

Welcome to Grace United Methodist Church!!

Sunday – December 3, 2023 – 9:00 am



Meditation Verse *“Therefore, keep awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.” – Mark 13:35 and 37*

Grace United Methodist Church

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Check us out on Facebook!

Church Staff:

Pastor
Office Administrator
Children's Ministry
Youth Ministry
Financial Administrator
Custodian
Digital Campus Host
Audio/Visual
Lay Leader
Pianist

John Britt
Phyllis Stevens
Kelly Carter
Kristal Hamm
Cindy Puckett
Pam Hemmingson
Kristin Britt
Steve Hilton
Mike Marsland
Julie Marsland

Order of Worship

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Call to Worship:

Leader: Are we ready? This question, put to us on this first Sunday in Advent, is a very personal one. Christ comes again in glory to judge the living and the dead, Are we ready?

People: Revive us, O Lord, God of heaven's countless hosts, let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Leader: Are we ready? Ready for the coming of Christ Jesus with the mercy which is judgement and the judgement which is mercy? Are we ready?

People: Revive us, O Lord, God of heaven's countless hosts, let your face shine, that we may be saved.

*Passing of the Peace

Advent Candle Lighting:

Reader 1: In the days of exile and uncertainty, the prophet Isaiah cried out: *"O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence. As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you."* (Isaiah 64:1-3)

Reader 2: In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, *"Therefore, keep awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come"* (Mark 13:35).

People: We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kingdom all around us.

Reader 1: We light this candle as a sign of our hope. May we stay awake to God's activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

*Song: Light the Advent Candle, verse 1

Kids Message

Message: "Stay Tuned"

Holy Communion and the Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

- Song: Come as You Are
- Hymn #620 - One Bread, One Body

Morning Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Announcements

*Closing Song: Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)

*Blessing

(*Please stand if you are able.)

GPS – Grow, Pray, Study

1) *Grow*. As we start this season of Advent, how do you sense God calling out to you, 'Ready or not, here I come!?' ...And how will you respond?

2) *Pray*. As you consider your prayer life during Advent, how might you incorporate ways and practices to "*stay awake*" and to "*keep alert*?"

3) *Study*. Read Matthew 3:1-12. What elements does Matthew's text add to today's text from Luke 3:1-8a? What "*good fruit*" might you bear this week?

Next Week's Lectionary Readings:

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2,8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

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

Next Sunday's Message: "Baptismal Limitations?" - This week we meet the first of Advent's characters: John the Baptist. He is out in the wilderness, baptizing, receiving confession, preaching about the one to come, changing hearts. All of this was to prepare people to receive the good news of Jesus Christ. John's limitations – living in the wilderness, living simply – were part of what drew people out to see him. We too are called to be people who prepare people to receive Christ. We do this by practicing the means of grace. While we may feel like we have many limitations ourselves, the reality is that when we keep it simple, sharing the love of Christ is all that is required to change a heart, to change a life.

This Week at Grace

- Wednesday – Noon – “Brown Bag” Small Group -- Zoom
- Wednesday - 1:30 PM – Midweek Chat - Chapel
- Wednesday - 6:00 PM – Youth Group
- Thursday - 10:00 AM – Discipleship Small Group - Chapel
- Thursday - 5:30 PM – Men's Group – Fellowship Hall
- Friday - 6:30 AM – Women's Study – Chapel

Announcements:

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

Please pick a tag (or two) off the Angel Tree! Unwrapped gifts with their tags need to be at the church by Dec. 10.

Please consider signing up to serve on a Sunday morning. Simply choose a Sunday that is convenient for you and sign up on the sheets opposite the drinking fountains! Thank you for serving.

May God Bless you throughout the coming week!!