



Celebrate Advent and Christmas at Grace

Advent begins on Sunday, November 27, and marks the beginning of the church liturgical year. It is four Sundays before Christmas, and the candles that are lit on the Advent wreath each Sunday prepare us for the coming of Christ, the light of the world. Traditionally, the candles represent hope, peace, joy, and love. Advent is a season of waiting, something we are keenly impacted by these days of waiting in hope for the appointment of our next pastor. Plan now to attend Sunday services during Advent and spend more time reading the Bible or devotions (see Bob Dean's suggestion elsewhere in "The Chimes"). Give yourself and others the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love as we prepare for Christmas.

Our guest preachers during Advent are: Rev. Bob Dean (November 27), Rev. Jim Perdue (December 4), Rev. Judy Wadding (December 11), and Rev. Gary Armstrong (December 18).

Christmas Eve will be celebrated on Saturday, December 24, 7:00 pm, with a service of "Carols and Candles." The Chancel Choir will lead us in singing Christmas carols and also provide special anthems, and there will be Scripture readings based on the four candles of the Advent wreath: hope, peace, joy, and love. We will also light the Christ candle and share the light of Christ as we sing "Silent Night." Rev. Pam Deeds is our guest preacher that evening.

Christmas falls on Sunday this year. We will not have a "live" service but you may access the Christmas Eve service online at 10:15 am on Sunday, December 25.

New Year's Day: There will be a 10:15 am service on Sunday, January 1, 2023, that will incorporate John Wesley's Covenant Service, a service of renewal and commitment, and will also include communion. Rev. Bob Dean will be the guest preacher.



Join us for
worship
in-person or
online!

Worship

Sunday @ 10:15 am on
Facebook, YouTube, and
GraceDesMoines.org

Address

3700 Cottage Grove,
Des Moines, IA 50311

Phone

515-255-2131

Email

info@gracedesmoines.org

Website

www.gracedesmoines.org

Facebook and YouTube

GraceDesMoines



Prayer Shawl Mini Bazaar

The Prayer Shawl mini bazaar will be set up in the foyer Sunday, December 4 from 9:30-11:30 and also during the Sing the Messiah event 1:30-3:30. Nice place to do some holiday shopping!

CHRISTMAS IS ON TOP OF A STEEP HILL

Dear Friends,

In a “Peanuts” cartoon, Charlie Brown explains to his younger sister Sally why Christmas seemed to take so long to arrive: “Christmas is on top of a steep hill, and the closer you get, the steeper the hill.”

For many children, that is true. For many adults, though, the opposite is true: Christmas is at the bottom of a steep hill, and the closer you get, the steeper the drop and swifter the ride!

The days until Christmas can be rushed, filled with many activities and obligations, leaving too little time to reflect on its meaning. Like a rider on a sled, we “whoosh” into Christmas Day at top speed. All too quickly the Advent journey to Christmas is over, and we’re back to the “everyday world” the next day.

Can we slow down that ride? In one sense, no: time moves on, and the 24-hour period we label “Christmas” will come and go. But in another sense, yes – while not able to slow the time, we can control some of our “journey”.

Look at your schedule. Evaluate if there are time-consuming non-essential activities you can do without. Instead, schedule time for activities which help you focus on the birth of Christ: reading the Bible and an Advent devotion (one idea is below), and time for prayer.

But, we cannot control everything. Pastor Adam Hamilton points out in his book “The Journey” (1) that there was much to Joseph and Mary’s journey that they could not control. The trip from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the census had to be exceedingly difficult, for Mary was “great with child.” Were she and Joseph frustrated, tired, wondering how God was “in control” when a Roman governor could upset the plans and lives of so many? We don’t know, but if they were, we could certainly understand.

Yet even in those circumstances, they were faithful to God’s call to them. God was with them through that difficult journey. When our journey through life becomes difficult, remember that discovering (and celebrating) God’s gift of love and eternal life in Christ is not a one-day-a-year event, but a lifetime journey.

We can know Emmanuel – “God with us” – any time we share, help, forgive, and love others. Author and professor Kate Bowler’s Advent Devotional “The Season of Waiting (and waiting, and waiting)” can remind us God is with us even in the difficult parts of our journey. This Advent Devotional includes activities for the 12 days of Christmastide (from Christmas day to Epiphany on January 6th). (You can download a free copy at <https://katebowler.com/advent-2022/>. Contact the church office if you cannot get the download to work.)

May this Christmas season bring you moments of joy, and may we know Emmanuel – “God with us” – any time we share, help, forgive, and love others in the Spirit of Christ.

Bob Dean, Interim Pastors Team

(1) Adam Hamilton, *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem* (c. Abingdon Press, 2011).

Opportunity for Ministry

Where? Grace Preschool at Grace UMC

When? Pick one shift: Tuesday or Thursday from 9am-12pm or 2:30pm-4:30pm.

What? Volunteer Classroom Grandparent

Contact? Ashley Wissler - Director of Grace Preschool

Email:

Ashleywissler@gracedesmoines.org

Phone: (515) 279-5942.

Start date: Immediately after background check process



Sunday School During Advent

The first Sunday of Advent is Sunday, November 27 which is when our Sunday School focus will turn to the anticipation of Christ’s birth. The children in Preschool (age 3) through 5th Grade will learn about the predictions of the Christ Child in the Old Testament and the angels that visited Mary and Joseph in the New Testament. All of this leads to celebrating the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day! Preschool through 2nd grade meet in Room 204 and 3rd through 5th grade meet in 303. All are invited and encouraged to attend!

Contact: Jim Perdue, 480-392-1672, revjimperdue@yahoo.com
Sunday, December 4, the Grace AMOS team will receive free-will offerings to AMOS's organizing team for 2023. AMOS is strictly non-partisan politically. It is funded in two ways: membership dues and individual contributions. The Grace core organizing team would appreciate individual offerings this Sunday from Grace members and attendees, both in person and virtually.

Grace AMOS team members will be in the narthex following the December 4 worship service, to receive offerings or pledges. For members and friends worshipping virtually, checks can be sent to the church office. Please make checks to Grace UMC and put "AMOS" in the notation line.

Credit card donations can be made by going online to <https://www.amosiowa.org/invest>, or scan the QR code.



Worship in December

Our guest preaching schedule continues, and we are grateful for our retired pastors who have stepped up to be a part of our worship services going forward:

December 4 - Advent 2) - Jim Perdue "Prepare" (Matthew 3:1-12)

December 11 - Advent 3) - Judy Wadding "Rejoice" (Luke 1:67-79)

December 18th - (Advent 4) - Gary Armstrong "Behold!"

December 24 (Christmas Eve) - **7 PM** - Pam Deeds (Lessons and Carols - Chancel Choir)

December 25 (Christmas Day) - No in person worship. Christmas Eve service will broadcast online at **10:15 AM**

Starting the end of November, and carrying on into this month of December, the four weeks of Advent prepare us for the coming of Jesus, and we will be lighting the candles on our Advent wreath each Sunday to remind us of the light that came into the world with Jesus' birth.

Plans for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

The holidays seem to arrive quickly, once fall arrives. In order for our church members and friends to be able to plan ahead, we want to let you know that we will celebrate Christmas Eve (Saturday, December 24) at 7:00 pm with a Service of Lessons and Carols, led by our Chancel Choir, with a sermon by Rev Pam Deeds. There will be no in-person worship at Grace on Sunday, December 25; the Christmas Eve service will be re-broadcast at 10:15 am that morning.

Music Events at Grace

Des Moines Community Orchestra will present G. F. Handel's "The Messiah" at Grace on Sunday, December 4, at 2:00 pm. Attendees are welcome to sing along with the orchestra and soloists. If you plan to attend and need to borrow the musical score, let Ann Gerdorn know - we have quite a few copies that we would be happy to lend you.

Financial Update

Financial Update as of October 31, 2022

October Income \$49,204.73 vs Budget of \$47,583.41

YTD Income \$394,878.34 vs Budget of \$475,833.18

October Expense \$29,014.30 vs Budget of \$49,908.57

YTD Expense \$397,002.40 vs Budget of \$470,082.88

Thank you for the resources that God has blessed us with as we faithfully serve our community.

Grace office and preschool will be closed for the upcoming holidays

Friday December 23rd - half day

Monday December 26



Bible Study Starts Anew in January

In January of 2023, Grace will start a new group of The Bible Year. The goal of this group is to read through the entire Bible in one year. The experience for those participating in it this past year has been eye opening, inspiring, and rewarding. In many cases, it has led to challenges to our beliefs and caused us to reevaluate our previous convictions. The study will follow the schedule in "The Bible Year: A Journey Through Scripture in 365 Days" which features weekly videos and daily devotions. Once we know who is interested in participating, we will identify a regular meeting time that works for the majority. We may even have two different sessions depending on the interest. Zoom meetings will also be available. Contact Coreen Witke at coreenwitke@gracedesmoines.org or call 515.255.2131 ext. 230 to get more information or to register for the group.



Poinsettia Orders due by December 5



Poinsettia Orders



The Altar Committee invites church members to purchase a poinsettia to enhance the worship setting for the Christmas season. The cost is \$15 per plant (6" pot) and the deadline for ordering is Monday, December 5, 2022. Please leave your paid order in the offering plate or drop it off in the office. Payment must be received before the plants are ordered.

Poinsettias may be given as memorials, a gift to honor someone you love, or simply as a donation to the church. After the Christmas Eve service you may take your poinsettia home, deliver it to a friend, or leave it in the sanctuary through the remainder of the season. Only available in white.

Please print clearly in case we need to contact you about your order.

_____ YES, I would like to order _____ Poinsettia(s)

Enclosed is \$ _____ cash/check/online (please circle one)

Online payments can be made at www.gracedesmoines.org under the **GIVING** tab by selecting **OTHER GIFT** and noting it's for a poinsettia in the **DESIGNATION** field.

Your Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Given **in memory of** or **in honor of** (please circle one):

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

One of the most important aspects of Sunday morning, is time spent with our church family and welcoming visitors. Please check out the Volunteer sign-up board in the Narthex for opportunities to serve. Sign up for a Sunday that works best for you. Current opportunities include:

Greeters

Ushers

Coffee Makers

Fellowship hosting after worship

Happy Birthday Jesus!

Please join us to celebrate the birth of Jesus with cupcakes and punch Saturday, December 24 at 6:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, Grace United Methodist Church. It's a great time to get reacquainted, catch-up and hear updates from family and friends prior to the 7:00 p.m. worship service.

Listening Sessions

We've been able to develop action plans in three of the areas, and will host the last session, on the topic of Climate Change/Recycling on Sunday, December 11 from 12 pm to 1:30 pm. There are also small groups meeting in the future, If you are interested in joining any of these groups, please contact the following people:

Immigration - Laura Sands
laurasands@mchsi.com

LGBTQ+ - Jon Coon
jpanton316@gmail.com

Social Justice - Jon Coon jpanton316@gmail.com

Climate Change - Lora Fraracci
lora@earthmadeclean.com