



Grace Lutheran Church

First Sunday of Christmas ~ December 31, 2023

Grace Lutheran Church

Welcomes You to Worship!

202 Second Street SE, Watertown, South Dakota

Web Site: glcwtm.org ~ gracelc@midconetwork.com

Church Office: 605-886-5737

Rev. Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett ~ 605-237-1501

PRELUDE

Congregation responses in Bold Print

Welcome and Announcements

CALL TO WORSHIP (based on psalm 148)

Come, let's praise our God together!

Angels above and sea creatures below,

Rulers of earth and street people,

young men and women, senior citizens and children—

Come let us all praise God together!

GATHERING SONG: ***"Mary's little boy child"***

Long time ago in Bethlehem, So the Holy Bible say,
Mary's boy child, Jesus Was born on Christmas day.

(Refrain) Hark! Now hear the angels sing. New King is born today.
And man will live forever more Because of Christmas Day.

Shepherds watched their flocks by night, They saw a bright new shining star,
And heard a choir from heaven sing The music came from afar. *(Refrain)*

Joseph and his wife, Mary, Came to Bethlehem that night.
They found no place to bear her child, Not a single room was in sight.

By and by they found a little nook In a stable all forlorn,
And in a manger, cold and dark, Mary's little boy child was born.

Trumpets sound and angels sing. Listen to what they say,
That man will live forever more Because of Christmas Day!

CALL TO CONFESSION *(based on Isaiah 61)*

God loves justice and despises wrongdoing, yet God is faithful in recompense and has made an everlasting covenant with those who turn from sinful ways and strive earnestly for righteousness. May the whispers of our hearts be pleasing to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We bow our heads in holy reverence. Oh God, we long to be free of burdens that hold us captive. We long to be bearers of good news to the oppressed. We long to return to your favor. Forgive us our transgressions; loosen the chains of doubt that bind us. Hear our prayers...

Silent Prayer

AFFIRMATION OF FORGIVENESS

Hear this good news... You are forgiven! God loves you. God blesses you with new beginnings and new life. Put aside your old ways and become new! God gives a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning. Sing, dance, rejoice! Never forget the gift of God's redeeming grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... **Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:10--62:3

Pew Bible p 604

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God**

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 148

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels;
sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon;
sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD,
who commanded, and they were created,

⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever,
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens,
old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,

whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants,**

the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!

PRIASE SONG “Alleluia (I am the Light)”

Alleluia, Alleluia, I am the light of the world.

Alleluia, Alleluia, I am the light of the world.

Those who follow me Will not walk in darkness.

Those who follow me Will have the light of life.

(Repeat entire song and end with:)

Alleluia, Alleluia, I am the light of the world.

Alleluia, Alleluia, I am the light of the world.

SECOND READING: Galatians 4:4-7

Pew Bible p 947

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God**

(Please stand as you are able)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

“Christ Be Our Light”

ELW 715

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

2 Longing for peace, our world is
troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has pow'r to save us.

Make us your living voice. *Refrain*

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.

Longing for water, many still thirst.

Make us your bread, broken for others,

shared until all are fed. *Refrain*

4 Longing for shelter, many are
homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone. *Refrain*

5 Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain*

Gospel: Luke 2: 22-40 Pew Bible p 833

The Holy Gospel according to St Luke, the second chapter

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed— and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to

all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(You may be seated)

MEDITATION

HYMN OF THE DAY

“We Will Wait”

We will wait with ever watchful eyes. We will wait with ever serving lives.
We will wait with ever open hearts; we will greet You.

We will greet You with ever thankful tears.
We will greet You with ever lessening fears.
We will greet You with ever hopeful joy; We will welcome You.

(Refrain) We will welcome You! We will sing! We will welcome You! We will sing!

We will welcome You as prophesied. We will welcome You into our lives.
We will welcome lessons that You teach. We will sing for You.

We will sing while we wait here on earth. We will sing to greet You at Your birth.
We will sing to welcome You, the Gift. We will follow You. *(Refrain)*

APOSTLE’S CREED....

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE:

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God who came among us in the birth of Jesus, be with you always.

God's Peace be with you also. (*We greet you all in peace.*)

OFFERING FOR THE MISSION AND MINISTRY of Grace Lutheran Church
(*Time of offering for the mission and ministry of Grace Lutheran Church*)

SONG of OFFERING: "Song of Offering"

O accept these gifts that we bring As an off'ring to You, our King;
Lifting our voices in praise to You, our God.
As your children we come to Your throne With the worship that is Your's alone;
Giving ourselves with our praise to You, our God. Alleluia, alleluia.
Fruit of our lips we offer to Your name.
O accept these words that we bring
As an off'ring to You, our King; Lifting our voices in praise to You, our God.

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God, the gifts we bring are so small in comparison to the gift you gave to us in your Son—nowhere near enough to meet the needs all around us. Yet we give to you what we can.

As seed planted faithfully to grow and bear much fruit, bless and multiply these gifts so Your words may be realized anew in this world and heart turned toward you in love. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FOR CHRISTMAS:

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

PRAYER SONG: "Hear Our Prayer" ELW 178

Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole; Peace to all people, hope for each soul, God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

PRAYER PETITIONS:

You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts of your people to adore you and spread the joy of the holy child with others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your praise is sung throughout creation in all times and seasons. As the new year turns, ground us in your changeless and sustaining love. Keep us attentive to the rhythms of nature and inspire us to live in harmony with wildlife, your creation, and all the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Give hope and stamina to leaders who work tirelessly for the sake of the most vulnerable. We pray especially for organizations working on behalf of children in areas of war and conflict who struggle to provide for their basic needs. We pray for our service men and women and their families as they face the perils that surround them. Grant to them a sense of your abiding presence. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Sustain all people who, like Simeon and Anna, have been waiting for salvation and wholeness. We pray for those living with cancer or chronic illness, all people who are in physical rehabilitation or addiction recovery, and those experiencing depression and anxiety, especially Rhys, Roy, Esther, Shannon, Allen, Danny, Dennis, Dick, Harper, Ted, Carol, Kristi, Sylvia, Lavern, Elvira, Jada, Rick, Roger, Lynn, Tracy, Deb, Kaisley, Raef, Ashlea, Robert, Sandra, family of Harry E. Roberts, Sr, those in Care Center, Assisted Living or are homebound... Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. We pray for all churches, especially Grace Lutheran, which are experiencing change – growth or struggle, reconciliation or conflict. Inspire and strengthen them in works of witness and service in their ministry and mission. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give thanks for all the beloved who lived with expectation and departed this life in peace. Sustain us in joy until we join them around your throne. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

Amen.

PRAYER SONG: “Hear Our Prayer” ELW 178

Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole; Peace to all people, hope for each soul, God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

COMMISSION & BLESSING: *(Based on Luke 2: 29-32)*

Depart now in peace, for your eyes have seen the salvation which God has prepared for all people. Grow in strength and wisdom and bring forth a harvest of righteousness and praise.

And may God smile upon you and make you strong and wise;
May Christ Jesus share his inheritance with you freely;
And may the Holy Spirit open your eyes to the presence of God's Messiah.
Amen.

SENDING SONG “Bethlehem Highway”

(Refrain)

There is hope on Bethlehem highway
For the ones who will journey there.
And the hope is a child in a manger
Bringing us love beyond compare.

In a child of prophecy. *(Refrain)*

Let the angels go before us.
Let the darkness become light.
Now the Savior lives among us.
Now truth has come to life (Refrain)

It's a lifeline for the needy.
It's sight to those who can't see.
It's a freedom for the faithful

Repeat refrain and end with:
THERE IS HOPE!

DISMISSAL: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

Thanks be to God. We Will!

Thank you for worshipping with us today!

Announcements

Keep in Your Prayers those with Healthcare Issues

Rhys Arnold, Roy Arnold, Shannon Beck, Allen Benson, Danny Brekke, Dennis Carlson, Dick Everson, Harper Evjen, Ted Frost, Carol Henrichs, Kristi Herting, Sylvia Larson, Lavern McPeck, Elvira Moen, Jada Mohror, Rick Raml, Roger Rust, Lynn Schaefer, Tracy Schaefer, Deb Schlenner, Kaisley Schulz, Raef Stolp, Ashlea West, Robert Wittrock, Sandra Wittrock, the family of Harry E. Roberts, Sr, those in Care Centers, Assisted Living, or who are Homebound. Pray for members of the Armed Forces and their families, transportation personnel, Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters, EMT and all First Responders.

A RADIO BROADCAST of the Sunday morning worship service can be heard at 10:05 a.m. each Sunday on KWAT (950 AM). **The RADIO BROADCAST** for this service is given in loving memory of Roy & Doris Schmeling from the Schmeling Radio Fund. The Altar Flowers are given in loving memory of their granddaughter Kennedy Tomsha from Ann & Doug Murfield.

On the CALENDAR For the week of December 31 thru January 7

Today 10 am Worship Service
 NO Sunday School

January 1 – Office Closed

January 2 – 5 pm Memorial meeting

January 3 – 10:30 am – Service at Avantara
 5:30 to 6:15 - Wednesday meal
 6 pm – Dinner Church and Wednesday school opening
 6:30 to 7:30 pm – Wednesday school
 6:30 to 7:30 pm – Confirmation
 7:30 to 9 pm – Youth Group

January 7 – 8:30 am – Traditional Worship Service
 9:30 am – Coffee Fellowship in Fellowship Hall
 With Meet and Greet Olena Shevliakova

9:45 am – Sunday school
11 am – Contemporary Worship Service
1 pm – Service at Edgewood

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 8th – Annual Reports are Due at the Office
January 21st – Annual meeting
 Sunday school at 9:30
 One Worship Service at 10:30 am.
January 27 – 11 am Chili Cook-off tasting begins.
February 10th – Celebration of Love Banquet for all members and non-members.
February 14th – Ash Wednesday

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ASSIST IN OUR WORSHIP:

PASTOR: Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett

READER: Dee Haugan

KEYBOARDIST: Isaak Montemayor **USHERS:**

PRIASE TEAM: Becky Sprouse, Leigh Carstensen, Krisma DeWitt, Karen Kasperson
Rhonda Lorenz

SOUND/VIDEO TECH TEAM: Paul Henrichs, Wyatt Sprouse, Larry Picht, Gary Rukstad,
Anthony DeHaan, & Dylan Jordan

**Keep up to date by checking our website at glcwn.org
And Grace Lutheran Watertown FaceBook.**

Thank You

A huge thank you to all who helped with the bake sale/fundraiser last weekend: all those who baked goodies (and they were delicious), those who worked at the sale, and of course, those who bought the wonderful treats! With the jewelry/gift shop, we raised \$1,161! What an awesome addition to the fund so our youth can attend the National Youth Gathering next summer in New Orleans! They are excited about the trip, and it's fun to see them talk about it. Thanks to all, God Bless, and Merry Christmas! Darlene

Thank you

I'd like to take a minute to thank everyone so much for the cards, gifts, and notes given to me at Christmas. I always wait until I get home to open them with my husband and so as I am finishing this newsletter up today, I hope to get there and see all your wonderful gifts.

THANK YOU

To EVERY ONE who gave bake sale items in support of the youth fund raiser December 10th,

those who purchased items, and all those who donated their time to help us with it.

It was very much appreciated

From the Youth and families of Grace Lutheran

CHILI COOK-OFF SCHEDULE FOR FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship and Outreach Committee of Grace Lutheran is sponsoring a Chili Cook-off on Saturday January 20th. There will be prized for the best chili. Judging will be by the tasters and a panel of judges. There is no cost to enter the chili competition and just \$5.00 to taste all the chili beginning at 11 am. For more information call or text Denise Biller at 605-377-5106.

CELEBRATION OF LOVE

Plan now to enjoy a night of food, dancing, fellowship, and a time to celebrate the season of love on February 10th at the 2nd Street Station. The evening of fellowship will begin with a social hour at 5 pm with serving of the meal at 5:30 pm. No formal attire is required.

The First annual Celebration of Love is sponsored by the Fellowship and Outreach Committee of Grace Lutheran Church. Tickets are \$30 for single and \$50 for two and available at the church office and must be purchase prior to February 4th.

The committee is looking for those who could provide rides for our elderly members or any who may not drive during the evening. If you are able, please let the office know.

YOUTH FUN NIGHT SCHEDULED FOR January 19

Youth in grades 7th thru 12th are invited to a fun night on Friday, January 19th from 6 to 10 pm at Grace Lutheran. The evening will begin with a meal, include games and several fun activities to be determined. Parents are asked to help with the night. If you are able, please contact Pastor Cheryl, 605-237-1501.



**You can GIVE online by using the QR code to the left
or visiting glcwtm.org/give**

**You can give to General, Refugee, Flower,
Memorial, Radio, Youth Trip, Parking Lot,
Multipurpose Room or other on that page.**