



# February 2025 Newsletter

## **Some Thoughts of the Season** from Pastor Bob Gutekunst

As I sit down to write this, the Presidential Inauguration took place yesterday. Around roughly one half of the country is celebrating jubilantly, while the other half is upset and disappointed. In my extended family, which numbers into the dozens of people, we are pretty firmly “purple”, politically speaking - we are split right down the middle- so I feel this division very acutely. Don't worry, I'm not going to talk about partisan politics.

But, amid all of this divisiveness, we are moving through the season of Epiphany. This is a season in which we are called to reflect that God reveals God's self in some unexpected ways and places, and through some unexpected people. One of the lessons that Jesus teaches to his followers in this season is to “love your enemies.” Pretty challenging stuff, I know.

I remember a guy named Dave. When we were kids, I hated Dave. Dave used to bully me relentlessly. I was always one of the smaller kids, and, during football games or basketball games, Dave always targeted me and roughed me up. I hated Dave. But as we got older, Dave ended up being included in my circle of friends. I got to know Dave a little bit. I learned that Dave had some emotional problems, just like me. We shared a lot of the same fears and anxieties and insecurities. As fate would have it, Dave and I ended up becoming good friends. Who would have guessed?

I read an article about fostering connection in these divided times. The writer of the article mentioned seven skills for doing just that:

1. See the person, not the label- learn some personal details about others.

## CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Pastor:**

Bob Gutekunst

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### **Minister of Music:**

Marisa Deshler

- cell: 484-226-7298
- email: [mdeshler@ptd.net](mailto:mdeshler@ptd.net)

### **Church Office:**

Mary Dobish

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- email: [graceuccchurch@gmail.com](mailto:graceuccchurch@gmail.com)

### **Church Website:**

[www.graceuccchurch.com](http://www.graceuccchurch.com)

### **Find Us on Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/grace.northampton](http://www.facebook.com/grace.northampton)

### **Hospital Code: #436**

Use this code when you're admitted so that we know you're in the hospital.

## Some Thoughts Continued...

2. Expand your views and circles- form some relationships with people not like you.
3. Find shared identities- no matter our politics, most Americans want the same things, prosperity, freedom, belonging, etc..
4. Practice perspective taking- try to figure out where others are coming from, even if we don't agree with them.
5. Self-distancing - disengaging from our thoughts and emotions when things get heated.
6. Identify common goals- figuring out what we can work on together can transform adversaries into collaborators.
7. Listen with compassion- if we want people to listen to us, we have to practice what we preach. Trying to be more open-minded, less defensive, and less focused on our own self-interests encourages conversation with others. Plus, we are following the example of Jesus, who always exhibited compassion for others (this is me talking, not the article:)

*I doubt if our country is going to get over this extreme polarization and divisiveness anytime soon, but we can do our small part with the people we encounter in our individual lives. There are all kinds of people we can choose to hate, people we can label as "them", whether it's Republicans or Democrats, politicians in general, Muslims, transgender youth, corporate executives, Mexican immigrants, on and on it goes. There is no shortage of groups of people we can identify as "them."*

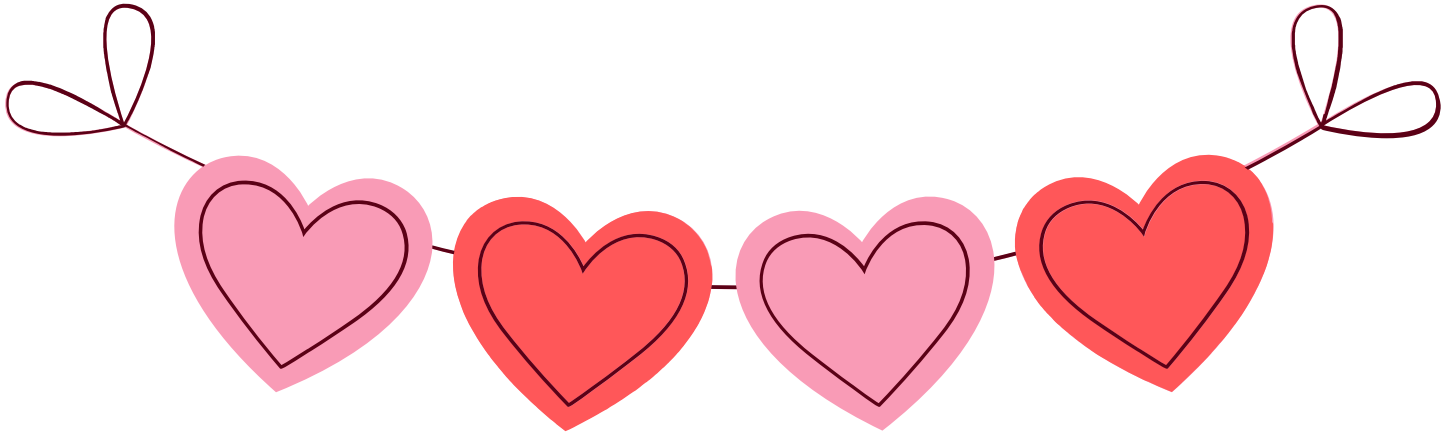
*A friend of mine is fond of saying that, as Christians, our job is to love people where they are and for who they are, not for who we want them to become. I have started to begin our worship services with this reminder, "No matter who you are, what you've done, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." I hope that this statement always rings true for us, as individuals, and as a faith community. Jesus calls us to do nothing less.*

*No matter our political affiliation, we are, first and foremost, called to follow Jesus. And, for Jesus, there never was a "them", only an "us".*

*May God bless ALL of you,*

*Pastor Bob*

# Grace United Church of Christ



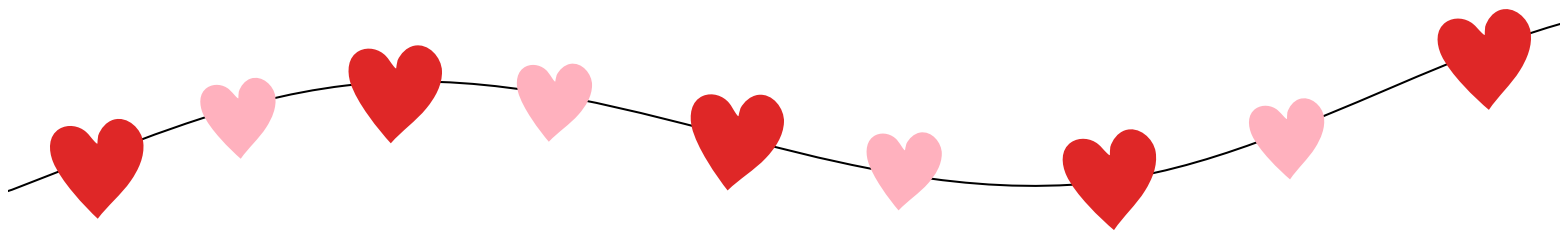
## Message from Consistory February 2025

**The next Consistory meeting is Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6:30 pm**

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on Sunday, February 16, 2025, immediately following the worship service. If the church service is cancelled due to inclement weather, the Annual Meeting will take place the following Sunday, February 23, 2025. Reports for the meeting need to be submitted by February 2, 2025.

There are a few Deacon positions available on Consistory. **The terms will begin in March, 2025.** If you are interested in serving on Consistory and would like more information, please fill out the designated form on the table inside the sanctuary entrance and return it to a Consistory member or to the office.

Property Damage to the Church Building - As many of you know, the church's elevator was damaged by a vehicle on Monday, January 13th. Until further notice, the elevator is out of service. Hopefully, it will be replaced in the very near future. Sorry for the inconvenience.



## Consistory Meeting Highlights – January 8, 2025

- Bills are paid for the month.
- Rates came down on CD's
- PNC stocks were down, however increased previous month.
- Remembrance Tree \$4,210 to be used towards heating cost; \$1,551 was used for snow plowing.
- Special Funds – memorial funds increased \$200, building \$100, sabbatical \$93
- PayPal – received \$20 from flower sponsor.
- Lynn suggests two people should have access to PayPal. Attendance is down, Gary T will call people to see if they will be coming
- Gary T will be going to St. John's in Coplay to discuss doing things together, possibly Vacation Bible School.
- Soup sale January 24/25th, chicken noodle, vegetable beef, and seafood bisque.
- Zooks meat pies and apple dumplings will be sold for February 15th pickup 2:00-4:00 pm.
- Possibly doing a discussion on the movie 'The Chosen' instead of bible study. Camera still isn't working, doesn't know what the problem is.
- Furnace was fixed, new valves were put on the boiler and in the choir room.
- Brotherhood Insurance 2025-26 Renewal –
  - Policy is increasing to \$5,000
  - Insurance has changed to NCG as of 1/1/2025.
  - Roof still excluded, will need roof inspected and receipts from all repairs.
- Sharon composed and submitted letter requesting Senior Center rent increase. Newsletter information is due to Mary by January 26th.
- Office copier - remaining with Fraser copier due to a required cancellation notice of 120 days before contract expires. They lowered the monthly fee.
- Hoagie fundraiser to start in February, through Galyean's Deli.
- Reports for the Congregational meeting need to be submitted to the church office by February 3, 2025.
- Joan has a table with drawers, does anyone want it? Possibly brownie troop. Sharon expressed how nice the Advent and Christmas Eve services were.

Next Consistory Meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Horwith, Recording Secretary

# FUNDRAISERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



## NOTES OF THANKS:

Thank you to everyone who supported me and my family at the passing of my husband Dan Horwith. Pastor Bob for helping organize and perform a beautiful funeral service at the church; secretary, Mary for assisting with anything needed; for the wonderful music by Marisa and Mark; Fellowship Committee for all the work preparing and cleaning up for the luncheon; Ron L, lift operator; for everyone who attended and/or sent cards/gifts and kind words and prayers. Grace Church is a wonderful church family!

Blessings to all,

Bonnie Horwith and Family

**Phoebe Devitt Homes** sent a thank you note for our continued support of their work.

**Lancaster Theological Seminary** acknowledged our recent gift of \$150.00 to the LTS Fund. Thank you for your commitment to the future of LTS and our students.



## Fellowship Committee

Zook's Homemade Meat Pie & Apple Dumpling Sale will be available for pickup on Saturday, February 15th from 2:00-4:00 pm in Fellowship Hall and after worship on Sunday, February 16th. Thank you for your support.

## Hoagie Fundraiser

Our monthly Hoagie Fundraiser has begun! We will be using Galyean's Deli here in Northampton. The hoagie types are Italian, Turkey, Roast Beef, Tuna and the cost is \$6.00. Sandwiches are Pastrami, Swiss Cheese on Rye (\$6.00) or Ham/Cheese or Turkey/Cheese on a Kaiser Roll cost is \$4.00. Order forms are posted in the back of the sanctuary as well as in the bulletin and website. **Orders and Payments are due to the office by Tuesday, February 4th. Delivery date will be Wednesday, February 12th with pickup hours of 4:00-6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for once again supporting this fundraiser. An order form is included in this newsletter.**

## Upcoming Events -

**Fellowship Committee** - will be having the Lenten Crab Cake Dinners. The dates are Friday, March 7, 14, 21, and 28th. Dinners will be available from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm. Dine in or take-out. Pay at the door - no preorders. Crab Cake Dinners include 2 crab cakes, baked potato, cole slaw, roll and brownie for dessert - cost \$15. Adult Chicken Finger Dinner includes chicken fingers, baked potato, cole slaw, roll and brownie for dessert - cost \$10. Children Chicken Finger Dinner - cost \$4.

**Easter Candy Sale** - More information coming soon! **Save the date:** Candy making will begin on Monday, April 6, 2025.

**Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner/Basket Raffle/Bake sale** will be taking place after Easter. Watch for more information.

Grace UCC Church  
 902 Lincoln Avenue, Northampton, PA 18067  
 Phone: 610-262-7186 Office Hours M-F 9:00 am - 1:00 pm  
 Website: graceuccchurch.com  
 Email: graceuccchurch@gmail.com

**Orders & Payment due by Tuesday, February 4, 2025**

**Our New Supplier is Galyean Deli/Island Expressions, Northampton, PA**

**Pickup Date: Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 - 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall**

**Customer Name & Phone Number:**

Qty	Type of Hoagies	Cost	Total
	Italian - Everything	\$6.00	
	Italian - Onions/No Peppers	\$6.00	
	Italian - Peppers/No Onions	\$6.00	
	Italian - Plain	\$6.00	
	Turkey - Everything	\$6.00	
	Turkey - Onions/No Peppers	\$6.00	
	Turkey - Peppers/No Onions	\$6.00	
	Turkey - Plain	\$6.00	
	Roast Beef	\$6.00	
	Tuna	\$6.00	
	<b>Type of Sandwiches</b>		
	Pastrami, Swiss Cheese on Rye Bread	\$6.00	
	Ham & Cheese on Kaiser Roll	\$4.00	
	Turkey & Cheese on Kaiser Roll	\$4.00	
	<b>Next Hoagie Sale is March 12, 2025</b>		
	<b>Total Hoagies</b>		
	<b>Total Sandwiches</b>		
	<b>Total \$\$ Due</b>		



# RECYCLING Electronics

Did you know that DRC Technologies located across from the Roxy Theater will take most items with a plug for FREE. This includes laptops, tablets, electric weed whackers, lamps and much more. You may visit their website at [www.drc-tech.net](http://www.drc-tech.net) for a full list of items. They do drop off by appointment only Monday thru Friday 9 am to 4:30 pm. Their contact information is DRC Technologies 2005 Main Street Northampton, PA 18067 and their phone is 610-502-0854

## Redner's Receipts

**Don't forget to save your Redners' receipts.** Submit your receipts to Grace and we will earn 1% of your purchase total. Use your Rewards Card as usual and save your receipts to give to the church office. It must be the full receipt for us to receive credit.

## Or, have you considered E-Giving?

Electronic giving is all about convenience for you and consistency for the church. Skip filling out your envelope every week by having contributions automatically transferred from your checking or savings account to Grace's bank account. Not only is it one less thing for you to think about, but it also helps your giving stay consistent even if you can't make it to service every week.

If you want to sign up, simply visit [graceuccchurch.com/support/graces-mission](http://graceuccchurch.com/support/graces-mission), download the form, and return it in a sealed envelope to the church office. That's it!

## Northampton Food Bank Donations

The first Sunday of every month is our Food Bank Donation collection. Please be supportive for our community Northampton Food Bank. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

## Inclement Weather Update

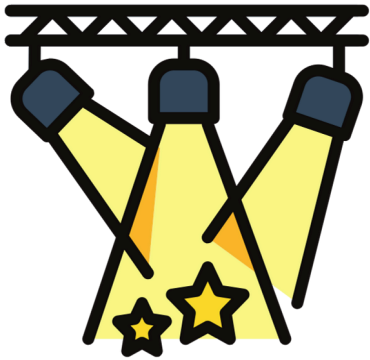
In the event of inclement weather, church service delays and/or cancellations will be posted on WFMZ 69 News Storm Center stations (TV and online) and on Grace UCC's Facebook page and Website. However, please use your discretion whether you can make it to church safely. In the event of inclement weather Monday thru Friday, the office may be operating under various hours.

# February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service - Communion	3 Hoagie Orders due	4	5	6 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	7	8
9 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service Family Sunday School	10	11	12 Consistory Meeting 6:30 pm Hoagie Pickup 4-6:00 pm	13 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	14 	15 Meat Pie & Apple Dumpling Sale - Pickup 2-4:00 pm
16 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service Annual Meeting after Worship Service	17	18 Soup Klitchen	19	20	21	22
23 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service	24	25	26	27	28	



# GRACE'S SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL BUSINESS



Grace is committed to supporting our community, which is why we'd like to take a moment to shine a spotlight on some of our local businesses. By supporting local, you're helping your neighbors provide for their families, offer more jobs in the area, and keep more money circulating in the community where it can be reinvested. If you would like to join Grace in supporting local, please check out some of these great businesses below. And don't forget - please let them know you heard about them through Grace!



610-264-5507

[www.DakuAutoBody.com](http://www.DakuAutoBody.com)

Click on "EZ Estimate Tool" Collision/Insurance Estimates Many Factory Certifications Family Run - Est. 1948




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Northampton, PA 18067  
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This edition of our newsletter  
is presented by: Sharon Braker

“Happy Valentines’ Day”

Visit our Website  
[www.graceuccchurch.com](http://www.graceuccchurch.com)

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[www.facebook.com/grace.northampton](http://www.facebook.com/grace.northampton)



**Sunday Worship: 10:30 am**

**Holy Communion is the first  
Sunday of every month.**

**Office hours: M-F 9 am-1 pm**