



Merry Christmas, our dear friend!



During the season of Advent, we are given space and time to reflect upon the God of the universe who chose to enter our darkness not with might and vengeance but, rather, in weakness and vulnerability...an infant born in an obscure manger in the outskirts of power. Paul, in 2 Corinthians, embodies this when he appeals to the wayward congregation with “the meekness and gentleness of Christ,” a posture foreign to those of us inclined to think that ministry is about our effort...rather than the gracious activity of God. Our pastors have been teaching us to embrace weakness as grace, i.e. where God’s power is manifest, and it is challenging the way we approach ministry. One way this looks is a deeper dependence, upon God and one another...folks like you who support our ministry through prayer, encouragement, financial giving, and so many other ways. Thank you for being a channel of God’s grace and mercy to us.

Your prayers for the health fair

were greatly appreciated as many residents of San Francisco and Daly City received care from an amazing team of congregational members and agency representatives. Turn the page for a peek at the many hands that the Lord graciously brought together.

By the way, we hope you like the new banner-head above, beautifully drawn by Caitlin Ng of Grace Fellowship Community Church. Shalom be with you!

- Craig Wong

Receive our e-Newsletter

Go to www.gum.org/signup

Stay in touch with Grace Urban Ministries, a San Francisco-based nonprofit that serves the Church’s mission to bear witness to the just and compassionate reign of Christ.

Grace Urban Ministries

3265 16th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-3323
(415) 703-6094 (voice) (415) 864-5830 (fax)
inquiries@gum.org www.gum.org

Christ’s Love through Project Magi

- Pam Chen, Grace Fellowship Community Church member

It’s always exciting to me when that time of the year comes to select one of the *Project Magi* gift tags from the Advent tree in our church foyer. It means that me and my family are given an important opportunity, during the Christmas season, to be prayerful of the many children in our city who lack many of the resources that I too easily take for granted, especially at Christmas time. We have the privilege of praying for a particular child, or his or her family or classmates, and to remember them while we prepare, and set out, to shop for their gift. Through *Project Magi*, we share in Christ’s generosity by extending it to others in our city. We have an opportunity to long for things to be different for many children and families that are encountering struggle, especially in these harsh economic times. And it allows us to reflect God’s heart to those around us. What a joy this is for my family and congregation.

When my kids were much younger, what seemed to matter most to them was whether *they* liked the particular gift on the tag we were going to shop for. My husband, Josh, and I had to explain to them that what was more important was that we, as a congregation, were sharing the love of Jesus with a family that, for a variety of reasons, is unable to buy presents, let alone make ends meet. It was a good reminder that having wrapped boxes under a Christmas tree is not a given for many families in our city. As our kids have gotten older, Christmas can still so easily become all about wish lists of all the things we want to have. Therefore, *Project Magi* helps us remember a broken world in need of a Savior, and the incredible gift of Jesus who brings the light and hope of salvation.

And so this ministry to our community represents a significant Advent activity for me and my family. We like hearing stories from folks who delivered the gifts and how God used presents to touch lives. We give thanks to God for giving us Jesus. We are reminded, amidst places of struggle and brokenness, that Christ is coming *again* someday to make everything new and right. May God receive all the praise and glory! ✚

Project Magi is a congregation-based Christmas gift-giving program that provides recreational, academic, and general support to children and their families, primarily through local school partnerships.



The Mission Street Health Fair: We praise God for many hands who served together!

In October, over 300 guests were served at the *Mission Street Health Fair* hosted by San Francisco Christian Center (SFCC). They were joined by members of Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Daly City, Grace Fellowship Community Church, Redeemer Community Church, and other local congregations, such as Mission Presbyterian Church, St. John of God and SF Church of the Sojourners.



← SFCC nurses took blood pressure readings. The *Black Nurses Association* joined the effort by measuring cholesterol and glucose levels.

SFCC members gave healthy cooking demos. Others shared about healthy lifestyle through *Body & Soul*, a program supported by the UCSF Helen Diller Family Cancer Center. →



A *promotoras* team from SF General Hospital was on hand to provide one-on-one or group education on diabetes Prevention. →



← The UC Berkeley School of Optometry sent over a dozen and a half amazing students who provided vision screenings for visual acuity and eye health.



← SFCC's youth pastor leads an inter-congregational team of young people to reach out to neighbors in the streets with balloons and flyers.

Congregational health professionals were joined by reps of the SF Department of Public Health, California Pacific Medical Center (flu-shots) and other local agencies. →



Other agencies included the American Heart Association, the Project for Community Health Access, San Mateo Health Plan, San Mateo Children's Health Collaborative, San Mateo Community Action Agency, the UCSF Children's Health Hut, California Acupuncture Center, Mama Café, and the American Association of Retired Persons. On behalf of GUM and the congregations we serve, we give you thanks for your many labors of love demonstrated on that day.

For more pictures: www.gum.org/healthfairphotos

Sharing From God's Good Creation

- Sylvia Terpstra, *Grace Fellowship Community Church*

Connecting with God's good creation, abundance, and loving provision through gardening brings wonder and joy, for children and adults alike. A team of us recently had the opportunity to participate in a health and nutrition fair at Sanchez School. We displayed photos of constructing the boxes and the progress of our gardens, and we gave away lemons and resource flyers. We shared about the benefits of raised-bed gardening for small backyards and budgets, and as a way to teach children where food comes from...food that is fresh, nutritious, chemical-free. The most frequently raised question for us at the fair was how we could help folks construct and start the raised-bed gardens. This got us thinking more about gardening as another way for us to connect with, and serve, our community. ✨



Sanchez Elementary School Health & Nutrition Fair