

Journeys

There is a hush that falls over the city Christmas Eve night. There is hardly a car on the road. Only the really hard-core stores and gas stations are open. People are on the way, making preparations, or already together.

It is one of the few true religious times of the year. It is time to stop, give thanks, and look for life's simple blessings. It is a time to pull back the muck of daily trials and tribulations and see the brighter side of life. It is a time of hope. It is a time to give.

By Christmas Eve, all our work and efforts have either happened or not. We have bought all the right stuff for each other. We have wrapped it in the right kind of paper. By then, we have made all the right kinds of food. We have put on the right clothes. We sang the right kinds of songs. We have done all this hard work as if we were the ones making Christmas happen.

When this Christmas Eve hush hits, we realize that it is God (not us) who makes it happen. There is no special formula for the right things that make Christmas, Christmas. Christmas - God coming to us - happens no matter what we do. Christmas is not something you do or don't deserve. Christmas happens whether we are ready or not. Christmas is all about the gift of himself that God places in the world's hands. God says, "Here this is for you." And we say, "Oh, you shouldn't have." But we open it anyway.

God's gift to us is the gift of new life, the gift of acceptance, the gift of love. In the hush of the moment this year, may each of us take God's gift for what it is and say, "Thanks God, it's just what I needed."

Grace & Peace,

Rev. Kelly Karges

Sr. Pastor



Want to write an article?
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Order Of Worship

PRELUDE The Nativity arr. by Sprunger; Medley of Christmas Carols arr. by Marsh;
Love Came Down at Christmas arr. by Price (Chimes)

OPENING SONG "O Come let us Adore him"

WELCOME

ADVENT CANDLES: CHRIST Candi Price

† THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

† OPENING HYMN #218 "It came upon the midnight clear"

† OPENING PRAYER (On Screen)

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN (On Screen)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:1-20

CHOIR ANTHEM "Heaven Came Down Tonight"

SERMON "Giving birth to God" Rev. Kelly Karges

† SPECIAL SONG "What a Glorious Night"

CALL TO PRAYER #2128 (Vs. 1)

"Come and Find the Quiet Center"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Joys One: "For this we pray..."
& All: "Lord hear our prayers"
Concerns

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (On Screen)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (On Screen)

† DOXOLOGY ADVENT

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (On Screen)

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CANDLELIGHT SONG "Silent Night"
(Raise Candles on Last Verse)

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN #234 "O Come all ye faithful"

† POSTLUDE Angels We Have heard on High arr. by Smith & Hustad

† - Please stand as you are able to



CHRISTMAS EVE SUNDAY 9:30AM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE DECEMBER 24TH, 2023

SENIOR PASTOR: Rev. Kelly Karges (402) 239-9507
ASSOCIATE PASTOR: Pastor Anny Kapundu (308) 370-9465
NEW VISITORS
FOLLOW UP PASTOR: Carla Gunn
DIRECTOR OF
FAMILY MINISTRY: Christina Landenberger
PASTORS EMERITUS: Del Roper, George Wheat
MINISTERS: All Members

ADDRESS: 511 North Elm Street,
Grand Island, NE 68801

OFFICE: (308) 382-1952

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SATURDAY WORSHIP IN GOLLAHER CHAPEL
Traditional: 6 p.m.
SUNDAY WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY
TOGETHER WORSHIP: 9:30 a.m.

WELCOME * CONNECT * DISCOVER

Announcements

End-of-Year Giving

Take note! If you have not donated for this month yet, all donations are to be turned in or postmarked by December 31st. We also like to encourage you all to donate twice this month. Call it a "13th Month" as this is the giving time of year. We thank you all for your heart-felt donations.

Office Closures

The office is closed on December 25th, 26th, and January 1st. Have a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

More Announcements inside

Volunteers For Service

| Greeters | Ushers | Reader | Organist | Pianists | Communion |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Marge Terman | Tom & Jeanne Graves | Steph Plate | Brenda Lambert | Sharon Jensen & Joyce Victor | Penny Allen & LeEllen Haynes |

Announcements

United Women In Faith

Due to availability circumstances, the Christmas Tea event has been rescheduled for January 17th at 1:30 pm. Thank you all for what you do.

Bulletin Folding

Folding of the bulletins is at 11 pm, December 29th. This is an hour before we close this Friday.

Cake & Salad Tupperware

The United Women in Faith is appreciative of everyone who donates cakes and salads for funerals. They would like to remind everyone who donates to pick up their pans and dishes. Thank you all.

Kitchen Remodel Project

The kitchen remodeling is set to start in the first few weeks of the new year. While we haven’t started yet, the cabinets are in good condition and will be sold to anyone needing them. Tom Graves will be in the kitchen after this service today if you want to look at it.



PECANS

For Sale

\$9.50/pound
4 flavors available

Contact Margie Balderston to place an order.
308-382-3272

Announcements



Miss Today’s Sermon? Here are some options:

- Call (308) 210-2183 *Most Popular!*
- Visit our YouTube channel
- Visit our Facebook page
- Visit our website
- Pick up a printed copy from the office

Food Distribution:

January 13th, 2023, at College Park 3180 W Highway 34. Enter Tech Boulevard. Distribution is at 9:30 am until Food is gone. It is best to arrive between 9 am and 11 am. Do not arrive before 7:30 am.

Hospital Visits & Prayer Chain

If you or a loved one is in the hospital and would like to be visited or put on the prayer chain for prayer, please get in touch with the office. **Update:** Due to HIPAA security rules, Regional Medical Center will no longer release the names of patients to the church.



Sympathies to the Family and Friends of:

† Junette I. Hiatt, 93, December 16th



Write Your Sermon Notes Here:

Calendar

December 25th – 31st 2023

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| | OFFICE CLOSED– CHRISTMAS DAY | 25 MON | December |
| | OFFICE CLOSED | 26 TUE | |
| | | 27 WED | |
| 11 – 12pm | Lectio Divina, Zoom | 28 THU | |
| 1 – 4pm | Prayer Shawl Group, The Gathering Place or Parlor | 29 FRI | |
| | OFFICE CLOSED AT NOON | 30 SAT | |
| 7 – 8am | Men's Study, Shady Bend Cafe | 31 SUN | |
| 11 – 11:30pm | Bulletin Folding, Parlor | | |
| 2 – 3pm | Coloring with Rev. Kelly, The Chocolate Bar | | |
| 5 – 6pm | Scripture Discussion, Parlor | | |
| 6 – 7pm | Worship, Gollaher Chapel | | |
| 7 – 7:30pm | Fellowship Time, The Gathering Place | | |
| 9:30 – 10:30am | TOGETHER Worship, Sanctuary, Nursery | | |
| 10:30 – 11:30am | Fellowship Time, The Gathering Place | | |
| | Growing In Faith Together (GIFT) | | |
| | Sharing Our Life Stories, Youth Room | | |
| | Way Seekers Study, Room C | | |