

Welcome to Grace United Methodist Church!!

Sunday – December 24, 2023 – 1:30 pm



Meditation Verse: *“Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” – Luke 2:10-11*

Grace United Methodist Church

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Check us out on Facebook!

Church Staff:

Pastor	John Britt
Office Administrator	Phyllis Stevens
Children's Ministry	Kelly Carter
Youth Ministry	Kristal Hamm
Financial Administrator	Cindy Puckett
Custodian	Tanya Taylor
Digital Campus Host	Kristin Britt
Audio/Visual	Steve Hilton
Lay Leader	Mike Marsland
Pianist	Julie Marsland

Order of Worship

Welcome and Opening Prayer

*Hymn #234 – O Come, All Ye Faithful (Vs. 1 and Chorus)

Lighting the Christ Candle:

Reader 1: To a people longing for hope and yearning for deliverance, the prophet Isaiah declared, *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined...For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”* (Isaiah 9:2, 6)

Reader 2: Tonight, we come seeking hope, peace, joy, and love, and we find these things in a child. God made flesh as a baby in a manger. A baby who is both the beginning and the end of our salvation, who dwells with us even now, our Emmanuel, God with us.

People: We live as people in the in-between who celebrate the arrival of the light that shines in lost and broken places as we wait for the day when we will live in the fullness of God’s kingdom.

Reader 1: We light these candles as signs of our hope, our peace, our joy, the love that transforms us, and Jesus Christ, our wondrous light. May the light burning in our hearts guide us, comfort us, protect us, and tend us in all seasons and circumstances, reminding us that day and night, in the light and in the darkness, God is with us. Our salvation has come! Amen.

Reading 1: Luke 2:1-5

*Hymn #230 – O Little Town of Bethlehem (Vs. 1 and 2)
- *With a Donkey parade!!*

Reading 2: Luke 2:6-7

*Hymn #217 – Away in a Manger (Vs. 1 and 2)
- *With a Mary, Joseph, and donkey parade!!*

Reading 3: Luke 2:8-14

*Hymn #240 – Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Vs. 1 and 3)
- *With an Angel parade!!*

Reading 4: Luke 2:15-20

*Hymn #245 – The First Noel (Vs. 1 and 2)
- *With a Sheep and Shepherd parade!!*

Homily: "The Foggy Fringe"

Reading 5: Matthew 2:1-11

*Hymn #254 – We Three Kings (Vs. 1 and 5)
- *With a Kings' parade!!*

Kids Message – "The Crippled Lamb"

*Hymn #246 – Joy to the World (Vs. 1 and 4)
- *With EVERYBODY parading!!*

Invitation to the Table and to Give

Holy Communion

*Sharing the Light

*Hymn #239 – Silent Night

*Blessing

*Hymn #251 – Go Tell It on the Mountain (Chorus only)

Please stand if you are able.

Next Week's Lectionary Readings:

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm 148

Luke 2:22-40

Galatians 4:4-7

To go a little deeper
with these readings
each day this week,
please go to:
pastorjohnb.org

GPS – Grow, Pray, Study

- 1) *Grow*. What might be keeping you from going to the fringes of society? How can other people of faith help you to take those steps?
- 2) *Pray*. As you consider those on the fringes, who in your life can you pray for this week, asking God to draw them in?
- 3) *Study*. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How does this experience of Jesus allow him to go to the fringes or edges of life with us and with those who are there right now?

Next Sunday's Message: "The Cliffhanger" - As the holiday season and year winds down, we gain a glimpse into the life of Jesus as a child. Mary and Joseph honor the traditions of their faith as they bring Jesus to the temple. While there Jesus is blessed by Simeon, who proclaims that Jesus' life is set to walk a prophetic path. We too are called to walk such a path. As we find ourselves in between what has happened and the new year that lies ahead, we reflect back and we look forward. Guided by God, we move into a new year, seeking to be grounded in our faith as we actively live out how God is calling us to be a part of the ongoing story.

This Week at Grace

- Thursday – 10:00 AM – Disc. Small Group – SS Room
- Thursday – 5:30 PM – Men's Group – Fellowship Hall
- Friday – 6:30 AM – Women's Study – Chapel

Announcement:

The December Mission of the Month is for Piedmont Valley Elementary and Stagebarn Middle schools.

Merry Christmas!! God's blessings to you all!!