

Grace United Church of Christ



Sunday, December 1, 2024

First Sunday of Advent

Theme: Hope

Welcome

Passing the Peace

Ringing of the Bell

Prelude - Savior of the Nations, Come - arr. Dieterich Buxtehude

Candle Lighting Liturgy

***Gathering Prayer** (In Unison)

Affirming God, How often do you speak to us, and how often do we miss it? How often do you whisper blessings over us that we refuse to hear? Open our hearts. Create space in us to not only hear these words, but to believe the good news tucked between them. We are hungry for your wisdom, so speak to us now. With hope and curiosity, we listen. With hope and curiosity, we dare to begin again. Amen

***Opening Hymn** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs. 1 & 2) NCH-116

Children's Moment

Offering - We Await You - Ruth Elaine Schram

***Doxology** (music #780, text #778)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen

***Prayer of Dedication**

Holy God of new beginnings, as we share our tithes and offerings with you, we are filled with hope. We enter the season of Advent with expectation; we have left behind us a time of fear, isolation, and uncertainty; and we raise our heads because we know our redemption is coming near. May our gifts be dedicated to help heal the brokenness of our world and to welcome our Messiah into the world once again. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 43:1-7 (NRSV-UE)

Luke 1:26-38 (NRSV-UE)

Sermon: The Rev. Chance Martinez

Sermon Title: "You Are A Blessing"

***Sermon Hymn:** **Come, O Long-Expected Jesus (vs. 1 only)** NCH-122

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

We invite you to pray this prayer using the words that are closest to your heart.

Our (Father/Mother/Creator) who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Service of Communion

Breaking the Bread Prayer

Receiving the Bread and the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Music during Communion - Meditation on "Of the Father's Love Begotten" - arr. Michael McCabe

Announcements

***Closing Hymn** "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates" NCH 117

Benediction

As you leave this place, may you have the wisdom to lean on one other. May you have the courage to hold onto hope, the compassion to do the good that is yours to do, and the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing. For in a world full of dead ends, Advent invites us to begin again. So start here. Start now. Start with love and begin again. In the name of Christ, our new beginning, go in peace.

Postlude -

~ The Postlude is still part of our worship; we invite you to sit and quietly reflect as we prepare to depart. ~

Advent Bible Study

Well friends, believe it or not, Advent is upon us. This year I invite you into an Advent Study based on the book *While We Wait: Living the Questions of Advent* by Mary Lou Redding. Sometimes we struggle to believe we'll experience anything new as Advent comes around. What could we possibly learn that we haven't seen or heard before? If you're looking for an Advent study of a different slant, *While We Wait: Living the Questions of Advent* offers new ways of connecting the story with your own questions of faith and approaches an all-too-familiar narrative from perspectives we may have missed. You'll read about biblical figures mentioned in passing in the "original" Advent. Somewhat surprisingly, Tamar, Ruth, Mary, Zechariah, Elizabeth, and the Magi asked questions that resonate with contemporary Christians.

There are three opportunities each week for you to participate in the study. The dates/times/locations are as follows:

In-Person on Sunday Dec. 1, 8, 15, and 22 from 12:30pm-1:30pm in Room 7/8 at Grace

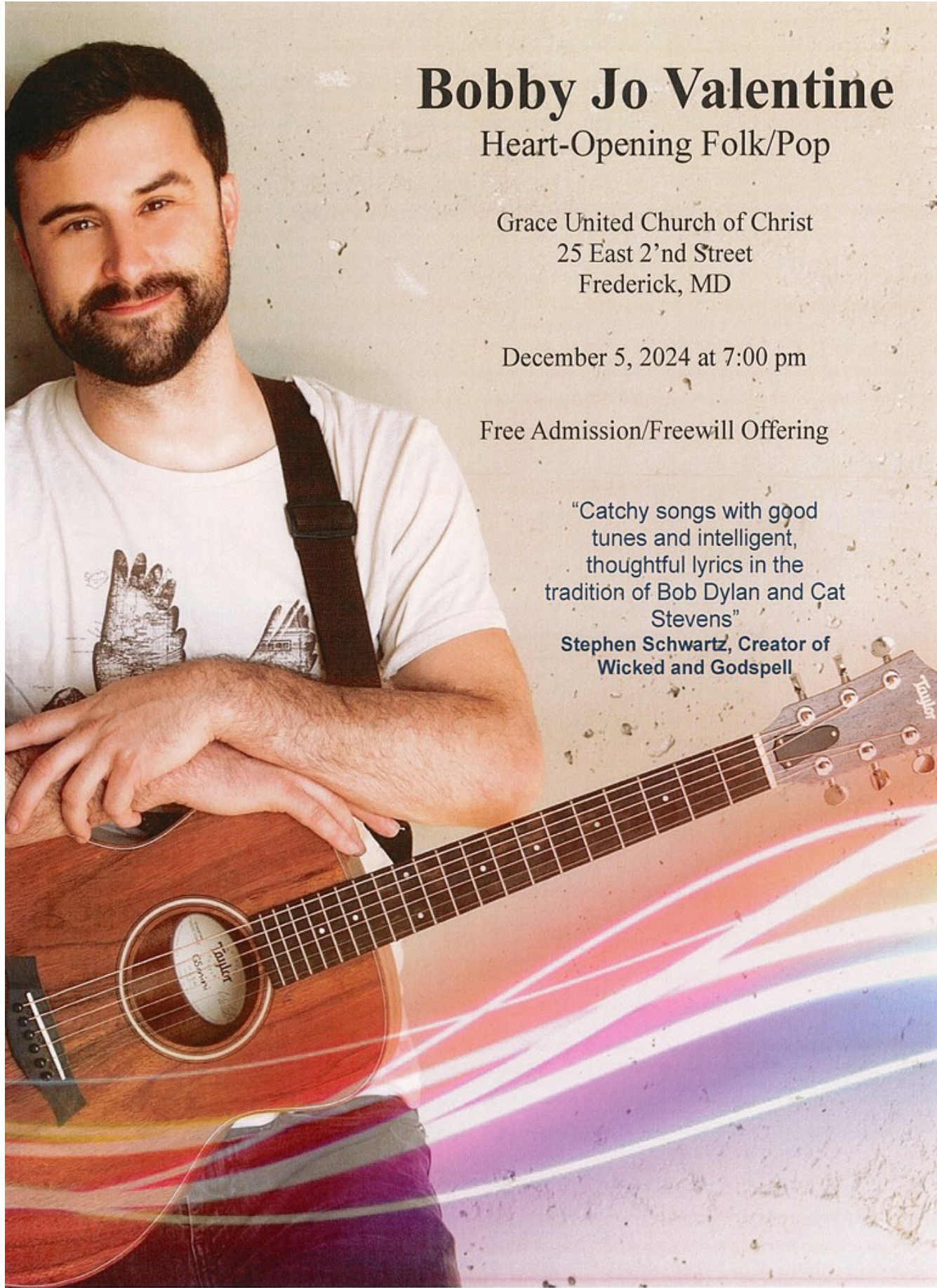
Via Zoom on Sunday Dec 1, 8, 15, and 22 from 7:00pm-8:00pm

In-Person on Tuesday Dec 3, 10, 17 from 10:00am-11:00am at Dublin Roasters

Purchasing the book is not required, but if you would like to purchase a copy for yourself, you can find them on Amazon at the following link:

<https://www.amazon.com/While-We-Wait-Living-Questions/dp/083580982X>

We hope to see you there!



Bobby Jo Valentine

Heart-Opening Folk/Pop

Grace United Church of Christ
25 East 2'nd Street
Frederick, MD

December 5, 2024 at 7:00 pm

Free Admission/Freewill Offering

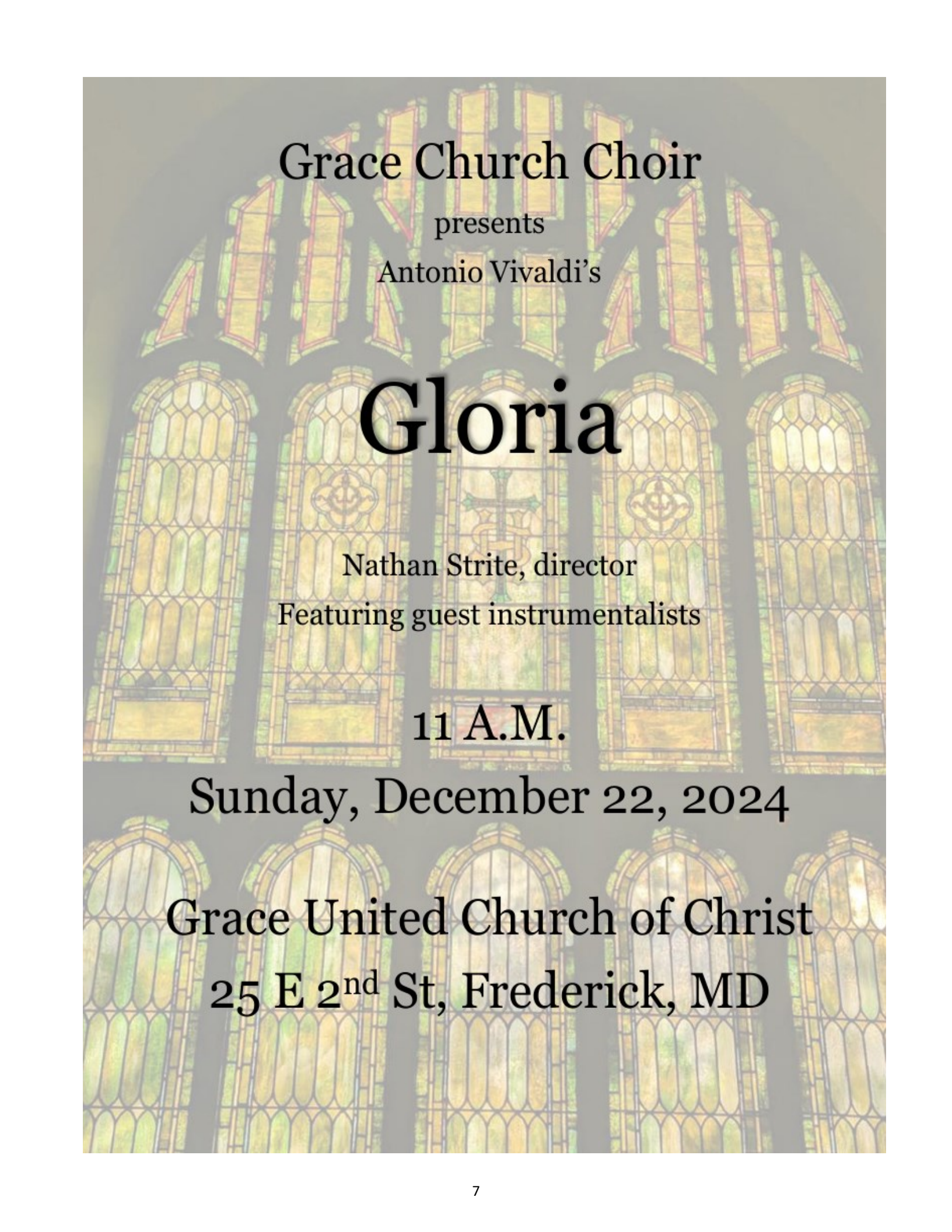
“Catchy songs with good
tunes and intelligent,
thoughtful lyrics in the
tradition of Bob Dylan and Cat
Stevens”
**Stephen Schwartz, Creator of
Wicked and Godspell**



While Advent and Christmas are two times of the year when we talk about comfort, joy, hope, peace, and love, this time of year is not always a happy one. This is especially true for those who are grieving. This year Grace UCC is hosting a Blue Christmas Service. This will be a worship service that will provide opportunities for expressions of grief, pain, and heartbreak as well as an opportunity to focus on the promise of hope found in Christ. Everyone is welcome to join us in the sanctuary at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, December 17, 2024.



Join us for our coffee house on December 20, everyone is invited to join us on the front patio of Grace at 7:00 pm as we gather to sing Christmas Carols and enjoy some hot chocolate, coffee, and cookies. This will be something like a “block party” and we will be inviting our neighbors on Second Street to come and join us as well. We do hope that you will mark your calendars and plan on joining us!

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a church's interior, focusing on a series of tall, narrow stained glass windows. The windows feature intricate leaded glass designs with various colors including yellow, green, and blue. The text is overlaid on this background.

Grace Church Choir

presents

Antonio Vivaldi's

Gloria

Nathan Strite, director

Featuring guest instrumentalists

11 A.M.

Sunday, December 22, 2024

Grace United Church of Christ

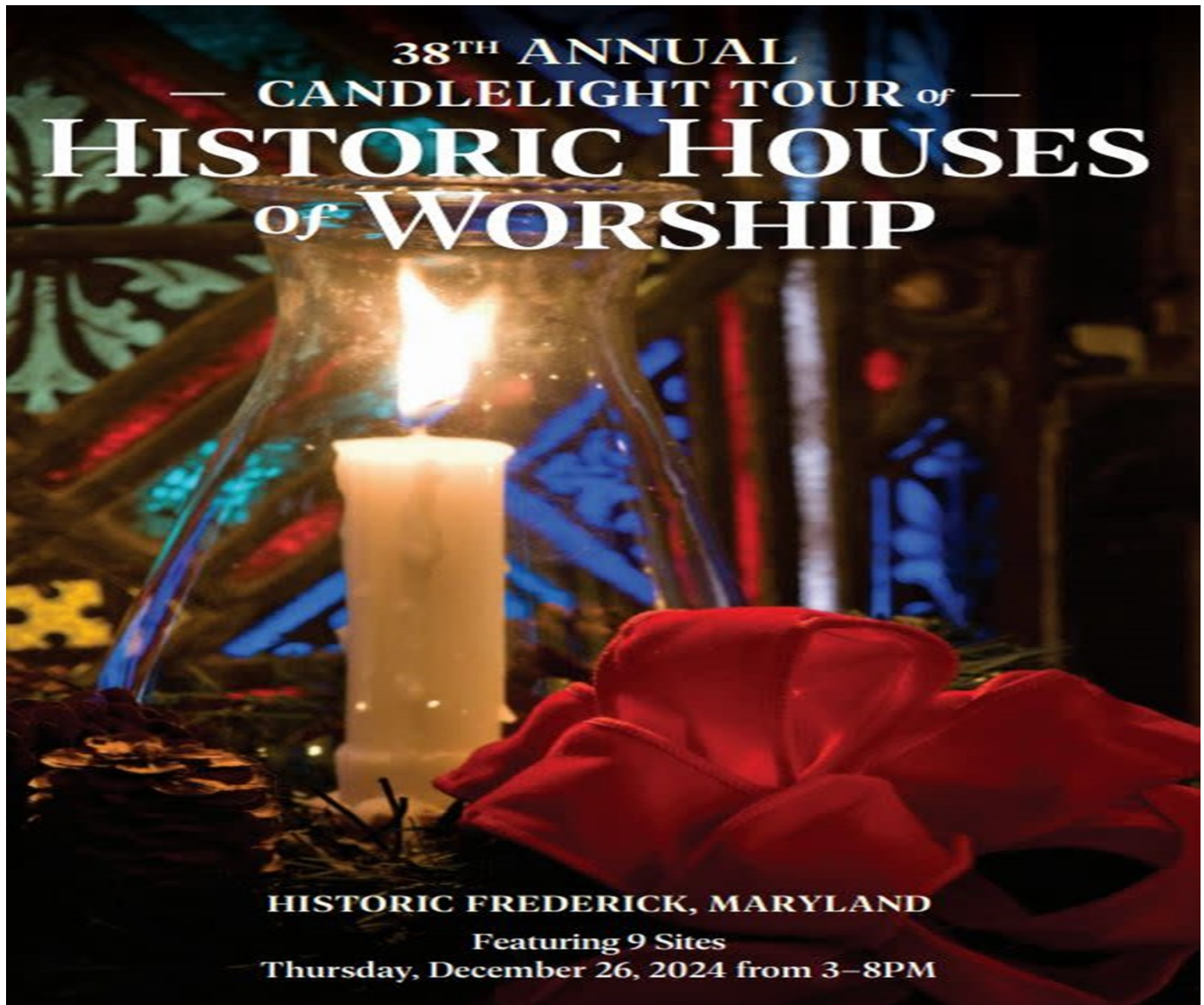
25 E 2nd St, Frederick, MD



We hope that you and your family/friends will make our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service a part of your time together this year. The festive organ musical prelude will begin at 7:00 pm and the lessons and carols service with organ, trumpet, choir, soloists, and congregational carols will begin at 7:30 pm in the sanctuary. This year will be a service of “Lessons and Carols” and we are looking for volunteer liturgists. If you are interested in helping with this, please email Pastor Chance at pastorchance.graceucc@gmail.com.



Sunday, December 29, 2024 will be Breakfast Church with carols led by guitar, as well as music from the handbells in their last performance under James Taylor's direction at Grace. We will gather for worship around tables in the Good Shepherd Room at 11:00 am. No need to bring anything but your appetite! Everyone is welcome so come and see us...won't you?



Thursday, December 26 - House of Worship Tour music schedule:

- 3-3:30 - Nathan Strite, organ
- 3:30- 4- Carol Singing
- 4-5- Terry Sparks piano student's recital
- 5-6- One God- One Voice Choir
- 6-7- Justin Furnia, piano
- 7-8- Nathan Strite, organ



Homeless for the Holidays Annual Hygiene Collection

November 1-December 31, 2024

If you could, stop for a moment and picture the holiday season. For most of us, the holidays are a celebratory time to gather amongst family and friends to spend time together under a warm roof and catch each other up on the excitement of the previous year. For hundreds of young people in Frederick County, this time of year is incredibly difficult. This Holiday season, we're seeking hygiene donations to provide for our students! All items collected from the hygiene drive will be distributed to students experiencing homelessness within Frederick County.

Top items requesting for hygiene donations:

- Ethnic Hair Care Products
- Deodorant
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Laundry Detergent
- Razors
- Hand Soap
- First Aid Items
- Dental Floss

- Mouthwash
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Feminine Hygiene Product
- Shaving Cream
- Body Lotion
- Hair Brushes
- Hair Ties
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper

New and sealed items only, please do not donate used hygiene items.

Thank you for supporting SHIP of Frederick County!

For additional information on how to donate,
scan the QR Code:



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:

Sleep In Heavenly Peace!

SHP (<https://shpbeds.org/>) is a national organization of local chapters that build bunk beds for children in the local community who otherwise wouldn't have a bed. Grace Church has been very generous in donating sheets, pillows, mattress covers and quilts over the last couple years.

The Frederick County Chapter of SHP has building events every month or so, mostly on Saturdays, and volunteers of all skill levels (including none) are welcome for tasks like cutting lumber, constructing and finishing the beds, transporting them, or sorting items, cleaning up and prep work.

This is a great opportunity to contribute to a great organization.

Contact Michael Davies (fluidmosaic@gmail.com) to be notified of upcoming builds and be part of the team when you can!

“No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town!”



Grace United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

25 East 2nd Street, Frederick, Maryland, 21701

301-662-3312 ~ Office Hours: 9AM-2PM/M-F

Admin@grucc.com ~ www.grucc.com



Pastor: Rev. Chance Martinez	pastorchance.graceucc@gmail.com
Director of Music: Nathan Strite	Music@grucc.com
Bell Choir Director: James Taylor	Bells@grucc.com
Children & Youth Ministry: Amy Duray	worshipgraceucc@gmail.com
Nursery Attendant: Joan Princler	Joan.dancer@comcast.net
Custodian: Kaden Hansen	Admin@grucc.com
Church Admin: Tricia Baptiste	Admin@grucc.com

Choir Section Leaders: Anna Kovacsics, James Taylor, & Donald Toms

SUNDAY WORSHIP — 11:00 AM — Virtual and in person

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Liturgist:	Trish & Peter
Children's Message:	Trish A.
Children's Church	
Altar Guild:	Karen
Greeter:	

Follow us!



Gracelivefrederick



GraceUCCFrederick



www.grucc.com

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

