

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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

January 1, 2024

Dear Grace UMC community,

Grace and peace to you as we step into this new year! I extend my heartfelt wishes for a happy and healthy 2024. May God's grace continue to guide and bless each one of you. In the spirit of Epiphany (January 6), let us reflect on the symbolism of following the star, as the wise men did in search of the Christ child. The star served as a guiding light, leading them to the source of hope and salvation.

In our lives, the metaphorical star is Jesus Christ, our guiding light. Just as the wise men followed the star to find Jesus, we are called to follow Him in our daily journey. Epiphany reminds us that Christ's light illuminates the path of righteousness, compassion, and love.

As we reflect on what it means to follow Jesus Howard Thurman offers a source of inspiration for our reflection:

*“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 flocks,
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 the people,
to make music in the heart.”*

Let these words echo in our hearts as we embark on the work of Christmas in the coming year. May we actively seek opportunities to find the lost, heal the broken, and bring peace to those around us.

May the light of Christ continue to shine upon and through us, guiding our steps and filling our hearts with love.

Happy New Year,
Rev. Dr. Jeffrey L. Hooker



†♦♥Family of Mary Gluck (Pat Panzarino's mom), ♥Winston Scarlett (brother-in-law of Maudlyn Scarlett, ♥David Biegler, ♥Vivian (4 months old) Peeples and sister Emilia (4 years old) Peeples, ♥Mary Turbeville (cousin of Lenore Kurz), ♥Jennifer LaRoche, ♥Michael Ciampi (friend of Kim Neri), ♥Thomas Neu, ♥Peggy Robinson, ♥Michael Kurz, ♥Walter McKnight, ♥Vin Dowling, ♥Carolyn O'Loughlin, ♥Suella Fredrick (friend of Lorna McKenzie), ♥Juliana Bonds (sister of Eleanor Phillip), ♥Garvin Phillip (nephew of Eleanor Phillip), ♥Elaine Treske, ♥Marilyn Eller (sister of Elaine Treske), ♥Irene Misiti (friend of Rosario Hooker), ♥Charles Zipperlen, ♥Emma Donnelly, ♥Jim Poch, ♥All our Military men and women, ♥Ken Richardson, ♥Barbara Siegl, ♥All UMW in Rehabilitation and Nursing Homes, ♥Castells Family (family of Elaine Treske), ♥Iris Molina, ♥Olga Molina (sister of Iris Molina), ♥Milly Molina (sister of Iris Molina), ♥Evelyn Neber (friend of Elaine Treske).

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. † - Death in family, ♦ - New entry

SPECIAL SUNDAY OFFERINGS - 2024

MISSIONS – January/April/July/October 2024

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY – January 14, 2024

UMCOR SUNDAY – March 10, 2024

EASTER – March 31, 2024

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY – April 14, 2024

GOLDEN CROSS SUNDAY – May 5, 2024

PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY – May 26, 2024

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY – October 06, 2024

UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY – November 24, 2024

CHRISTMAS EVE – December 24, 2024 (Tuesday)

CHRISTMAS DAY – December 25, 2024

COUNTING TEAM SCHEDULE FOR January 2024

January 07 – Debbie Nicosia

January 14 – Everett Fitch

January 21 – Debbie Nicosia

January 28 – Marisa Pershad (Team 1)

COUNTING TEAM SCHEDULE FOR February 2024

February 04 – Marisa Pershad

February 11 – Debbie Nicosia

February 18 – Everett Fitch

February 25 – Debbie Nicosia

Christmas Greetings were also sent by Janet and Brian Stone, and Barbara Howard and Family.

Church School. Today's lesson focused on Matthew 2:1–12, the story of The Magi. In a far away place they were Wise Men, Magi, who spent their time watching the stars. One night the Wise Men noticed a very special star in the sky. It was extra bright, and seemed to be moving ahead of them. The Magi thought this special star would lead them to the new king. The Magi wanted to bring special gifts to the new king. The Wise Men packed three gifts fit for a king – frankincense, gold, and myrrh. The Magi then set out to follow the star. They arrived in Bethlehem, following the special star until it stopped over a stable. When the Magi entered the stable, they met the new king, Jesus, and His mother, Mary. The Wise Men knelt down and offered their gifts to Jesus. Our class discussed the fact that gold, frankincense, and myrrh were gifts that would be given to a worldly king. Not necessarily a gift for a baby. We also talked about what our gifts were. Not the presents under the tree, but gifts that God has given us. Were we patient, kind, creative or artistic? Would these be gifts that would be good enough for our king? As we thought about the new year beginning, we decided to give some of our gifts back to Jesus by sharing them with others. We prayed, thanking God for the gift of Jesus. We also prayed that we will be able to share the gift of the Good News with others in 2024. Happy New Year to all!

Grace Church **Missions Committee** delivered lasagna ingredients to Far Rockaway Mission on Dec. 19 for their Christmas lasagna. We also delivered clean used coats and warm clothing. The money you give to Missions allows us to support Far Rockaway Mission. Simply indicate "Missions" in the memo line on your check or on the memo for your Zelle or write "Missions" on the envelope you drop in the plate. Thank you!

Katherine Perkins, Missions Chair

REMINDER. Please remember to put your **Envelope Number** on your checks, your donation envelope or **include with your Venmo or Zelle.** Thank you.

Coffee Hour – This Sunday, January 7, 2024, Coffee Hour will be hosted by the Evangelism Committee. Thank you. We also need a volunteer to host on January 14 and/or January 28. Thank you.

CALENDAR

Weekly Meetings, Rehearsals and Gatherings:

- ***Every Sunday** – Choir Rehearsal 8AM/Church
- ***Every Sunday** – Church School 10AM/Church
(except 1st Sunday of the month – 10AM/Education Building)
- ***Every Second Sunday of the month** – Healing Prayer Service after Church/Chapel
- ***Every Wednesday** – Bible Study 7:30PM-9PM/Zoom (Same Zoom Link every week)
- ***Every Thursday** – Westminster Ringers 7PM/Church
- ***Every Saturday** – Prayer Meeting 8AM/Zoom (Same Zoom Link every week)
- ***Every Saturday** – Thrift Shop 10AM-2PM

Upcoming Events:

- ***Saturday, January 27, 2024** – 9th Annual Evangelism Prayer Breakfast

Upcoming Meetings



HAPPY NEW YEAR
Eileen