

## Welcome to Grace United Methodist Church!!

Sunday – December 24, 2023 – 4:00 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

P.O. Box 265 | Piedmont, SD 57769

(605) 787-4858 | [www.gracepiedmont.com](http://www.gracepiedmont.com)  
[gumc@midconetwork.com](mailto:gumc@midconetwork.com)

Pastor John Britt

(605) 787-2414 | [pastorjohnbritt@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjohnbritt@gmail.com)

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

### **Call to Worship:**

Leader: Augustus and Quirinius — ancient names that seem odd to today's ears...

**People: Characters in an ancient story that we long to hear.**

Leader: Nazareth and Bethlehem — distant towns we know little about...

**People: Places our hearts long for, because of the One who traveled there.**

Leader: We gather together to hear once more, a story so ancient and yet so current, so distant and yet so near.

**People: We come to hear the story of God coming to us.**

\*Passing of the Peace

\*Hymn #230 – O Little Town of Bethlehem

### **Advent Candle Lighting:**

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.

\*Song: Light the Advent Candle, Verses 1-5 and Chorus

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Kids Message – “The Crippled Lamb”

\*Song: Little Drummer Boy

Message: "The Foggy Fringe"

Song of Response – Make Room

Christmas Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

\*Hymn #217 – Away in a Manger

Announcements and Blessing

\*Passing of the Light

\*Hymn #239 – Silent Night

*\*Please stand if you are able.\**

**Next Week's Lectionary Readings:**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalms 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](http://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

## **Special Events at Grace**

- Dec. 25 – Church Office *CLOSED*

## **Announcement:**

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

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