

December 2025 Newsletter

Gresham United Methodist Church



From the Pastor's Desk...



Grace and Peace to you,

We have arrived at the door of Advent. In the life of the church, this is not merely a countdown to Christmas; it is a sanctuary in time, a holy invitation to slow down, breathe deeply, and reset our focus.

The world around us will tell us to hurry. It will fill our calendar and crowd our minds. But God is calling us to a different rhythm. This Advent season is our opportunity to recalibrate our hearts and once again align them with the mission we share: to be Rooted in Faith, Friendship, and Community.

To find this reset, we look at the ancient wisdom of scripture. The Old Testament reminds us that God is constantly at work, inviting us to release the old to make room for the new:

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” — Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV)

To perceive this "new thing," we must clear our vision. The New Testament urges us to shift our gaze from the distractions of the season to the Source of our hope:

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.” — Hebrews 12:2 (NIV)

Friends, this Advent, I invite us to stop looking at the chaos and start looking at Christ. Let us use these weeks to deepen our roots in Faith, strengthen our bonds of Friendship, and widen our circle of Community.

Please join me in this prayer as we enter the season together:

A Prayer for an Advent Reset

Gracious God, we pause now to reset our hearts. In a world of noise, we choose Your silence. In a season of rushing, we choose Your pace.

Help us to forget what lies behind and press toward the hope of the Manger. Root us deeply in Faith, that we might stand firm. Bind us together in Friendship, that no one walks alone. Build us into a community that reflects Your love to Gresham and beyond.

We fix our eyes on Jesus, and we wait with expectant hope. Amen.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Troy!

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR LAY LEADER

Terrie Ham

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR LAY LEADER - DECEMBER 2025

The Innkeeper: Making Room for Christ This Advent -From our "Forgotten Voices of Christmas" Advent Series

Most of us grew up picturing the Innkeeper as the one who turned Mary and Joseph away too busy, too preoccupied to notice that the Messiah was at his doorstep. But Scripture never actually gives the Innkeeper a voice at all. Instead, Luke simply tells us there was "no room in the guest space." No criticism. No blame. Just the reality of a crowded world. What if the Innkeeper wasn't heartless at all, but simply overwhelmed? What if he did the best he could with what he had, and God still worked through it?

Advent invites us into that possibility. Many of us arrive at December feeling just like Bethlehem: full to the brim, running on fumes, doing our best to make space for what matters. And yet, into our crowded schedules and weary spirits, Christ still comes.

This season, the Innkeeper reminds us:

HOPE often enters through the side door of our lives, not with trumpets, but in the quiet places we didn't expect. Even when our "guest rooms" feel full, God finds a way to reach us.

PEACE doesn't require perfection. The stable was not ideal, yet it was enough. When we offer God whatever space we have—even if it feels humble or messy, God's peace can settle in.

JOY grows in ordinary places. Bethlehem wasn't glamorous, and the manger wasn't majestic, but God's joy rested there. Joy doesn't wait for us to be fully organized; it arrives in the middle of real life.

LOVE makes room. When we turn toward one another with compassion, gentleness, and patience, even small acts create space for Christ to dwell among us.

This Advent may we resist the pressure to have everything in perfect order. Instead, like the Innkeeper, may we simply offer what we have, our time and our hearts.,

And as we journey through the season of **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love**, may we discover that Christ has been at the door all along... waiting for us to open just enough room for Him to enter.

Terrie



United
Women
in Faith

WOMEN'S NEWS

December 2025

WOMEN'S NEWS FOR DECEMBER 2025

Santa's Helpers

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH will become Christmas Elves **Monday, December 8th, 1:30 p.m.** Time to fill all those Christmas Stockings for those who need a bit of Christmas cheer. It's a fun work party!

- Come, get in the Christmas Spirit! Put your faith, hope and love in Action!
- Wear your Christmas clothes...hats, hair trims, sweaters, etc.
- Light refreshments provided by *Giving Tree* committee.
- Feel blessed by the fellowship of working together. Invite your friends to join you.

RETELL Book Club

Our December gathering will be on **Monday, December 15th** and will be held at the home of Linda Harrison. She's providing desserts and beverages. We've been asked to bring brunch items to share—muffins, fruit items, holiday munchies etc. There is no book discussion, just fun and fellowship. We will carpool from the church at 10:00 a.m. Please RSVP directly to Linda. 503-805-9683.

December Anniversaries

Dick & Diane Getchell
Joel & Cindy Mumford
Robert & Carol Potter
Brad & Anna Stokkeland

December Birthdays

Pastor Troy
Abbie Barash
Mike Carpenter
Orletta Goering
Truman Grandey
Jim Fellers
Tina Heal
Ava Horton
David Horton

Tricia Jenner
Laurie Monnes Anderson
Robert Potter
Kathy Stafford
Patty Strathern
Beth Trautman
Frances Volking
Andrew Walton



HAPPY THANKSGIVING AT THE WOMEN'S SHELTER

We used our community mission money to furnish seven turkeys (94 lbs.) for the special Thanksgiving meal, with all the trimmings that GUMC provided on November 25th. A special shout-out to **Linda Bridges** who made all this happen with her organizational skill and dedication. She was also able to arrange for us to serve the meal to the women as we always did before COVID. Thank you **Linda Saroni, Orletta Goering and Dennis Bridges** for jumping in to help. That made the day very special. We also salute **Sandy Brooks** who was able to arrange the use of the *Rockwood Center's* commercial kitchen to roast those 7 birds all at once!

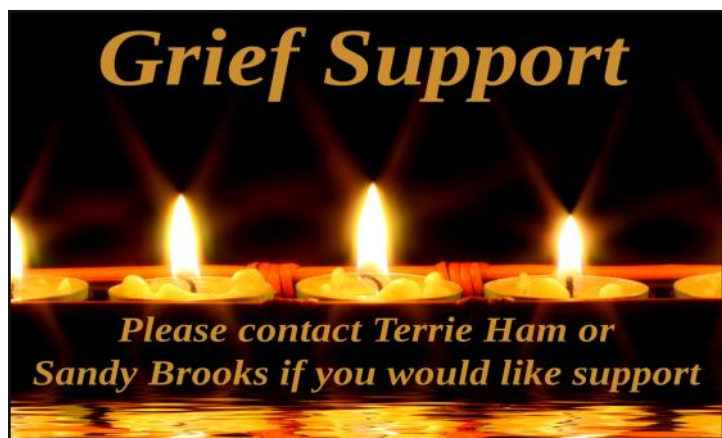
We are also thankful to members of the church, including Roz Collins and Linda Saroni, who volunteered to help serve SnowCap's Thanksgiving meal to the many SnowCap clients. The "take-out" meals made this holiday truly a happy one for those who otherwise would not have had a great Thanksgiving meal!

LET US ALL BE THANKFUL!

Most of us will soon be putting up at least a few Christmas decorations in our home, and by now, you've noticed how our church has been beautifully decorated and transformed for Advent. This didn't happen by itself. Each decoration must come out of the storage area in the basement, dusted off, and placed in the appropriate spot. The Giving Tree, an Advent Wreath, greens and seasonal banners hanging on the ceiling beams, remind us of the joy and importance of this first season of the church year: ADVENT...the season of waiting for the birth of our Savior!

But all these beautiful decorations do not just appear by themselves! It takes a whole cadre of people to do this for our enjoyment and pleasure—the men help right along with the women. Climbing ladders, pulling cables, stringing lights—it's not for the faint of heart. We can come to worship and celebrate the beauty of Christmas because of their work. And let's not forget that after the 1st of the year, it all comes down, repacked, and hauled back down to storage. So let's show our appreciation by thanking those who volunteer to do this work for our church home. And, Ladies, if you have a **Thank Offering jar/box**, make your first donation of the new Church Year.

Submitted by Carol Potter & Roz Collins



The Snowcap food barrel remains in the Narthex for your donations.
Volunteers are needed at the Clothing Closet and Food Pantry!
Contact Nate Larsen nate@snowcap.org

KNIT ONE CROCHET TOO donated 12 heavy shawls and lap robes to SnowCap for elderly clients plus warm hats. We gave hand knitted and crocheted hats to both Hartley and Hollydale Schools. The Women's Shelter received hat and scarf sets.

Submitted by Roz Collins



A New Way to Donate to the Church

Scan this QR code with the camera app on your phone to donate electronically to our church.

You will be asked to download and install the Paypal App if you do not already have it on your phone.



Advent Study: *The Forgotten Voices of Christmas*

Sundays in Advent | After Worship in the Prayer Room

(Grab some coffee and a treat, then join us!)

Every Advent we read the same story — Mary and Joseph, shepherds and angels, wise men and a bright star. Yet between the lines are other voices — quiet, unseen, sometimes misunderstood. This year, we'll take a closer look at those *forgotten figures* and what their stories might teach us about God's presence in the ordinary and the overlooked.

Inspired by *Season's Greetings* by Ruth L. Boling, this four-week conversation series will help us see the Nativity through fresh eyes:

- **Week 1 (Nov 30):** *The Innkeeper – The Misunderstood Gatekeeper Making space... or missing it.*
- **Week 2 (Dec. 7):** *The Shepherds' Families – The Ones Who Stayed Behind Faithfulness in the ordinary.*
- **Week 3 (Dec. 14):** *The Neighbors of Bethlehem – Witnesses to the Ordinary Miracle God at work in overlooked places.*
- **Week 4 (Dec. 21):** *The Midwife (or Stable Woman) – The Hidden Helper The unseen hands of grace.*

We'll meet **immediately after the Sunday service in the Prayer Room**. There will be time to grab coffee and goodies before settling in for conversation and reflection. We will meet for thirty minutes.

Come discover how even the most ordinary lives can reveal extraordinary glimpses of God's grace. Everyone is welcome — bring a curious heart and a warm cup of coffee!

Submitted by Terrie Ham



If you would like someone to pray with you, or pray about a situation, but don't want to put it on the prayer chain, please contact Tina Heal or Terrie Ham. They meet together every week to pray for the needs of the church and for many other concerns.

Please contact the church office to be connected with Terrie Ham, Tina Heal or Sandy Brooks.

Church Office: 503-665-1192 or prayers@greshamumc.com

Gresham Women's Shelter News

Linda Saroni and Linda and Dennis Bridges served our Gresham Women's Shelter Thanksgiving meal on November 25 and found it to be a wonderful experience. The women were thankful for both the bountiful meal and for the servers. Curtis from the Rockwood Center cooked 7 turkeys and about 15 people contributed food. Below are thank you cards from 4 of the women. In December we will be serving a Christmas meal.

Submitted by Linda Bridges

GWS
Nov. 25th, 2005
To The Volunteers of Gresham
Methodist Church:
• Thank you so very much for
the lovely, delicious Thanksgiving
Meal! What a lot of hard work
you have done for us and
we appreciate you all so very much!
Love, Katherine C.

Thank You So Much!
I am unable to go to
Seattle to see family
and this was so
Lovely! ♥
Happy Holidays
and New Year to
all the Congregation
Jeannette

Happy, Thanks giving
to you all.
Thank you for thinking
of us.
Dinner was excellent!
Happy Holidays!!
Debra

HAPPY
Thanksgiving
&
GOD BLESS
methodist church
volunteers,
I want to say
thank you very much
for providing me, the
Gresham woman's shelter
with Thanksgiving dinner
& taking time to do that
— Larue —

GUMC Newsletter Notes!

CALLING All Kids, Grandkids and teenagers!

Nativity play Sunday, December 21st at 10:00 AM. Come as you are. We will provide props for you, wings, and a halo for the Angels, staffs and headpieces for the shepherds, hats for the sheep and crowns for the wise men and wise women

No rehearsals, no speaking parts, just show up and be in the play.

Contact Reverend Carolann Unger at 503-522-5123 or email Carolann unger@me.com

Giving Tree

Dec. 7th is the LAST DAY to select a tag off the tree. All Giving Tree GIFTS must be returned, unwrapped and with the tag, by SUNDAY DEC 14TH.

All "Pantry Essentials" and other food items will be collected throughout the month.

Invite your friends and neighbors to GUMC's

**COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROL
SING-ALONG**

&

BAKE SALE

Saturday, December 20th

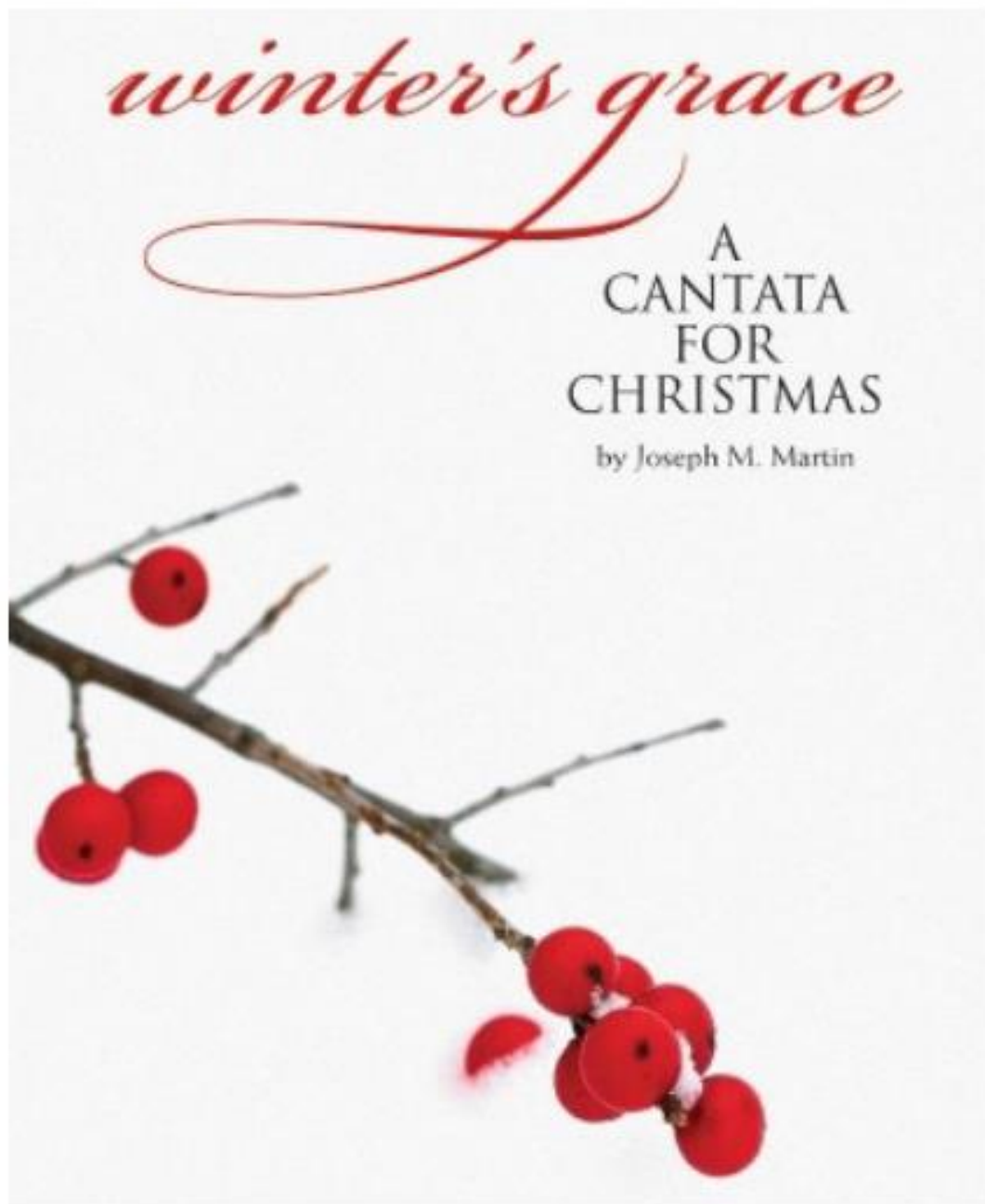
3:00 pm

Proceeds go to benefit GUMC's music program



Joy to the World!

Prepare for Christmas by joining our Chancel Choir, Bell Choir and narrators for Joseph Martin's beautiful cantata!



*SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH
10:00 AM WORSHIP SERVICE*

GUMC Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9:30 - Faith Based Fitness ¹ 10:30 - Knit One	2	3	4 2:00 - SnowCap Clothing Closet ³ 6:30 - Church Council Meeting via Zoom	5	6 8:00 Solve-it-Saturday
7 11:15 Advent Study Week 2	8 1:30 - UWIF Santa's Helpers	9	10 7:00 - Choir Rehearsal ² (every Wed.)	11 2:00 - Worship at Courtyard Fountains ⁴ 6:00 - Brews and Bible ⁵	12	13
14 10:00 Christmas Cantata 12:15 Advent Study Week 3	15 10:00 ReTell Book Club	16	17 11:00 Come As You Are Meeting	18 2:00 - SnowCap Clothing Closet ³	19	20 3:00 Christmas Carol Sing Along and Bake Sale
21 10:00 Youth Nativity Service 11:15 Advent Study Week 4	22 1:00 Caregivers Support	23 4:45 Women's Shelter Food Pickup	24 7:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas	26	27
28	29 1:00 - Caregivers Support Group	30 Shelter Potluck Meal Dropoff Day	31 11:00 Come As You Are Meeting			
All events happen at Gresham United Methodist Church unless otherwise noted.						

¹ Faith Based Fitness is held every Monday and Thursday

² Choir rehearsal is held every Wednesday

³ SnowCap Clothing volunteers meet at 21655 SE Stark St; Gresham, OR 97030

⁴ Please contact Terrie Ham for details and location of Courtyard Fountains Worship

⁵ Brews and Bible meets at Black Bear Diner; 105 NE Burnside Rd; Gresham OR, 97030

⁶ Let's do Lunch will resume in January