



# January 2025 Newsletter

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

Well, the holiday season is past, and we are into the new year - 2025! Someone commented to me, during the holiday season just concluded, "It's pointless to go on a diet and try to lose some weight during this time of the year!" It's kind of true. You go from Halloween candy to a Thanksgiving feast, to Christmas cookies and other treats, to another feast on Christmas day, to some champagne on New Year's Eve. Maybe that's why many people wait until the new year to try and lose some weight. That's, generally speaking, what many New Year's resolutions involve- trying to improve oneself. Whether it's trying to lose some weight, or exercise more, or just generally improve one's health, or be more productive at work, or accomplish any number of worthwhile tasks, that's usually what our New Year's resolutions are all about- trying to achieve more, trying to be more productive, trying to be better than we were. It can be kind of stressful, and anxious, and exhausting, because, let's be honest, most people have a really hard time sticking with their resolutions. They, more often than not, last until about February, and then we give up on them.

I read an article that caught my attention. It talked about a different kind of New Year's resolution - doing more things we enjoy, being kinder and more gracious to ourselves, loving ourselves more. I liked these kinds of resolutions, so I am including some of them for you to consider.

1. Continue journaling. I started keeping a journal last Christmas, and I'm so proud that it's now December, and I've kept it up for almost a year! It's been great for my mental health and helped force me into a habit and routine. For around 30 to 40 minutes, I disconnect from all my tech, screens, work, etc., and make myself a cup of tea, sit down, and pour my thoughts onto a page."
2. Be kinder to myself and learn to love myself more."

## CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Pastor:**

Bob Gutekunst

- office phone: 610-262-7186
- cell: 484-714-9245
- email: [gutekunst66@hotmail.com](mailto:gutekunst66@hotmail.com)
- email: [revgraceucc@rcn.com](mailto:revgraceucc@rcn.com)

### **Minister of Music:**

Marisa Deshler

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

### **Church Office:**

Mary Dobish

- office phone: 610-262-7186
- 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...*

3. Do my best. Try to stay positive but forgive myself when I'm not. Try to figure out where the negativity is coming from.
4. Spread more kindness and love. There's too much bad going on to waste time being hateful and mean."
5. Give myself space to learn and create, without worrying about outcome or goal, but with some dedication toward doing hard things."
6. Travel more.
7. Find my favorite Jane Austen novel. My mom's favorite is *Pride and Prejudice*, and my aunt's is *Persuasion*."
8. Find true love.
9. Take more time for myself mentally and emotionally. I hate being stressed and overwhelmed all the time.
10. No expectations.
11. Smile more.
12. Stop fighting with people
13. Do the things I want to do by myself. I'm challenging myself in small steps to do the things I'm scared to do alone. For example, going to a movie I want to see by myself because I can do things I want alone."
14. Learn to stop blaming myself when things go wrong.

The article concludes with a quote from Captain Picard of the Star Trek franchise, "Remember that it is possible to commit no error and still lose. That is not a weakness. That is life." Maybe these suggestions will help you to put less pressure on yourself, especially around New Year's, and do some things for yourself. As Christians, of course, we are called to love others. But that calling begins by first loving ourselves. Love yourself a little more this year.

Happy New Year's,

Pastor Bob



# Grace United Church of Christ

## Message from Consistory January 2025

**The next Consistory meeting is Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 6:30 pm**

Consistory is grateful to everyone who attended and supported the Spaghetti Dinner held on Saturday, November 16th. The many donations of baskets and baked goods were greatly appreciated. Thank you, also, to our dedicated volunteers for their services. We had a great turnout of people coming to eat and to enjoy a time of fellowship. Military Veterans were treated to free dinners. Many take-out dinners, basket tickets, and baked goods, were sold. The profit, which will benefit the church general fund, is yet to be determined. Thank you for the support! -- Sharon Braker, Consistory President

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.

### **Consistory Meeting Highlights - December 11, 2024**

- \$2,107 spaghetti dinner profit.
- Fulton CD is maturing December 15th ; Lynn is checking other rates.
- Organ Concert music funds \$547 received.
- Christian flag was returned to get the correct flag.
- Received thank you from St. John's for their visit here.
- Gary T stated we should be proud of our church for as small as we are. Nice to have everyone involved, great staff.
- Very nice potluck this past Sunday; thank you Gary for coordinating.
- Soup sale, January 2025, form submitted for approval. Approved.
- The total profit for 2024 was \$8,084.67 from Fellowship events. Thank you Fellowship Committee!
- Bethlehem Emergency Shelter – Pastor Bob, Joan, Debbie attended. They welcome help, do not need to sign-up.
- There will be a Hymn sing service December 29th.
- Will have a new member service coming up soon.
- Community Focus Group - LVHN focus group scheduled for December 18 th , 6:30 p.m. attending: Pastor Bob, Sharon, Don, Gary T, Joan, Debbie, Jim, Gary H

## Consistory Meeting Highlights - December 11, 2024 (Continued)

- Consistory 'Hear Us Out' group discussion will begin at January meeting.
- Pastor Bob would like to have a performance review. Bonnie reviewing Office and Personnel committee and evaluation document availability.
- Thursday night men's group is no longer meeting here.
- Had a leak in fellowship hall – Jeff Galgocy fixed leader valve. Thank you.
- Elevator was inspected. Scheduled to be serviced.
- Grease trap is being cleaned out.
- Boiler was inspected. Checked all good. Inspector had a survey and started asking questions about many other things. Looked at oldest circuit breaker. Asked about the roof.
- Sunday the bell cords broke; electrician was here with ladder; ropes were off pulley, has been fixed.
- Sharon noted the outdoor display looks very nice. Christina Oswald said can use additional memorial funds. Will add more next year.
- Two lights in sanctuary were blinking. Think due to incorrect bulbs, changed. Corrected the problem.
- Fire alarm still beeping. Something in Fellowship Hall causes the electric to make it go off. Not happening as often. Still working on resolution.
- Marisa reported the organ is making a noise. Told the person tuning it; noise comes from the organ loft. Would require moving pipes, etc. will be very costly. Not necessary to do anything currently; keep monitoring.
- Brotherhood Insurance 2025-26 Renewal – received notification:
  - The underwriters are requiring paperwork on the roof replacement and repairs. Also, they want a current signed inspection of the roof. Once received, they will review the information to see if the roof exclusion can be removed.
  - This is unfortunate for the church to have to go through because the roofs have been taken good care of and kept in good repair over the years.
  - With the renewal coming up next month, action will need to be taken as soon as possible. Any help with this matter would be greatly appreciated.
    - 2012/2013 – received bids to replace roof. \$48,000
    - Garinger is going to try to send invoices.
    - Pastor Bob – has contact will see if can inspect.
- Mary is shopping electric rates.
- Copyright is taken care of.
- Office copier - Church Secretary, Mary moved forward with Topp Business Solutions 36-month contract.

## Consistory Meeting Highlights - December 11, 2024 (Continued)

- Senior Center—supplies must be ordered in bulk. They were moved to downstairs storage area. Storage area needs to be consolidated.
  - In new year, a few people will go through the church boxes downstairs.  
Sharon/Lee Ann/Debbie
  - Joan – said Senior Center is very active. Can we identify a specific area for them?  
Space downstairs; needs to be organized.
- Candle lighting – maybe we should have multiple people; Donna will help Ron. Provide acolyte training class for youth.
- 2025 Congregational meeting – February 16th with 23rd as inclement weather date.
- Consistory terms – expiring 2025 Feb 28 – Deacons: Sue Kutzler, Joan Matura, Elder Sharon Braker. Joan and Sharon doing another term. Sue – no.
- Gary T – will not have Sunday school December 29th .
- Joan – her sister watches service, likes it very much; how can she get connected. Give Mary her email address to get weekly link.
- Sue – received feedback from family that they really enjoy the sermon.
- Donna – Julie will help w/QR code set-up
- Bonnie –
  - It gets too congested at entrance of church, suggest removing back pew for more room, and place table for signups, etc. Other feedback: deacon and elder need to move away from entrance. Push back bell table.
  - Need rail at altar steps; elders should find acolytes each week
  - Any interest in String Art event? Yes. To be set up early 2025

**Next Consistory Meeting: Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 6:30 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Horwith, Recording Secretary



# FUNDRAISERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who donated gift cards for Turning Point of the **Lehigh Valley's Holiday Gift Card Drive**. **Gift cards** totalling \$375 were collected for survivors of domestic violence.

**Christian Ed** wishes to thank everyone who purchased gifts for local families in need during the **"In the Spirit of Giving" gift drive**. The many beautifully wrapped gifts were placed under the Christmas tree in the sanctuary before being distributed.

## **Greeters Needed for 2025**

Would you serve as a Greeter for worship services for a one-month period; arrive at church ½ hour prior to church services, welcoming and handing out bulletins to members and guests as they arrive. Please consider helping, there is a sign-upsheet at the back of the church, or contact Bonnie Horwith, bogash@ptd.net or 484-201-0412, to sign up. Your time and stewardship are appreciated!

## **A Thank You from Grace's Staff**

Thank you to everyone who contributed towards the Staff Appreciation Gifts this Christmas. It truly means a lot to receive recognition for all the hard work not only during the busy Christmas season, but all year long. We are very grateful and blessed.

Thank You!

-Mary, Marisa, Trish, Lynn, Mark & Pastor Bob



## **News from Fellowship Committee:**

Fellowship Committee Soup Sale will be held on Saturday, January 25th with pick up from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm and after worship on Sunday, January 26th. **Orders and payment are due by Sunday, January 19th with cash or check payable to Grace UCC.**

Please return your orders to the office or to a member of the Fellowship Committee. Soups for sale are Chicken Noodle \$12/quart, Vegetable Beef \$12/quart and Mary's Seafood Bisque \$15/quart. Please see the order form on the next page.



## **Coming Events:**

Fellowship Committee is planning Zook's Homemade Meat Pie & Apple Dumpling Sale on February 15 with pick up from 2-4 p.m. Homemade Meat Pies (Chicken, Beef, Sausage) and Apple Dumplings will be ready for pick-up on February 15 from 2-4 p.m. and after worship February 16, 2025. **Orders and payment are due January 26. For your convenience, an order form is enclosed in this newsletter**



Grace United Church of Christ  
**FELLOWSHIP SOUP SALE**

902 Lincoln Ave. Northampton, PA 18067  
610-262-7186 / graceuccchurch@gmail.com

**Orders & Payment Due: Sunday, January 19th**  
**Cash or check payable to "Grace UCC"**

**Ready for Pick Up: Saturday, January 25, 2025**  
**between 11:00 am -1:00 pm and Sunday, January 26, 2025**  
**after worship**

Please return your orders to Sue Kutzler, Lee Ann Hortman, Sandy Andrews, Donna Damiter, Charlotte Leindecker, Karen Kresge, Deb Menio, Betty Miller, Gail Miller, Cindy Trively or the church office. Thank you for your order!

I would like...

\_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Noodle (\$12/quart)

\_\_\_\_\_ Vegetable Beef (\$12/quart)

\_\_\_\_\_ Seafood Bisque (\$15/quart)

Total # Quarts \_\_\_\_\_

Total Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Pick Up Person \_\_\_\_\_



# ZOOK'S HOMEMADE MEAT PIE & APPLE DUMPLING SALE

We are thrilled to offer Zook's delicious meat pies and apple dumplings again this year, homemade in Lancaster County. They will be frozen so you can just pop them in the oven whenever you want a quick, tasty dinner!



*Orders & Payment Due: Sunday, January 26, 2025*

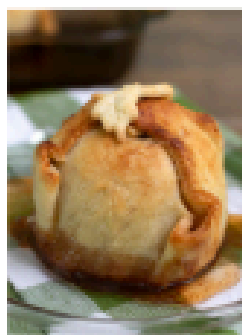
Cash or check made payable to Grace UCC. Mailing address is 902 Lincoln Avenue, Northampton, PA 18067

*Ready for Pickup: Saturday, February 15th from 2-4 pm or*

*Sunday, February 16th after worship service in Fellowship Hall*

Please return your order form with payment to Lee Ann Hortman, Charlotte Leindecker, Betty Miller, Sue Kutzler, or church office.

## About Zook's



Zook's specializes in chicken, beef, or sausage pies that are made with chunks of meat, peas, carrots, and potatoes and have a crust on top and bottom. Available in 6" or 9" sizes. They also make their own apple dumplings. Both meat pies and dumplings come in microwave and/or oven safe containers.

	6" chicken \$6.50	9" chicken \$11.00	6" beef \$7.00	9" beef \$11.50	6" sausage \$6.50	9" sausage \$11.00	apple dumpling (single) \$4.25	apple dumpling (double) \$8.50
quantity								

Pickup Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Total # Items: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ Due: \_\_\_\_\_



# 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.

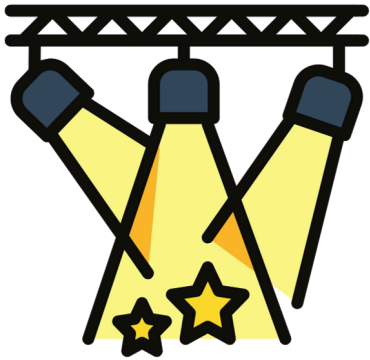
## Inclement Weather Update

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.

# January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 	2	3	4
5 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service - Communion	6	7	8 Consistory Meeting 6:30 pm	9 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	10	11
12 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service Family Sunday School	13	14 Soup Klitchen	15	16 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	17	18
19 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service	20	21	22	23	24	25 Soup Sale Family Game Night - TBD
26 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Service Soup Sale Meat Pie Order Deadline	27	28	29	30	31	

# 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)

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Happy  
New Year



This edition of our newsletter is presented by: Joyce Kohler  
"In Memory of Barbara Hanks"

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**Sunday Worship: 10:30 am**

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

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