

# January/February 2025 Grace Notes

Volume 13 Issue 1

Each month we collect loose change that goes to a variety of ministries. This year we will be collecting money in October to go to one of United Methodist Missionaries: Rev. Jane Eesley. Jane was my Senior Pastor while serving my last few years at Christ United Methodist Church in Rockford. She now serves as advocacy coordinator of the Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem.

You can read more about her here:

<https://umcmmission.org/missionary-bio/eesley-rev-jane-susan/>

She arrived in Jerusalem on August 1, 2023 for a 3 year tour of service. Within weeks of her arrival, Hamas militants attacked Israeli communities near Gaza, killing 1,200 people and taking several hundred hostages. Israel responded and has killed over 40,000 Gazans.

Rev. Eesley and her colleagues have started a bi-monthly zoom meeting to hear more about the situation and to dialogue with Palestinian Christians.

In this new year, I encourage you to engage with Rev. Eesley and the important work that she is doing in the Holy Land. On a personal note, I have learned so much more about the complicated situation in the Middle East.

If you are interested in joining the zoom meeting (which includes personal stories and a time of prayer) please let me know. I would be happy to share the information with you.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Laura

## **Pastors January Community Office Hours:**

Since this is a month that is traditionally colder, Pastor Laura would like to offer up a different opportunity: "Lunch with Laura" via Zoom. Each week we will send out a zoom link that anyone can pop on and have a bite to eat from the comfort of your own homes while visiting with Pastor Laura and whoever else joins. She will offer these Thursday January 2, 9, 16 and 30th at noon. Please note there will NOT be one January 23rd as Pastor Laura has a meeting. She will plan on meeting for 30-45 minutes. Hope to "see" you there!

## **Pastors February Community Office Hours:**

During the month of February, please join Pastor Laura at the Metro Grill & Bar 2019 Essington Road, in Joliet. Thursday, February 6, 13, 20 and 27 at noon til 1pm.



## **Faith and Wellness**

In the midst of a joyous Christmas season, feelings of sadness, loss, loneliness and pain can arise. On December 12th we offered a Blue Christmas Service that quietly and reverently acknowledged those "blue" feelings and gently reminded us of the light of Christmas. Music and the spoken word and candle lighting were the gifts we offered. A big THANK YOU to Cathy Downey, Patty Strobbe, Kevin McOlgan, Pastor Laura and Cathy DuBois for such a meaningful service.

## **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

1. 1st Sunday BP checks. We are in the library the first Sunday of every month for 30 minutes prior to the start of the our worship service—come and get your BP checked.
2. Lunch Bunch—We will gather and dine Tuesday, January 14th, at 12:30 pm at McBrides on Route 52, (2727 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet). Please RSVP to Pat Meyers (815-557-4864) or Barb Fisher (815-325-1624). February Lunch Bunch gathering is still to be determined. Watch you Thursday email blasts and the bulletin when we get closer to February.
3. January 19th, 9-9:50 am in Grace sanctuary: End of Life Wishes: How to keep your family and care team informed. The new year is a great time to learn and review what documents are needed legally and religiously in these complicated times. Mike Lucas will discuss Living Wills, Powers of Attorney, DNR, Will Trusts. Pastor Laura will discuss how to make your wishes known for your final service—what information is needed to help your pastor and family.
4. February 23rd, 9-9:50am in Grace sanctuary: A heartfelt Discussion. Since February is American Heart Month our presentation will focus on learning about the signs of stroke, heart attack symptoms for both genders and what information the Emergency Room staff need to know when you come in. Jennifer Dimer, Registered Dietician, will speak about a heart healthy diet and how to read today's food labels.

Here's to a happy, spirit-filled and healthy New Year for all!

Debi Shippy

## ASP 2025 Theme



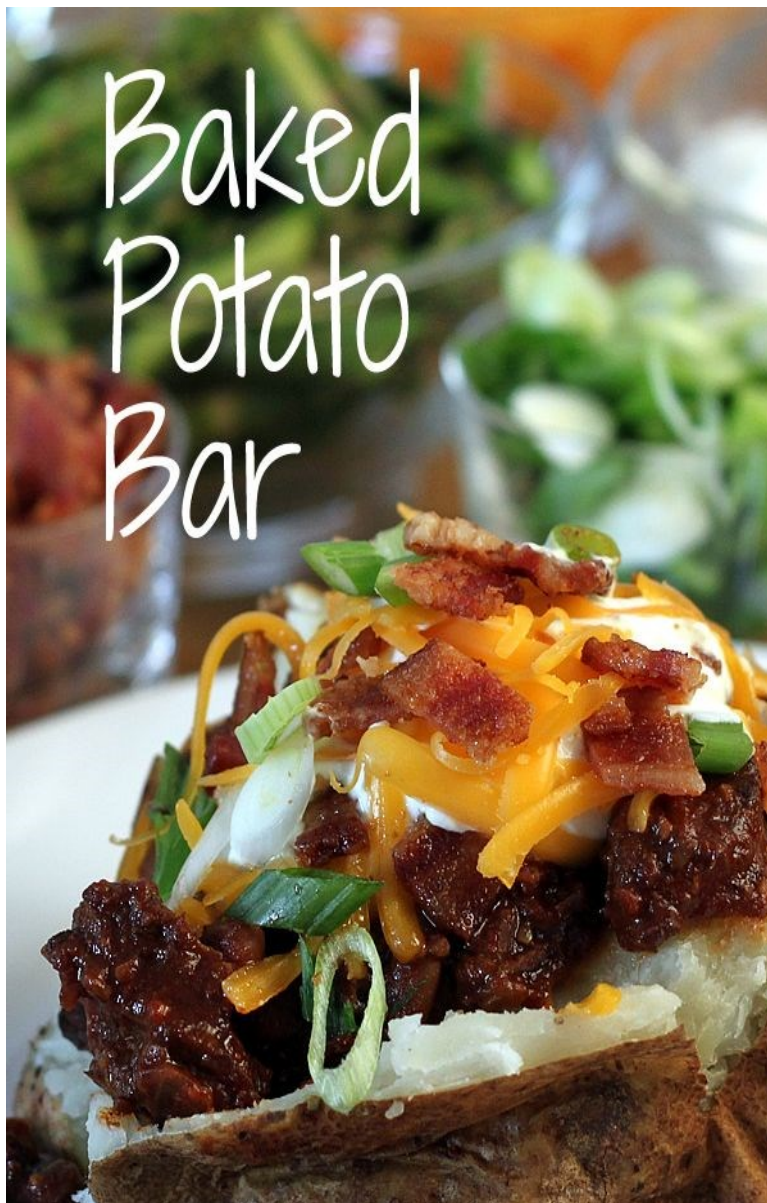
Carry Out or

Dine In at

Grace Place

\$8 each

Your choice of  
toppings



February 2nd  
9— 1 pm

**Added** new this year to the  
Potato Bar

**Chili Cook-Off**

There will be a chili tasting.

ASP 2025 Fundraiser - proceeds go to the 2025 ASP Mission Trip



## Join the Fun! Sign Up for the Chili Cook-Off!

Get ready to spice things up at our upcoming Chili Cook-Off! Whether you're a seasoned chef or a first-time competitor, we want YOU to bring your best chili recipe to the table. This is a great opportunity to showcase your cooking skills, and compete for the title of best chili cooker in the church.

Not a cook? No worries! Come enjoy the tasty creations, vote for your favorites, and help crown the ultimate Chili Champion.

Sign up today to participate as a cook! We can't wait to see (and taste) what you've got. Let's make this year's Chili Cook-Off the best one yet!

We will have a sign up sheet outside the sanctuary for you to sign up. We look forward to this competition! Thank You!

This will be in conjunction with the Potato Bar. So dine in and select your favorite chili!

Jonah Barkley



## Christmas at Grace







## Christmas at Grace





## United Woman of Faith

On December 7<sup>th</sup> nearly 40 folks gathered in Grace Place for a Baby Jesus Shower of gifts for the Ground-work Domestic Violence Program. We enjoyed a light brunch followed by a program of word and song "Celebrating Mary and Her Story" in our beautifully decorated sanctuary. It was truly a joyous event!



Grace Child Care Center had a fun filled Christmas program for the parents and families. Santa made a visit and everyone was delighted.





Dear Friends at Grace UMC, we would like to express our deep appreciation for all the beautiful cards & many kindnesses the Tucker family have been blessed with from our Grace Church Family. Sincerely, the Tucker Family

Dear Grace family, thank you, all of you, for being so generous with me during the holidays. I even had a Secret Turkey gift. I am so very blessed to be part of Grace UMC. Adrienne Hartman

THANK YOU!! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! Thirteen kids, youth, parents and SS teachers gathered in Grace Place to make 400 bags of candy for Meals on Wheels on Saturday, December 14, 2024. Bags were decorated and then filled with all sorts of candy! The candy bags will brighten the holidays for the Meals on Wheels participants!! Thanks to all who donated candy and thanks to all who came on Saturday! We couldn't have done it without you! Diane Morrow

Thanks to all who donated the beautiful poinsettias to decorate the altar for Christmas. Thanks to all who helped get & place them. Barb Fisher

**GRATITUDE CORNER** ~ We are grateful for much newness at GUMC ~ new pastor, new ministries, new Hanging of the Greens, new Christmas Cantata service, and the new year ahead with potential for new opportunities.

## FINANCE

As we near the end of 2024, the financial picture for the year is becoming clear. We still have the Christmas service and one Sunday service to receive pledges and gifts, but most of our bills for the year have been paid. This is where I see our finances at the end of 2024:

Our budget income will be very close to the budgeted amount of \$289k.

Last week church council voted to pay our 2024 apportionment in full, even though that will put us in a deficit position for the year. With this payment, our expenses for the year will be \$313k, which is \$6k less than the budget amount of \$319k.

In spite of the 2024 budget deficit, we are still in good financial condition. Our assets include \$90k designated for capital expenditures, \$10k designated for ongoing programs, and \$110k of undesignated funds.

In addition to that we have restricted funds in two more accounts: nearly \$50k in the Memorials account, and just over \$400k in the Endowment account.

As we approach 2025, the finance committee is well aware of challenges and is working to improve our income relative to expenses. Pledges for 2025 are up from 2024 and we thank you for that.

We look forward to the fruitful ministry God is going to do in and through Grace UMC in the upcoming year!

Jay Wait

# Parenting and Grandparenting for Faith Formation



Who is most influential in a child's faith life? If you are a parent or grandparent of a child or teen it's probably you!

Let's spend a day together exploring your role, and coming up with practical, authentic approaches to help the children/teens in your life discover faith for themselves.



9am—4pm Saturday, January 11, 2025

Plainfield United Methodist Church

15114 S. Illinois St., Plainfield, IL 60544

\$35 per person, snacks and lunch included

Childcare available thru age 10 by reservation. To reserve call

Pastor Sherry Steele at 815-436-9651 by Sunday January 5.

**Register by Sunday, January 5, 2025**

Call Mary at 224-335-5652, or Email at [mzajacsd@gmail.com](mailto:mzajacsd@gmail.com), or Online at [spiritualitytoday.net/retreats](http://spiritualitytoday.net/retreats)

Find out more about Mary at [spiritualitytoday.net](http://spiritualitytoday.net)



# Happy Birthday

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| Samantha Kazak     | January 02 |
| Jia Joy Renzi      | January 02 |
| Joe Sabella        | January 03 |
| Craig Barkley      | January 04 |
| Maria Cheney       | January 06 |
| Mike Parro         | January 08 |
| Scott Paulson      | January 08 |
| Cheryl Deardurff   | January 09 |
| DeWayne Barkley    | January 10 |
| Christine Butler   | January 10 |
| Carol Cook         | January 11 |
| Gus Kramer         | January 15 |
| Patrick Morrow     | January 15 |
| John Louis Boswell | January 16 |
| Anna Rocha-Gray    | January 16 |
| Kaliah Dolph       | January 18 |
| Braydon Hocking    | January 18 |
| Justin Farrar      | January 19 |
| Nancy Leggett      | January 19 |
| Becki Kabelis      | January 22 |
| Diane Parro        | January 24 |
| Mark Landers       | January 25 |
| Karen Storz        | January 26 |
| Steve Meister      | January 31 |
| Mason Meister      | January 31 |
| Kelly Renzi        | January 31 |

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Cheri Johnson    | February 01 |
| Carol Zettergren | February 02 |
| Trudy Pearson    | February 04 |
| Colton Twardy    | February 05 |
| Patricia Daniel  | February 08 |
| Stella Guzman    | February 09 |
| Stella Slinkard  | February 10 |
| Lester Cheney    | February 12 |
| Sarah Osborne    | February 12 |
| Katie Robertson  | February 12 |
| Eleanor Findlay  | February 14 |
| Ashlyn Furto     | February 15 |
| Nelly Bessette   | February 17 |
| Frieda Clausen   | February 17 |
| Jolene Johnson   | February 17 |
| Jake Whitney     | February 18 |
| Arleta Gordon    | February 21 |
| Joan Norris      | February 21 |
| Daniel Small     | February 22 |
| Diane Morrow     | February 23 |
| Dulci Cabreda    | February 24 |
| Isa Cabreda      | February 24 |
| Valerie Jelinek  | February 24 |
| Barbara Jones    | February 24 |
| Landon Hocking   | February 25 |
| Grace Petersen   | February 25 |
| Christopher Ray  | February 27 |
| Laura Wagner     | February 27 |

## ANNIVERSARIES

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| David & Debbie Black   | January 16, 2001  |
| Les & Maria Cheney     | February 20, 1983 |
| Ubaldo & Shannon Rojas | February 23, 2020 |

| DECEMBER<br>ATTENDANCE | WORSHIP<br>8:30/10:30<br>AM | CHILDREN'S<br>SUNDAY<br>SCHOOL | ADULT<br>SUNDAY<br>SCHOOL |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| December 1             | 5/124                       | 18                             | 14                        |
| December 8             | 6/94                        | 13                             | 17                        |
| December 15            | 5/133                       | 20                             | 12                        |
| December 22            | 4/91                        | 26                             | 10                        |
| Christmas Eve          | 140                         |                                |                           |
| December 29            | 4/80                        |                                |                           |



# January 2025

| Mon                                                                                                                     | Tue                      | Wed                                                                                      | Thu                                                           | Fri                                                            | Sat                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                         |                          | <b>1</b><br><i>HAPPY<br/>NEW<br/>YEAR</i>                                                | <b>2</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON ZOOM<br>Lunch w/Pastor | <b>3</b>                                                       | <b>4</b>                                                            |
| <b>5</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>10am Blood Pressure screening<br>10:30 Worship                               | <b>6</b>                 | <b>8</b><br>7:30p Choir                                                                  | <b>9</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON ZOOM<br>Lunch w/Pastor | <b>10</b>                                                      | <b>11</b><br>9-noon Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place                  |
| <b>12</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship<br>11:40am Worship committee mtg.         | <b>13</b>                | <b>14</b><br>12:30p Lunch Bunch<br>5-7p Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place<br>6:30p Trustees | <b>15</b><br><i>11 am Food<br/>Pantry</i><br>7:30p Choir      | <b>16</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON ZOOM<br>Lunch w/Pastor | <b>17</b><br>9-noon Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place                  |
| <b>19</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>9:00am End of Life Wishes Presentation<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship | <b>20</b><br>5p DayBreak | <b>21</b><br>7a DayBreak<br>5-7p Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place<br>6:30p Daycare ZOOM    | <b>22</b><br>6:15p Bells<br>7:30p Choir                       | <b>23</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast                                | <b>24</b><br>9-noon Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place<br>5-6:30pm FMSC |
| <b>26</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship                                           | <b>27</b>                | <b>28</b><br>5-7p Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place                                         | <b>29</b><br>6:15p Bells<br>7:30p Choir                       | <b>30</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON ZOOM<br>Lunch w/Pastor | <b>31</b>                                                           |

# February 2025

| Sun                                                                                                                  | Mon                                            | Tue                                                             | Wed                                                          | Thu                                                                                          | Fri                                                                                                | Sat                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                      |                                                |                                                                 |                                                              |                                                                                              |                                                                                                    | <b>1</b><br>9-noon Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place  |
| <b>2</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>10am Blood Pressure screening<br>10:30 Worship<br><b>POTATO BAR</b>       | <b>3</b>                                       | <b>4</b><br>5-7p Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place                 | <b>5</b><br>6:15p Bells<br>7:30p Choir                       | <b>6</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON Metro Grill Lunch w/ Pastor                           | <b>7</b>                                                                                           | <b>8</b><br>9-noon Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place  |
| <b>9</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship                                         | <b>10</b>                                      | <b>11</b><br>10am UWFMtg<br>5-7p Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place | <b>12</b><br>6:15p Bells<br>7:30p Choir                      | <b>13</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON Metro Grill Lunch w/ Pastor                          | <b>14</b><br> | <b>15</b><br>Grace Place rented                    |
| <b>16</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship                                        | <b>17</b> <i>Presidents Day</i><br>5p DayBreak | <b>18</b><br>7a DayBreak                                        | <b>19</b><br>11 am Food Pantry<br>6:15p Bells<br>7:30p Choir | <b>20</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast<br>NOON Metro Grill Lunch w/ Pastor<br>6:30pm Church Council | <b>21</b>                                                                                          | <b>22</b><br>9-noon Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place |
| <b>23</b><br>8:30am Prayer and Gathering<br>9am Christian Ed<br>9 am Health & Wellness Heart Health<br>10:30 Worship | <b>24</b>                                      | <b>25</b><br>5-7p Play Pen<br>Sports Grace Place                | <b>26</b><br>6:15p Bells<br>7:30p Choir                      | <b>27</b> 7a Men's<br>Breakfast                                                              | <b>28</b>                                                                                          |                                                    |