

Grace United Methodist Church — December 2020 Newsletter

605-787-4858 — Email: gumc@midconetwork.com

Web site: www.gracepiedmont.com



Dear Grace United Methodist Church,

Advent is almost here!! Last month, I wrote, “*At any moment we can be back to having only online gatherings...*” and here we are. The urgent plea from Bishop Ough arrived and the leadership team decided to return to on-line worship only. Children’s Church will be online each Sunday following the 9 AM worship service for as long as we are online only. The leadership team will meet again after December 6 to evaluate our plan for gathering again or for continuing online only. We are still in the process of figuring out what the Children’s Christmas Program will be and will let you know as soon as a decision is made. In whatever form it takes, the “program” will be on December 20 during the 9:00 worship service.

For the Advent season we are inviting everyone to participate in a church-wide study called “Where We Belong”. The study will connect in to the Sunday scriptures and the message. Check out the options for being a part of a study on page six of this newsletter. We will make every effort to make sure each person or family receives a copy of the Advent booklet. Also on that same page is more information for the new “Sermon by Phone” option that we are now offering for folks with limited technology.

Again, and especially now, please continue to express acts of love for one another by wearing a mask and social distancing whenever we gather together. Thank you.

May the Lord our God bless you and your family and Grace Unite Methodist Church! Peace in Christ!! - *Pastor John*

Grace United Methodist Church
10060 Foothills Drive
PO Box 265
Piedmont, SD 57769

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Minutes from Leadership Meeting (Abbreviated) November 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Mike Marsland with 11 members in attendance.

FINANCE—Nancy Tryon reports our year to date expense is \$166,234. As of this day, midway through November, we have spent 87.21% of our yearly budget so we on target. The Finance committee raised the question of whether we could use \$5000 of the Camp Fund account and send it in to the Camps to Keep the Fires Going. The reality is that if the camps close there will be no camp for our kids and youth to attend.

KITCHEN—Tom Stevens reported the success of the 1st Annual To Go Turkey Dinner. Some folks have emailed from outside the church thanking and praising the event. The workers loved the event and the clean up was much easier than in previous years. The profit margin as not as high but they gave away \$600 in adult and children's meals so that will be the "community giveback" donation this year after expenses are paid. We did have one family make a generous donation toward the cost of the food and that definitely helped.

TRUSTEES—Dana said they will postpone repairing the church and parsonage roof's hail damage until next summer. Same for the parsonage 2 outdated and non working wall air conditioner units.

PASTOR JOHN—Pastor has checked into providing Sermons by Phone for individuals who can't come in person and aren't comfortable with on-line worship because of the technical issues. For \$17 per month we could offer them a local number to call and they could hear the message and perhaps a song or two. It was decided to invest in a 2 month trial.

Kelly is getting anxious for more Children's Church . We got a short rundown on the Children's Christmas program scheduled for Dec. 20th.

Some discussion on options for chair placement for Christmas Eve and other considerations. Possibly live streaming to the Chapel. An upcoming confirmation class, a Christmas Advent devotional for every member, yard signs being place in visible places inviting other to join us and some changes to our website announcing the event.

Next meeting will be December 15, 2020

Respectfully submitted, Phyllis Stevens

Advent Study Options:

Please consider joining one of these small groups to study "Where You Belong", our church-wide devotional. For now, most groups will meet on Zoom*. Some will be in-person with masks and social distancing required**. If you prefer to use the study as a family or as an individual, please do so!

Small Groups: *Beginning Nov. 29*

Sunday — 8 AM — *Adult Zoom Mtg.**

Monday — 7 AM — *Zoom Meeting**

Tuesday — Noon — *Zoom Meeting**

Wednesday — 9 AM — *Women's Advent Group***

Wed. — 6 PM — *Kelly Carter's home (21533 Sturgis Road)***

Thursday — 5:30 PM — *Men's Advent Group***

Friday — 6:30 AM — *Women's Zoom Group**



*Zoom meeting address: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6057874858> or you call in by phone to meeting #605 787 4858 at either 1-253-215-8782 or at 1-312-626-6799.

** Masks and social distancing REQUIRED.



Sermon by Phone

Each week the Sunday message (plus a little bit more) will now be available by phone. If you are interested in this service, please let the church office know. You will receive a reminder call each Sunday then you will be able to call 343-1307 on your cell phone or land line to listen to the message given in church that Sunday.

Advent 2020:

During the month of December, our church will offer several special opportunities to make your Advent season special. Here is a brief description of each:

Blue Christmas Service — On December 21 we will gather (possibly online only) at 7:00 PM for a special “Blue Christmas” worship service. This is a service of remembrance dedicated to bringing healing and hope to those experiencing grief and loss during the holiday season.

Christmas Eve Worship — On December 24 we will offer three worship services. Here are the details:

- 1:30 PM — Children’s Christmas Eve
 - This service is designed and intended for families with younger children.
- 4:00 and 6:00 PM — Traditional Christmas Eve
 - This is our traditional candlelight service.

Wesleyan Covenant Renewal Service — On December 31 we will gather at 7:00 PM (again, possibly only online) to celebrate John Wesley’s traditional service of covenant renewal. This worship service sets our hearts and souls to walk faithfully throughout 2021.

Angel Tree reminder!! Please have your gifts for the Angel Tree to the church BY December 6th!! And, if you would like to help wrap presents, we will be doing that on December 10 at 9:30 AM at Our Lady of the Black Hills.



Upcoming Events and Meetings at Grace UMC

Weekly Meetings:

* denotes ZOOM meeting

- Sun. — 8 AM — Adult Sunday School*
- Mon. — 7 AM — Zoom Advent Study*
- Tues. — Noon — Zoom Advent Study*
- Wed. — 9 AM — Ladies’ Advent Study
- Wed. — 6:00 PM — Youth Group*
- Wed. — 6:00 PM—Adult Advent Study
- Thur. — 5:30 PM — Men’s Advent Study
- Fri. — 6:30 AM — Early Risers Ladies’ Study*

Monthly Meetings:

- Tues., Dec. 15 — 6:15 PM — Team/Committees*
- Tues., Dec. 15 — 7:00 PM — Leadership*



Mission of the Month: “Christmas Eve Offering”

In December our mission of the month will be the Christmas Eve offering. All donations will be added to the offering given on Christmas Eve. Each year we select a special organization or cause (or two or more) to receive this offering. Thank you!!



Birthdays for December:

Dec. 2 — Milo Kroger	Dec. 19 — Corlena Toenneis
Dec. 4 — Della Hall	Dec. 20 — Ricky Clark
Dec. 4 — Howie Baird	Dec. 22 — Spencer Simpkins
Dec. 6 — Ben Storm	Dec. 23 — Josey Woitd
Dec. 6 — Alyssa Yeary	Dec. 24 — Christine Gingras
Dec. 7 — Stephen Hennies	Dec. 26 — Jordy Jacobsen
Dec. 9 — Lanna Argiz	Dec. 26 — Riley Jacobsen
Dec. 10 — Eric Creelman	Dec. 27 — Gloria Hauan
Dec. 10 — Ethel Barbee	Dec. 27 — Pat Rice
Dec. 14 — Grace Fogelman	Dec. 28 — Ellie Storm
Dec. 15 — Jayden Rahn	Dec. 29 — Stacie Jacobsen
Dec. 16 — Audrey	Dec. 29 — Jay Mart
Scarborough	Dec. 31 — Mark Quasney
Dec. 17 — Haitia Valandra	Dec. 31 — Kristin Britt
Dec. 18 — Parker Creelman	
Dec. 19 — Liberty Graves	



NEEDED: "Sunday Readers" for Worship:



PLEASE sign up to be a "Sunday Reader"!! The BRIGHT PINK signup sheet is posted on the bulletin board inside Fellowship Hall. It is very bright pink. We will even send you the readings ahead of time. OR.... You can email Pastor John. Thanks!!

Notes from Christian Education and Youth:

Holiday Greetings! We did have 2 days of Children's Church before the latest closure, which I'm very grateful for. I had some grand plans for last week's class, but plans changed, at least for now. In the meantime, I will be doing virtual Children's Church immediately following our church service that is on the church YouTube channel. PLEASE have your little ones join me. I will have activities, music and dancing, Bible lesson and prayer time.

The Christmas program will still be on December 20, I will be sharing some YouTube songs on Facebook so your little ones can learn the songs. I can't wait!!!

Yours Truly, Kelly Carter



Hello Grace Youth and Families ,

We have had to switch gears in the last few weeks, we are having to do ministry differently to meet our current situation with Covid-19. I understand that we are having a hard time with losing more of what we love in youth group but this is something that we have to do. We will meet online December 2nd and 9th at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6057874858>.

We will have an idea of what will happen going forward by then. Thank you for your understanding. I have a daily devo that I share on snapchat and I'm working on a possible podcast as well. I'm looking a different ways to reach and stay connected with our youth and their families. If you need anything or need to talk please reach out to myself or any one of the leaders here at Grace UMC. Blessings to each of you.

Thank you and blessings! — Jerry Simmons