

December 13, 2018

Words from the Pastor

Mission statement:

Grace United Methodist Church is a family of faith striving to share God's love with all people.

Dear Church Family,

Advent Season is a time of joyful expectation of the coming of the Lord. It is a time of conversion and renewal, a time of watching and waiting, a time of new beginnings. The heart of the Advent message is to be found in the Scripture passages we read on each of the Sundays of the season. That message is above all one of hope, peace, joy and love. The question for us is how do each one of us prepare for the coming of Jesus into our lives now, and in the times to come.

One of the most beautiful symbols of the Advent season is the Advent wreath and candles. The Advent wreath carries with it many rich symbols. The circle represents eternity. A circle has no beginning and no end, just as God's life is everlasting. The evergreen, which is always green, symbolizes life, growth and hope. The candles signify the time of preparation, a time of looking into ourselves and recognizing the need for the coming of Christ in our lives and the joy we know because God loves us so much that He sent Jesus into the world. The lighted candles have always meant for us the presence of Christ.

The Advent season is a busy time for our church family. Last Saturday we witnessed the many smiling faces of our children as they enjoyed Breakfast with Santa, took pictures, and received gifts. Many thanks to the Hazell family, some church members and friends. During worship service on Sunday, we received into membership four new members. We look forward to your presence in the other events noted on our December calendar.

Let us keep in prayers Bishop Bickerton and his family. Bishop Bickerton's mother died last week. Also, keep in your prayers those persons listed on the prayer list. You are encouraged to reach out to them via telephone, e-mail, text message, and or by sending cards.

On Wednesday, December 12th, at 7PM, we will meet in the Bert Keller Room in the Education Building to continue the Alpha course. **There are five remaining sessions.**

To help us learn more about God, ourselves, and prepare for the worship service on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, please read the following scriptures: Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18. At least two of these scriptures will be read during our service and will be the focus of the message.

Thought for the Week

Your attitude about who you are and what you have is a very little thing that makes a very big difference. ~Theodore Roosevelt~

Journeying with you through Advent,
Pastor Nation

Sunday, December 16, 2018. Pastor Nation will be giving the Sermon; Kenneth Richardson is the Organist and Chancel Choir Director; Flowers are given in loving memory of Robert W. Howard from Barbara and Family; Liturgist is Coleen Murray; Reader is Michelle Lewis; UMW are our Coffee Hour Hosts; Lisa Becker is the Nursery Attendant; Ushers are Donna Hartmann, Carol Provenzano, Michael Provenzano, Elias Tarquino, and Richard Tiedge; Counting Team members are Sonia Khan, Phil Osei-Boah, Ken Pearce, Yvonne Pearce, and Marisa Pershad.

Prayer List. ♥Anne Mahoney, ♥Marianne Pike, ♥Shirley Shivrattan-Dookhi, ♥Buddy Dookhi, ♥Fran Greifenberger, ♥Carol D'Amico (grandmother of Lisa Becker), ♥Marilyn Ike, ♥Fay Rose (mother of Nichole Robinson), ♥Everol Palmer (son of Enid Simpson), ♥Donna Lowe (daughter of Loretta Lewis Zimmer), ♥Eustine Gazette (aunt of Maria Gordon), ♥Jason Ryan (brother of Larry Gordon), ♥Linda Molina (sister of Iris Molina), ♥Joan Bertie, ♥Rev. Barbara Melzer, ♥Evelyn Neber (friend of Elaine Treske), ♥Family of the brother of John Schnur (friends of Elaine Treske), ♥Monica Godinho, ♥Susan Felsen, ♥Bill Hammen (brother of Edie Zipperlen), ♥Wilfredo Ortiz (brother of Frances Ortiz), ♥Gisela Nunez (friend of Naomi Brown), ♥Nadia Gay (aunt of Renée and Marlon Polycarpe), ♥Rose Ramsaran (mother of Savi Thomas), ♥Family of Excelencia Price-Edwards, ♥Carmelita Seraphin (grandmother of Brianna and Jessica Knice), ♥Loretta Lewis Zimmer, ♥Vincent Morrison, ♥Rondolph Ives (brother of Margo Morrison), ♥John Simpson, ♥Bob Zimmer (husband of Loretta Lewis Zimmer). **Note.** Prayer List names will continue to be listed for two weeks.

After that period of time, the names will be removed unless you call us with current information.

Church School. Twenty-five students were in attendance at Church School on December 9th. There were three students present in the PreK/Kindergarten. There were four students present in the First and Second grade class. There were five students in the Third and Fourth grade class. There were five students in the Fifth and Sixth grade class. The Youth class had eight students present. Next week's lesson is John the Baptist from Luke 3:1-18. We look forward to working with your students! Thank you. *Janet Stone, Church School Director*

What Is Alpha?

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith, typically run over eleven weeks. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone is welcome. We will meet on December 12th, 7PM, in the Bert Keller Room, Education Building, using the W. Fairview entrance.

The **Christmas Pageant** will be on December 23rd! We need volunteers!!! Pageant rehearsals will be held on Saturday, December 15 from 3PM-5PM as well as at 8:30AM on the morning of our Pageant performance in church. We are looking forward to a heartwarming, spirit filled Christmas Pageant!

Gifts of Love. Are you looking for a way to share the joy of Christmas with others? Give to others by giving a **Gift of Love!** It's easy! Here's what you need to do:

Choose a category of recipient and go shopping! Gift items should fit into a shoebox, shirt box or gift bag. Choose whatever you'd like to give. Please be sure to purchase NEW items. Please do NOT give food, candy, money or gift cards. Some ideas are described below. Because everyone loves to open presents, please be sure to wrap your gift! Clearly LABEL your gift with the category of recipient including the gender (ie: teenage girl or boy toddler age 2-4). Bring your Gift of Love to church no later than **December 16th**. There will be collection boxes in the Narthex and in the Education Building. Items will be delivered to families in need the week of Christmas.

Here are some suggestions:

Babies - onesies, washcloths, towels, blankets, clothes, bottles, pacifiers, toys
Toddlers, Children, young teens - toys, clothes, toiletries, books

Young adults and Adults - hats, gloves, socks, undergarments, books, toiletries, handbags, wallets, belts

If you have any questions, please contact Janet Stone at mom2springers@gmail.com

A Word from Stewardship. We would like to take a moment to thank all of you who have pledged for 2019. By pledging we ensure that our church ministries continue, and it allow us to plan for future ministries and provide a path to follow to maintain our buildings and meet our expenses. For those of you who have not yet pledged, we encourage you to do so. This will enable us to plan for the coming year. You may mail your pledge card to the church office, put it in the collection plate, or call Eileen at 516/825-1182 with the pledged amount. During this season of giving it's a good time to reflect on what our family of faith means to each and every one of us.

Pledges for 2019 toward Pledge Goal of \$200,000: \$104,804

Last Call for Christmas Card List/Sign-up. Our annual Christmas Card Sign-Up List began on Sunday, December 2, 2018, and continues through and including Sunday, December 16, 2018. All money collected will go to the Grameth Fund, a discretionary fund *for those in need*. Single Name is \$1; Family Name (The Smith Family) is \$2; Family Listing (Bob, Mary, Susie and Jack Smith) is \$4. In addition, *any contributions will be merrily accepted!!* Your participation in this annual event is greatly appreciated. Please see our volunteer, Lenore Kurz, in the Church Narthex and at Coffee Hour or Eileen in the Church Office. You can also email your info to Eileen at GraceVSNY@aol.com and then send in your donation to the Church Office.

SOUP AND SANDWICH DINNER SUNDAY DECEMBER 16, 2018, directly following our Christmas Concert.

The dinner will be served in the Gym and will include a choice of homemade soups and sandwiches. Tickets are available for \$12.00 for adults and \$7.00 for children 12 and under, from the Church Office and Bob DiSalvo. Please come down and join our family of faith as we celebrate the gifts and blessing of our children and choirs, and the birthday of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! *Merry Christmas!*

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT. Come Join Us at Grace United Methodist Church's Annual Christmas Concert on December 16, 2018, at 4PM in the Church. Our wonderful choirs and musicians of all ages will be celebrating, singing, and praising the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ! Come on out and enjoy the hymns and songs that bring the Joy of Christmas to us all! Directly following the concert, we invite all to attend our "Soup and Sandwich" dinner in the Gym. Tickets will be available during coffee hour and at the door the day of the concert. Please come out and support our Music Ministry.

POINSETTIA. If you would like to place a beautiful Poinsettia in the Sanctuary for Christmas in honor of or in memory of a loved one, friend, soldier, etc., please fill out an order form which is located in the Narthex of the Church or in the Church Office. The deadline is Sunday, December 16, 2018. Poinsettias are \$13 each. Please send your check (**made out to GUMC**) with the order form to the Church Office, place it in the Offering Plate (in a sealed envelope marked for the Church Office) or email your request to GraceVSNY@aol.com and send your check to the Church Office. Mark your check, "Poinsettia" and if appropriate, include your Envelope Number. Thank you.

Grace Methodist Nursery School. Registration for programs at Grace Methodist Nursery School is now available for eligible children of members of Grace United Methodist Church. Please contact the Nursery School office at 516/825-2354 to obtain a registration packet or arrange a tour.

Christmas Cookies. The UMW is holding a bake sale on December 23rd after church. We would like to invite all who may have a favorite Christmas cookie recipe to make up a batch or two and bring them to church Saturday morning or Sunday morning at 9AM. We plan to make boxes of assorted Christmas cookies for the sale. They make a great gift.

Breakfast with Santa. Breakfast with Santa was held on December 8, 2018, with approximately 125 children and adults in attendance. It was great to see the children's faces when Santa arrived in the gym! There are numerous people to thank for making the event successful including members and friends of Grace Church who willingly gave their time and talents. We thank Diane Panzarino, Director of Grace Methodist Nursery School, who advertised the event and sold 56 tickets! We

thank Miles Charles, a first-grader in Julianne Hazell's Sunday School class, for blessing the meal. We also thank Santa and the volunteers who provided entertainment during the event led by Kenneth Richardson, Director of Music, and the entire kitchen staff, headed by Anthony Mazella of Exquisite Eats. We thank the decorating team who enhanced the winter wonderland theme this year; the young adult who took care of the hot chocolate bar; servers; clean-up; ticket collector; and the team that wrapped gifts. We thank Pastor Nation and the Worship Committee for continuing to support this event. Thanks to all! *Note: A very special thank you to JoAnne, Easton, and Julianne Hazell for putting together this amazing event and giving the children another year of Santa. (from a grateful congregation, parents, children, and of course Santa).*

Please note the time change for the Charge Conference Saturday/4PM

December Calendar

Wednesday, 12/12 – Alpha 7PM/BKR

Saturday, 12/15 – Charge Conference 4PM/BKR

Saturday, 12/15 – Pageant Rehearsal 3PM-5PM/Church

Sunday, 12/16 – 4 PM Christmas Concert & Soup and Sandwich

Wednesday, 12/19 – Alpha 7PM/BKR

Saturday, 12/22 – Far Rockaway Mission Food Prep 10AM/K

Sunday, 12/23 – Pageant Rehearsal 8:30AM/Church

Sunday, 12/23 – Christmas Pageant during Church

Sunday, 12/23 – UMW Bake Sale (Christmas Cookies) & Youth Crafts after
Church

Monday, 12/24 – Christmas Eve Services 7:30PM (Youth) & 11PM

Wednesday, 12/26 – No Alpha meeting until 1/2/2019

Monday, 12/31 – Watch Night Service 11PM

Have a wonderful week! See you at the Concert and Soup and Sandwich!!

Eileen