



“God’s greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger”

A Service for Christmas Day~ December 25, 2023

Grace Lutheran Church Welcomes You to Worship!

202 Second Street SE, Watertown, South Dakota

Web Site: glcwtwn.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 FOR CHRISTMAS (based on Luke 2: 10-11, 14)

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 Saviour,
who is the Messiah, the Lord.

**Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!**

GATHERING SONG:

“O Come, All ye faithful”

ELW 283

1 O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to
Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the king of angels:

born of a virgin, a mortal he
comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Refrain

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven
above! Glory to God
in the highest: *Refrain*

4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION FOR CHRISTMAS

O God, you search us out and know us, and all that we are is open to you.
We confess that we have sinned.

In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

When we make no room for Christ, and fail to welcome him into our lives,
In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

When we follow shooting stars and squander our gifts in Herod's court,
In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

When we seek to cut down those who might rise above us,
In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

When we sanitize your birthplace
and erase from memory the poor and displaced,
In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

When we sing sweet sentiments over Christ's birth,
and fail to rejoice over his everyday presence,
In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

We turn to you, O Christ, perfect union of Spirit and flesh;
We renounce evil; We claim your love; We choose to be made whole.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the good news of Christmas. Today God reveals to us the wonders of divine love. Even the darkness is not dark to God, and the night is as bright as the day. The God who promised never to leave us or forsake us HAS come to us in Jesus Christ, who binds up the broken-hearted, heals all your infirmities, and relieves your burden of sin. So arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

After spending four weeks of preparation during Advent, we have come to Christmas Day.

Isaiah 9:2 tells us “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.”

[Four colored candles are lit.]

And St John tells us “The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.” (John 1:9)

And “the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

(Christ candle is lit)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

All-powerful and unseen God, **the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

PRIASE SONG

“Love has come”

ELW 292

1. Love has come—a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies. See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.
- 2 Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers; Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.
- 3 Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free. Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas; Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

FIRST READING: Isaiah 62:6-12

Pew Bible p 604

⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night they shall never be silent.

You who remind the LORD, take no rest,

⁷and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.

⁸The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm:

I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies,

and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored;
⁹but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones,
lift up an ensign over the peoples. ¹¹The LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion,
“See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.”

¹²They shall be called, “The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD“;
and you shall be called, “Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.”

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

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 97

¹The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice;
let the multitude of the isles be glad.

²**Clouds and darkness surround the LORD,
righteousness and justice are the foundations of God’s throne.**

³Fire goes before the LORD,
burning up enemies on every side.

⁴**Lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.**

⁵The mountains melt like wax before the Lord of all the earth.

⁶**The heavens declare your righteousness, O LORD,
and all the peoples see your glory.**

⁷Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods!
Bow down before the LORD, all you gods.

⁸**Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgments, O LORD.**

⁹For you are the LORD, most high over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.

¹⁰**You who love the LORD, hate evil! God guards the lives of the saints
and rescues them from the hand of the wicked.**

¹¹Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the honest of heart.

¹²**Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous,
and give thanks to God’s holy name.**

Second Reading: Titus 3:4-7

Pew Bible p 969

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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: 8-20

Pew Bible p 833

The Holy Gospel according to St Luke, the second chapter

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was

with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, O Christ.**
(You may be seated)

MEDITATION

HYMN OF THE DAY “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” ELW 288

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today! | He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this! |
| 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this! | 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save! |

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: “What Feast of Love” **ELW 487**

1 What feast of love is offered here,
what banquet come from heaven?
What food of everlasting life,
what gracious gift is given?
This, this is Christ the king,
the bread come down from heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!
How sweet the manna given!

This, this is Christ the king,
the sun come down from heaven.
Oh, see and hear and sing!
The Word of God is given!

2 What light of truth is offered here,
what covenant from heaven?
What hope of everlasting life,
what wondrous word is given?

3 What wine of love is offered here,
what crimson drink from heaven?
What stream of everlasting life,
what precious blood is given?
This, this is Christ the king,
the sweetest wine of heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!
The Son of God is given!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FOR CHRISTMAS:

O newborn Savior, on this early morning in the wake of your birth, when there
is still time to believe that because you are with us, the world can change, we
pray for the church and all of creation...

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:

God of new life, by the birth of Jesus you have brought light into our darkness. Shine in our lives, Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

God of new life, nothing will ever separate us from your love.

Give us faith to trust your promise, Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

God of new life, you call us to serve the hungry, the poor, the lonely and the outcast. Show us how we can respond, Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

God of new life, Jesus was born into poverty and lived under oppression.

Open our eyes to injustice, and inspire us to proclaim your reign, Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

God of new life, by the birth of Jesus, bring your healing to those in need, 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, those in Care Center, Assisted Living or are homebound... Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

God of new life, inspire this congregation to reach out beyond our walls, beyond our fears, beyond our past. Help us to welcome your future, Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

God of new life, by the birth of Jesus you have brought light into our darkness. Shine in our lives, Christ Jesus, by your coming,

Let love dwell within us.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our light, our life, and our hope. **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.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We indeed give thanks and praise to the almighty and merciful God and remember His words spoken on that ancient night...

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

DISTRIBUTION SONG: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW 289

1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song?
Refrain

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Refrain

POST COMMUNION BLESSING: May this body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ bless you and keep you in grace to eternal life! Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our redeemer, **you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

SENDING & BLESSING:

Go now, and walk in the light, knowing God will guide your way...
May the God of the angels, who heralded Christ's birth,
bring joy to your hearts this day and always.

May the God of love, who gave his only Son to be born for you,
fill your life with love and peace.

May Emmanuel, God with us, be with you in all your doings and all your celebrations, until he brings you into his eternal kingdom.

And may almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

“Joy to the World”

ELW 267

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature
sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

DISMISSAL: Go in peace. For Christ has come. **Thanks be to God.**

Thank you for worshiping with us today!

Announcements for Christmas Day

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 McPeek, 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 Bob Haan, the family of Lana Norgaard, 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 poinsettias are given in loving memory of Roy and Doris Schmeling and Larry Schmeling from Linda, Larry, Lana, and families.

On the CALENDAR

For the week of December 25-31st

Today 10 am Christmas Worship Service
 NO Sunday School
 11 am to 1 pm Christmas meal delivery
 1 pm – Clean-up

December 26 – Office Closed

December 31 - 10 am Worship Service (ONE SERVICE ONLY)

NO Sunday School

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 3 – Wednesday activities resume

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 – Chili Cook-off
February 10th – Celebration of Love Banquet
February 14th – Ash Wednesday

ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER TODAY

The 49th annual Community Christmas Meal for Christmas Day is today. Deliver starts at 11 am with clean up at 1 pm.

Volunteers are needed to deliver the meals, dish up for carry out orders, and clean up after the meal. Please consider coming to help following the Christmas service at 10 am or return for cleanup beginning at 1 pm.

*ALL WHO BELIEVE IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST ARE WELCOME TO
COME FORWARD FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.
YOUNG CHILDREN WILL RECEIVE A BLESSING*

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ASSIST IN OUR WORSHIP:

PASTOR: Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett

READER:

KEYBOARDIST: Isaak Montemayor **USHERS:**

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

**Pastoral Calls: You can reach Pastor Cheryl at 605-237-1501(cell or text) or
by E-mail: cherylgracelc@midconetwork.com**

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

You are invited to worship with us again. Except for special circumstances, our worship from September to May each year is at:

8:30 am - Traditional Worship Service

11 am – Contemporary Worship Service

6 pm – Wednesday night Dinner Church Service

Holy Communion is celebrated on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month

*Come and worship the Lord and be filled each week
with God's Words of Hope, to strengthen and sustain you!*