



GRACE NOTES

Volume 12 Issue 1 January 2024

“Shining Out”

I have read different translations of the meaning of the word “Epiphany.” Epiphany can mean “shining out or revealing.” It is better captured in the stories because defining the word can be limiting. The Bible is of course filled with stories of epiphanies when the presence of the holy is filled with awe and wonder. Moses captured this essence in the burning bush which prompted Moses to lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage to freedom. Isaiah saw the vision of the Lord sitting on the throne, high and lofty, the angels calling one another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of host and the whole earth is full of your glory.” The heavens opened up when Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River.

The visit of the Wise Men captured this essence of the holy. They followed the star and ended up in the court of Herod. They searched diligently but they rejoice with “exceeding great joy” according to the written account of Matthew. In that darkness of the evening, the star guided the Wise Men to the manger bearing gifts symbolic of Jesus’ divinity and humanity. There was a “shining out” moment when Christ was revealed to them.

We only have a glimpse of the Wise Men who traveled from afar. They left their mark uniquely in the Christian story. The Good News breaks down barriers and this Good News is no longer exclusive. As John testified in the familiar verse of John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him , will not perish but shall the everlasting life.”*

There is a story retold so many times to all pilgrims to the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. In the 5th century many churches were destroyed when the Persians conquered the Holy Land. But the Church of the Nativity was spared because there was a Mosaic of the Three Kings in Persian attire that adorned the church.

There is a “shining out” of the glory of God for the world. The Wise Men returned home by another way. When we receive Christ, we live the Good News uniquely.

We begin another year with joyful anticipation. We carry the light of the world forward. God is doing a new thing in our presence, rekindling hope and creating a spark of joy.

God bless the Church, Pastor Romir



Thank you Grace Church Family and Friends for your gracious support of the Children's Angel Tree. We reached our goal and made a lot of children happy. Also, A big thanks to Linda and Steve Meister for assisting with the decoration on the Angel Tree as well as monitoring the list of names and "wish" list from the Salvation Army. Thanks to Don Lutz and those that helped take the Christmas tree and boxes from the storage room. For all the help, we Thank you Clarice Boswell

Many thanks to all of you who helped beautify our sanctuary for the Advent season, to those who provided beautiful music to inspire us, to those who participated in the Angel Tree and sweatshirt ministries, and to those who purchased soups and coffees that supported our causes. Maida McCormack

Missions Christmas Sweatshirts

Thank you to everyone that donated sweatshirts for our annual drive. They will be put to good use & protect them from the winter chill. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you! Adrian

Gratitude Corner: Thanks to the strong efforts of our A/V team to enhance our worship experience.

Thank you to all of you for your support for our Confirmation Class Meals on Wheels Candy Drive this fall.

Your donations of candy (and money to buy more), plus the time and effort of Adrienne, our pastors, students, mentors and their families allowed us to create 600 gift bags for delivery to shut-ins during the holidays. Your support is very much appreciated by us and all who receive our gifts.

Jim & Diane Morrow

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CORNER

In January, the Discussion Class will begin a new Adam Hamilton study entitled, "Why." It is a four week study covering such topics as

1. Why Do the Innocent Suffer?
2. Why Do My Prayers Go Unanswered?
3. Why Can't I See God's Will for My Life?
4. Why God's Love Prevails

The study will begin on Sunday, January 14 and conclude on Sunday, February 4. All interested adults are welcome to join us. We meet in the first room off Grace Place at 9:00am on Sunday mornings.

Lori Wait

RESTAURANT CLUB



Restaurant Club will meet on Saturday, January 20th at Goat & Vine Restaurant (195 Remington Blvd., Bolingbrook) at 6pm. Please join us for some lively conversations and camaraderie! RSVP to Diane Parro by January 14th at 630-430-3808 or dparro@comcast.net. Please note that I will be on vacation Jan 5 – Jan 14, so please be sure to send a text or email.

November 2022 Income & Expense Summary

Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/16/21

	November		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
INCOME	\$20,100	\$31,419	\$236,100	\$273,369
EXPENSES				
Apportionment	\$2,128	\$0	\$23,408	\$6,384
Salary & Benefits	\$16,424	\$15,383	\$192,484	\$184,023
Administration	\$1,175	\$726	\$12,925	\$13,524
Programming	\$1,071	\$1,491	\$11,780	\$6,394
Church Buildings	<u>\$5,713</u>	<u>\$4,048</u>	<u>\$84,239</u>	<u>\$78,712</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$26,511	\$21,648	\$324,836	\$289,037
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT):	-\$6,411	\$9,771	-\$88,736	-\$15,668

Notes:

- 1) Income now above budget by \$37K.
- 2) Expenses \$19K below budget when adjusted for not paying apportionments Apr-Nov.

2024 ALTAR FLOWER CALENDAR



What a wonderful way to commemorate a special occasion, remember a loved one, or celebrate a joyous occasion then with beautiful flowers that would be displayed prominently on the altar or one of the tables in the church. Just fill out an Altar Flower Form (found next to the Flower Calendar on the bulletin board in the Narthex) and turn in to the office two weeks before.



ASP Fundraiser

Baked Potato Bar

February
4th

9 am—12 pm

\$8 each

your choice
of toppings

Dine In or
Take Out Only
Pre sale Jan.
7th, 14th, 21st,
& 28th in the
Narthex.





DAYBREAK SHELTER

The sign up sheets are back up on the bulletin board. All items need to be at church the Sunday before Daybreak.

Daybreak this month is January 16th and 17th. The sign up sheets are posted in the back of the Narthex. Food donations should be left in the kitchen by Sunday, January the 15th. Please label all donations daybreak. Thank you for supporting this important missions. Diane Lutz

MISSION OF THE MONTH

January – Global (pg. 14) Micro-Credit in Moege and Papease, Ghana (#3020810)

This mixed farming project was set up to reduce food shortages through improved crop reduction processes and providing viable seed lands for production on an out-grower basis as well as production of animals for supply to peasant farmers.



The men's group from Grace has a Thursday morning breakfast fellowship. They meet at the Old Fashioned Pancake House on Jefferson St. Since nearly all who attend are retired, the groups meets at 7:00 am starting January 4, 2023.

All are welcome.

Update on Grace Child Care.

Tina thanks all those who brought in items for the daycare for Christmas. She really appreciates our support!

The front entry and the office floors is complete. The new floors really look nice. They also updated the office desks for Tina and Amanda and got rid of some old office furniture and shelving. The office looks great!

The Christmas Program was on December 7, 2023 and the kids did a great job!

Grace Child Care will be closed from December 25, 2023 - January 5, 2024 and will reopen on Monday January 8, 2024.

Grace Child Care received a grant and the staff will receive a bonus.

The state of Illinois passed a new law called the Paid Leave for Workers Act which will go into effect January 1st. This gives all employees up to 1 week of paid personal leave each year, based on number of hours worked. Tina will be writing a policy to add to the employee handbook.

Diane Morrow



David & Debra Black

January 16, 2001

- 1/2—Samantha Kazak
- 1/3—Joseph Sabella, Erin Lutz
- 1/6—Maria Chaney
- 1/8—Scott Paulson, Mike Parro
- 1/9—Cheryl Deardurff
- 1/10—Christine Butler, Lauren Mulvey
- 1/11—Carol Cook
- 1/15—Patrick Morrow, Gus Kramer
- 1/16—John Louis Boswell, Anna Rocha-Gray
- 1/18—Kaliah Dolph, Braydon Hocking
- 1/19—Justin Farrar, Nancy Leggett
- 1/24—Diane Parro
- 1/25—Mark Landers
- 1/26—Karen Storcz
- 1/31—Stephen Meister, Mason Meister, Kelly Renzi



February Grace Notes articles can be sent to me in the office at anytime. Deadline for the February newsletter will be January 24th. Thank you so much for all your help with the newsletter. Adrienne Hartman

DECEMBER ATTENDANCE	WORSHIP 8AM 10:30AM	CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL	ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
Dec. 3	95	26	14
Dec. 10	75	17	17
Dec. 17	125	27	cantata
Dec. 24	80		
Christmas Eve	126		



Give With Vanco

Reminder - You can submit payments/donations to all your favorite church causes right from our website! Go to www.graceumcjoliet.org and scroll down to the Vanco section. Click the button to open a variety of church cause to select from. Donate to the Mission of the Month or Ridgewood Food Pantry, pay for Flowers for the Altar, use Amazon Smile and designate Grace Joliet as your beneficiary.



Flowers for the Altar

Pay now



UMCOR Disaster Relief

Donate



General Operating

Contribute



Mission of the Month

Contribute



Daybreak Homeless Shelter

Donate



Daybreak Homeless Shelter

Donate



Ridgewood Food Pantry

If you prefer to use the purchasing power through the Northern Illinois Food Bank, you may make a monetary donation. Our day at the Food Pantry is the third Wednesday of the Month.

Donate



Christmas Donation

Christmas is special time for coming together to worship. Thank you for making a Christmas offering to GUMC.

Give

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 New Years Eve 10:30am Worship	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024	32 6:30 SPRC	3 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	4 7 am Men's Breakfast 10a Remove Christmas decor	5	6
7 8:30am Prayer and Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30am Worship	8	9 6:30 Trustees	10 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir 	11 7 am Men's Breakfast 	12	13
14 8:30am Prayer and Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Worship Com- mittee mtg.	15 AV work begins  5pm Daybreak	16 7am Daybreak Breakfast 10:00a Worship	17 11:30am Pantry 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	18 7 am Men's Breakfast 7pm Christian Ed Meeting via ZOOM	19	20 Restaurant Club 6pm Goat & Vine Bolingbrook
21 8:30am Prayer and Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30am Worship	22	23 6:30p Finance 7pm Church Council 	24 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir 	25 7 am Men's Breakfast 	26 30 hour	27 Famine
28 8:30am Prayer and Devotion 9am Christian Ed 10:30am Worship Famine ends	29	30	31	Happy New Year! 		



Christmas Cantata 2023



Grace United Methodist Church

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