Samuel 3:3). Eli oversaw the tabernacle, so some people say this refers to an actual lamp. But the passage could have a deeper meaning. Although Eli had turned a blind eye to his sons’ sins and neglected his duties, God knew that Eli could still be a divine instrument. God knew not to turn off Eli’s light. God was expecting Eli to still shine brightly for him, and eventually Eli figured out that Samuel, his young charge, was hearing God’s voice. So if your light seems dim or even burned out, be assured that your pilot light remains on! God has left the light on not just *for* you but also *in* you.

—Julie Lee



## **Human Relations Day Jan. 15**

Global Ministries, the worldwide mission and development agency of The United Methodist Church, with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), invites churches and individuals to celebrate Human Relations Day on Sunday, January 15, 2023.

One of the Special Sunday Offerings of the United Methodist Church, this collection benefits neighborhood ministries through community developers, supports community advocacy through United Methodist Voluntary Services and works with at-risk teens through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program.

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**JOIN US ON FACEBOOK**

If you are on Facebook, please join the Church page by liking us at Grace United Methodist Church, Ravena, NY. Find out what's happening each week, including meetings and special events.

**OR VISIT US ON THE WEB: [www.gumcravena.com](http://www.gumcravena.com)**