

December 2020

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

191 Bridge Street

Corning, NY 14830-1997

607-936-6145

www.gumccorning.org

email: gracemethodist@stny.rr.com

Grace Notes December 2020



Nursery Open

Temporally closed

Sunday Worship Service

10:00 AM

Sunday School Children-Youth

Adult Sunday School

Fellowship Hour

Temporally Closed

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday
8:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Closed Fridays

Grace UM Church Staff:

Rev. Mike Kelly, Pastor

Anna Illig
Administrative Assistant

Evelyn Einfeldt,
Financial Secretary

Terry Oakden,
Custodian

Jean Tedrick,
Organist

Donna Kuhner,
Treasure

December 2020

open hearts
open minds
open doors



Grace United Methodist Church

Re. Mike Kelly, Pastor

607-936-6145

gracemethodist@stny.rr.com

Pastor's Christmas Message

Joy to the World is one of my favorite Christmas hymns. It is a hymn that brings to mind so many of the Psalms that call on all creation to sing the glad songs of praises to greet the Lord of heaven and earth who now lies in the Bethlehem manger.

But this year has been challenging at best. The difficulties that have besieged us this year with the COVID pandemic have been incredible. Life has been stressful, and watching the news in recent months has led you to ask on this Christmas Day: how can there be joy in this world, when the whole world seems to be falling apart?

As we have suffered through sickness and deaths, through hunger, hurricanes and terrible wild fires, through less money in our pockets and many businesses closing, and through conflict and stress with those whom we hold dear, it may seem nearly impossible to sing out the refrains calling on all of heaven and nature to sing.

And yet, the words of this favorite Christmas hymn are ours as well for one simple reason.

Despite all the heartache that so dominates our lives daily, we gather around the manger, we gather around the altar, we gather around the Word, and we sing our praises; for the one who will come to redeem us.

Even in the midst of so much suffering and death, we rejoice, singing loud songs of celebration that the Savior of the world is coming. The long-promised Jesus will come to lift the hearts and minds, to bring the good news of salvation to a world that is suffering.

We join together in singing Joy to the World for there is no more sorrow, no more crying, no more death; the Savior of the world is coming, and we rejoice and sing that no matter what happens around us, no matter what happens in our lives from one day to the next, the king is coming.



Mary Christmas and Happy New Year!

**WORSHIP SERVICES
DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON**

December 6- *2nd Sunday of Advent*

December 13 – 3rd Sunday of Advent
Wear your Ugly Christmas Sweater!!

December 20 – 4th Sunday of Advent

December 24- *3 PM & 7 PM Christmas Eve
Service (Please RSVP for services)*

**December 27 – 1st Sunday after Christmas
Day**

MITTEN TREE

Each year we decorate a Christmas tree outside of the church office with warm winter mittens, gloves, hats and scarves, which are then given to the children in the Head Start program. Please bring in new or gently used items for the tree and help keep a child warm.



**RINGING THE BELL FOR THE
SALVATION ARMY**

Every year members of Grace UMC ring the bell for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Program. Please contact by email or calling office with some dates and times available so that we can set up a date that would work best for the church to help with bell ringing.

POINSETTIAS

LIVING FAITH ENDOWMENT FUND

It is that time of year when we remember our loved ones by sharing the beauty of poinsettias on the altar or giving a gift to the Living Faith Endowment Fund. If you wish to place a poinsettia on the Chancel for Poinsettia Sunday (Dec. 22 service) and Christmas Eve, please call Northside Floral (962-3103) or florist of your choice to order and have delivered to the church by noon on December 19. If giving to the Endowment Fund, please mail your check to the church office. Names of givers and those honored or memorialized will be printed in the bulletin on Christmas Eve. The deadline for the bulletin is December 18. Please fill out the form below and return it to the church office.

Poinsettia _____

Endowment Fund _____



In memory of

In honor of

Given by

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

There is no meeting in December.

Normally we would be having an envelope in our bulletin to make a contribution for the Food Bank to purchase turkeys for their clients for the holidays.

I urge you to consider making a personal contribution for this purpose.

Make checks payable to:

Food Bank of the Southern Tier
388 Upper Oakwood Avenue
Elmira, NY 14903

Or make check payable to

Corning Food Pantry
11715 East Corning Road
Corning, NY 14830

Your donation will be gratefully appreciated.

A Light that Interrupts

Scripture: Luke 1:78-79

Our God is merciful and tender. He will cause the bright dawn of salvation to rise on us and to shine from heaven on all those who live in the dark shadow of death, to guide our steps into the path of peace.

Scripture: John 1:1, 4-5, 14a

Before the world was created, the Word already existed; he was with God, and he was the same as God.

The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us.

Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, is filled with the Holy Spirit at his son's birth and celebrates the tender mercy of God, light for all who sit in darkness, a dawn that will guide our feet into the paths of peace. We read his words at the end of Luke 1.

And in John's Gospel, we hear the exclamation: Jesus is the true light that

splinters all darkness, the light that has never been overcome, the light that dwells among us, a source of life and light for all people.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, God's light splintering the darkness, we are invited to identify where and how that light shines in the world around us. The following story is taken from the mission study *Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship*:

When they announced that Christmas Eve services were to take place at the state maximum-security prison, I [Janet Wolf] was not enthused. The pastor urged us to attend, emphasizing the story of incarnation, the Word becoming flesh among us, this baby born to an unwed

teenage mama among an oppressed, colonized, and impoverished people. "This story belongs in the streets," he argued, "the body of Christ in and for and with the world."

When we arrived at the prison that night, we were told that we couldn't go inside. Something had happened at the prison, and we would have to hold our service outside. And even though this was Nashville, Tennessee, it was snowing. We were a sad little handful of people, huddled outside the immense prison, snow and sleet swirling around us. This was not my idea of Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve for me had included brilliant poinsettias and candles lighting up the rafters in the sanctuary. Christmas Eve was trumpets and pageantry, majestic music and bright colors, the choir spilling down the aisle, little children dressed up like angels and shepherds. Once we even had a live donkey. But here we were, standing in the cold. And I was pretty sure no one inside even knew we were there. My children were going to get sore throats and earaches and then I'd have to miss work. This was so definitely not my idea of Christmas Eve.

As all this went through my head, our group huddled together, trying to get the Christ candle lit. The fierce wind extinguished the match every time. A member of the group who was trying to help shield the flame handed me the Bible and said, "Read this." And I did, from Isaiah 9:2: "The people who walked in darkness have seen great light . . . on them light has shined."

Just about that time, the Christ candle was lit and I leaned in, trying to help my children light their small candles. And still in my heart I was grumbling, sure this moment could not possibly matter to anyone. But then one of my boys tugged on my coat. "Mama, look!" I turned to look where he was pointing and saw, in cell after cell, the glow of matches and lighters being held up to the windows, light spilling through the bars. As we began singing "Silent Night, Holy Night," I imagined I heard voices inside and out, singing with the joy and awe of those who have turned to see what God is doing in the world around us.

Questions to ponder:

When and how have you "turned" to discover God's light that splinters darkness?

How have you invited others to turn and discover what God is doing in the world?

Closing Prayer

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 release the prisoner

to rebuild the nations

to bring peace among the people

to make music in the heart.

May it be so. Amen.



MISSION NEWS

United Methodist Student Day

What is Student's Day? One of six church-wide Special Sundays with offerings of The United Methodist Church, United Methodist Student Day takes place the first Sunday after Thanksgiving. This Special Sunday calls the church to support students as they prepare for life in uniting faith with knowledge. The special offering provides scholarships for qualified United Methodist applicants. When you give generously on United Methodist Student Day, you support students as they prepare for life in uniting faith with knowledge. What students have to say:

The United Methodist Church believes that every person has the right to education and that the responsibility of educating young people rests with the family, faith communities, and the government. On United Methodist Student Day, we have the opportunity to support scholarships and low-interest loans that help young leaders achieve their dreams. Morgan Murdock, a 2018 graduate of North Carolina State University, was a Gift of Hope scholar. According to her, when we give on United Methodist Student Day, "You are reminding and encouraging students of all majors and walks of life to remain constant in their faith and to continue to uphold the great qualities that The United Methodist Church has instilled in us. The church has shown me so much unconditional love over the years in many forms, and this was a very meaningful form of that love. I was encouraged to pursue more in my community and remember the church that helped make me who I am." As a child who experienced being bullied, Benjamin Carlson found refuge in his church. As a college student, the Gift of Hope scholarship offset some of his college expenses and he says it "reinforced my understanding that The United Methodist Church supports [its] students."

Make your check payable to

Grace UMC

Put "Student Day" on the memo line.

NEWS FROM STAFF/PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee recently met and dealt with the following:

1. Accepted the resignation of Kathy Scudder as treasurer. Hired Donna Kuhner as treasurer effective November 1, 2020.
2. Reviewed all staff salaries. Upper New York Conference recommended an increase of 1.7% for 2021. Recommended that increase to Finance Committee for pastor, financial secretary and organist. Administrative assistant and treasurer salaries will be reviewed for possible increase after completing 6 months employment. Custodian and assistant will receive New York State minimum wage increase for 2021. All salaries are subject to approval by Finance Committee and Church Council.
3. Completed the S/PPRC Advisory form for UNY Conference. We recommend that the current pastor's ministry continue for 2021-2022. However, we have concerns that need to be addressed.
4. Completed the Pastor-S/PPRC Covenant form.
5. In the near future we will be working on updating the church profile.

Touchless thermometers have been purchased and will be used to take the temperature of members and staff as they enter the building.

Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee is responsible for maintaining communication with the pastor and employees. If you have a question or an issue with any of them or

with another member of the congregation, please contact a member of the committee. It is our responsibility to attempt to resolve such issues.

Vida Johnson, Chairperson

Members: Betty Lou Taynton, Pat Edger, Donna Kuhner, Dr. Marvin Lee, Matt Blodgett, David



The office will be closed for the
Christmas & New Year's Holiday
December 25 & 26; January 1

UNDIES FOR JESUS

Grace Church's Membership Care Committee's winter project will be collecting underwear, socks and sweatpants for our elementary schools. We would like to collect these items during November and December with a deadline of January 28 for donations.

Sizes needed would be girl sizes 6 to girls large and boy's size 6 to small men. If you would rather donate monetarily, please make your check out to Grace UMC with "Membership Care" in the memo line and the committee will do the shopping for you!

UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATER

Make sure to wear your ugly Christmas sweater on Sunday, December 13. Let's see how many crazy sweaters are out there!!



STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFT

As we prepare for another celebration of Christ's birth this Advent season, let me take this opportunity to wish you a joyous and fulfilling holiday season.

Traditionally, those individuals who wish to do so have contributed to a staff Christmas gift so that we might remember our staff in a special way at this time of year. This is being done again this year. Please put your contribution in an envelope marked "Staff Christmas" and give to Dave Patterson on any Sunday between now and December 15 or you may mail it to the church office to my attention. **If writing a check, please make it out to Dave Patterson.**

Again, best wishes to you and your family, and thank you for your continued support of our church.

Yours in Christ,
Dave Patterson



COMMITTEE NEWS

CHURCH BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 - Yvette LeBaron
3 - Robert Bush
4 - Betty Darcangelo
6 - Kathy Hostrander
10 - Julie Einfeldt Kellon
12 - Laura Dickerman Kram
19 - Andrea Ervay
 Pat Bennett
 Stephanie Monastra
24 - David Bush
25 - John Slaven, Jr.
 Terry Johnson
30 - Zachary Bush



PAY PAL

The church is set up to accept secure donations through Pay Pal. You can access Pay Pal by going to the church's website (gumccorning.org). Please be aware that when using Pay Pal, 2.9% of the donation and \$.30 per transaction is taken from the contribution.

WITH OUR CHURCH SCHOOLERS

2 - Hanna Hagadone

ANNIVERSARIES

18 - Michael & Roxanne Mourhess

21 - Marvin & Hyung Lee

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE DECEMBER 2020

*Please note that there are many areas in need of volunteers.
Let the church office know if you would like to help out in any of these areas.*



Thank you to all who volunteer their time for these ministries and to those who donate flowers or bulletins.
Your time and help is very much appreciated!

Date	Greeters - 3	Flowers
12/6	1. Pat Edger 2. 3.	
12/13	1. Pat Edger 2. 3.	
12/20	1. Pat Edger 2. 3.	
12/27	1. Pat Edger 2. 3.	Poinsettias
12/24 Christmas Eve	1. No Greeters 2. 3.	Poinsettias

*Merry
Christmas*





December 2020



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Second Sunday of Advent 10:00 Worship, S	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Third Sunday of Advent 10:00 Worship, S	14 Newsletter Deadline	15	16	17	18	19
20 Fourth Sunday of Advent 10:00 Worship, S	21	22	23	24 Office Closed 3:00 PM Christmas Eve Service 6:00 PM Christmas Eve Service	25 Office Closed	26
27 10:00 Worship, S	28	29	30	31		ABBREVIATIONS K = Kitchen L = Lounge S = Sanctuary BC = Bethany Chapel DR = Dining Room RH = Reed Hall