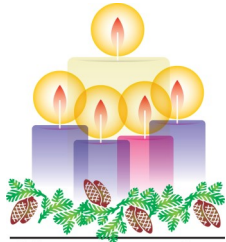


# THE MESSENGER

Gladbrook Methodist Church

December 2023



## Christmas Eve

**Dec. 24 -  
Family Christmas Eve  
Worship (The Light of  
Love) at 7:00 PM**

Then the light of Godly love came into the world to dwell here with us. This is the time to light the candles and worship.

For God sent his only son into the world that who so ever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. This family-friendly service has been prepared to incorporate scripture, story, music and all the sights and sounds of Christmas. In this way we will fully worship and honor the Messiah. Join us.

**Angel Tree Gifts need to be returned, wrapped, to the church by Dec. 13th.**



## Advent Readers...

Dec. 3- Gallo Family

Dec. 10-Children's Program

**Dec. 17- Needing a Volunteer**

**Dec. 24- Needing a Volunteer**



Thank you to all the families who are serving their church family by being Advent Readers this year. We appreciate this service.



## Sunday School Program

The children and youth will be presenting the drama "Christmas Is" on **Sunday, December 10** during the worship service. Everyone is invited and encouraged

to attend as we remember the reason for the Advent and **Christmas** seasons.



**Lions Soup Day**  
Sat., Dec. 9th in the Memorial Building.

Free Will Donations

There will be homemade chili, potato, and ham & bean soup, hot dogs, and pies. Dine in, carry out or call Jeanne @ 641-751-2039 for deliveries.

## Senior Citizens Dinners

Dec. 1st at 11:30 is the senior dinner in the Festival of Trees, upper level of the City Center. You will enjoy seeing the beautiful trees and receive a Christmas favor and your Santa Sack.

Call Jeanne to make reservations: 641-751-2039





### 11<sup>th</sup> Kids Shopping Day Is Here!



*Kids' Christmas Shopping Day* is here. On Saturday, Dec. 9, 9-12:00 at Peace Church, our hometown folks will once again open the doors of Gladbrook's Christmas Store, and also open their hearts a little bit wider to share their love with the children and families in our community. Volunteers please be at the church by 8:15 a.m. so we can get organized before we open the doors at 9 a.m. Area children from three to seniors can select gifts for their families (at no cost) from the articles that have been donated by so many. We are expecting another big crowd at our 11<sup>th</sup> Kids Shopping Day.

*"We will, "Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!"* May each of us forever treasure our Savior Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem on Christmas day.



### **Gifts of Hope**

**Christmas Offerings:** In honor of the birth of Jesus, the Gladbrook Methodist Church will be accepting an offering for mission projects. Your gift will be recognized in our Christmas bulletin. Order forms are available in the office or are located on the table in the lobby. They are due to Dana by Dec. 17th.



#### **Church World Service Blankets -**

This is a project selected by the Sunday school department. Blankets are distributed where lives have been disrupted by fire, hurricane, earthquake and violence.

#### **Self-Help International Children's Nutrition Program**

The Self-Help International is a widely known mission, based in Waverly. The C.N.P. offers a free meal to school students in various African nations. The meals encourage students to remain enrolled in Christian schools where they are taught the love of Jesus and agricultural practices that can establish food security.



## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Aren't we rushing things a bit? The Thanksgiving Day turkey has barely been finished. We haven't exchanged Christmas gifts and cheer. What's all this talk about the New Year? Simple: the First Sunday of Advent, which is coming this December 3, signals a new liturgical year. We begin a new cycle of readings and reflections concerning ***“the whole mystery of Christ, not only his Incarnation and Birth until his Ascension, but also as reflected in the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of a blessed return of the Lord.”***

Each new experience fills us with the excitement of anticipation as well as the anxiety of the unknown. The “NEW” speaks to us of growth, possibilities, creativity and a break with the past. At the same time, we must surrender the familiar with all its securities and sense of order. The “NEW” can be risky business. Hence, the temptation is great to retreat to the near and not go forward into the unknown. Biblical examples abound: the call of Abraham to leave his homeland and begin anew; the Hebrews leaving Egypt to journey to a Promised Land; the disciples becoming fishers of men; and the zealot Saul becoming Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. All these indicate that beginning anew evokes a special quality.

Matthew 24:37-44 indicate what this quality is: ***the ability to be watchful.***

<sup>37</sup>For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup>and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup>Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. <sup>41</sup>Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. <sup>42</sup>Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup>But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup>Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. (ESV)

For if we are not watchful and alert, we can easily lose our way and fall. To be watchful is to be aware and sensitive to the realities around us. Watchfulness does not allow self-absorption. Above all, to be watchful and alert is to know what time it is. And there is the rub. Time is so familiar, yet so mysterious. Augustine once said that he thought he knew what time was until someone asked him. Then he realized he didn't know what time was at all.

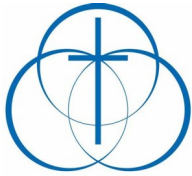
Paul's letter to the Romans 13:11 reads thus: ***“Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.”*** Jesus in speaking to his disciples says: ***“For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man”*** (Matthew 24:37). And again: ***But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect”*** (Matthew 24:43-44). Jesus and Paul are reminding us of that dimension of time that cannot be measured by watch and calendar. There is sacred and ultimately important aspect about such time. We can miss and make-up many things: tests, a ballgame, a dental appointment. But there is an urgency and uniqueness about God's inbreaking into our lives and history. To miss it because we are self-concerned, absorbed in worldly affairs or simply uninterested is to endanger our salvation.

The watchful, alert person is also a person of *action*. The time of God's visitation requires us to break with the past reign of sin. We must live in a new way. Paul leaves a little doubt as to what is required. ***“So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light”*** (Romans 13:12b). We cannot continue to live as in the day of Noah and only be concerned about our pleasures and desires. We must live each day with a hopeful expectation and of receptivity to God's coming.

The call to live a NEW WAY is not a call to gloom and doom. Rather, God is calling us to true joy and peace. Isaiah employs the image of ***“the Lord's mountain”*** (Isaiah 2:3), a place of lasting peace and reconciliation. The division and hostilities which separate people will be healed. We know this is a hope and not a present reality. However, each day we are called to make the Lord's mountain a little more visible on the horizon.

As we welcome the New Year in the liturgical cycle, we are to be watchful and be alert. It is the beginning of a new year filled with hope and expectation. Our God is throwing a party on his mountain. We are all invited. Let us with courage ***“walk in the light of the Lord”!***

**Pastor Gideon**



## Administrative Council Minutes

October 23, 2023

Twelve members of the Ad Council met at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall of the GUMC. Members in attendance were Dana Brown, Becky Fish, Gideon Gallo, Cornell Gethmann, Dave Koester, Paul Koester, Roger Luehring, Carolyn Moe, Linda Schneider, Grant Strohbehn, Susie Strohbehn, and Kevin Williams.

Susie called the meeting of the Gladbrook Methodist Church to order. Cornell provided our devotional. The past minutes were read, corrections were noted and approved. Correction to the October Minutes: Carolyn Moe was not at the meeting. Gideon gave the report for the Missions committee.

Roger presented the treasurer's report. Our bank balances are strong. We are no longer having to pay as much to our new Global Methodist Conference as we were to the United Methodist Conference.

**SPPRC, Dave K.** The committee met Oct. 2. Michael Lamb was hired as the new custodian. He will start immediately. Pastor Appreciation Sunday will be Oct. 29th. SPPRC members will serve the fellowship. Kevin Williams will preach.

**GMW, Dana** reported the women of the church met Oct. 18th. We filled Blessing bags That were distributed to the nursing home, independent living and to several community members.

**Mission Outreach, Carolyn** reported the committee will be meeting when Gideon is able.

**Trustees, Paul** reported a bid to rebuild the bell tower raised bed has been accepted. Work will begin as soon as the contractor is available. A large tree at the parsonage needs to be removed most of its roots were removed or damaged when repairing the sewage line to the house.

**Finance Committee, Grant** announced there will be a committee meeting Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> after the regularly scheduled SPPRC meeting.

**Memorial, Cheryl** several memorials have been received lately.

**Good Samaritan, Dana** reported we are anticipating greater need for funds as winter approaches.

**Food Pantry- Dana** reported we continue to serve 12 -15 people every month. But this month she was called for 3 separate "emergency" appointments on top of being available for the 3 scheduled monthly days.

**Pastoral Report, Gideon** reported he attended an advisory meeting in which a new conference has been formed from the provisional conference. The Upper Midwest Conference will be held Nov.2nd, 3rd, and 4<sup>th</sup> in Watertown, South Dakota. Gideon and Lisa and Dave Koester plan to attend. Gideon participated in the annual Crop Walk. He continues to lead several weekly Bible studies. He is planning to resume his ministry at Westbrook Acres.

### **Other Items:**

1. Linda gave an update on getting an estimate on replacing the green countertops in the kitchen. She is planning to use Bill Schneider's memorial money to complete this project.
2. Projector bulbs are needed. It was decided that Memorial funds would NOT be used for this ongoing expense. As of now, this is not a budgeted item. It will need consideration as to how this item will be budgeted for each year.

**Joys: 1.** Dwight Surber's 79<sup>th</sup> birthday is today. He has overcome many health issues over the years. His family is blessed he is still leading the family forward.

2. We are blessed to have Michael Lamb as our new custodian.

3. It is a great joy to have many children attend church and Sunday school. This is a testament to how successful Nancy and her many helpers are with this program.

**Concerns:** There were no concerns brought up at this time.

Gideon closed with a prayer. Meeting Adjourned.

Next Meeting scheduled for November 27th, at 7:00pm. **Paul** will supply the devotional.

Respectfully submitted, Dana Brown



**December**

- 2 Dan Bruene
- 2 Lisa Flamme
- 11 Jeni Junge
- 12 Noel Strohhahn
- 14 Terri Luehring
- 16 Chuck Bearden
- 19 Jeff Bruene
- 19 Kendra Beierschmitt
- 21 Cornell Gethmann
- 23 Hillary Purvis
- 28 Marilyn Brekke
- 28 Owen Koester



To everyone who participated in our many events and services this past month. We appreciate everything you do for your family, your church, and your community.

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**December**

- 1 Kevin & BJ Williams
- 4 Bud Locke & Priscilla Crumley
- 6 Al & Janell Gienger

Thanks to those who took an angel to make someone's Christmas a little merrier this year. The food boxes and gifts must be back by **Dec. 13th**. Please put the wrapped gifts in the fellowship hall.

- Sign your name when taking an Angel and checking it off when bringing the gifts to the church.
- The boxes will be picked up at Peace Church on **Dec. 15th**.

The Angel Tree is a project of the area churches and the Northwest Tama County Food Pantry.

You are invited to read these scriptures each week before the Worship service:  
**Lectionary Readings for Advent and Christmastide Season**

**December 3**

Isaiah 64:1-9 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37

**December 10**

Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8

**December 17**

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

**December 24**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38 Luke 1:46b-55

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20

**December 31**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40

**Psalm 119:105**

***<sup>105</sup> Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.***

**Gladbrook Community Kids' Club Family Night**

The next meeting of Kid's Club (2nd,3rd,& 4th graders) will be Wednesday, December 13th at Gladbrook Methodist Church. This will be a Christmas family meal.

For Reservations, call Dana at 641-473-2025 or text Barb Marchant at 515-360-3513.

Follow Facebook page: Gladbrook Community Kid's Club for more updates.







## Gladbrook Methodist Women (GMW)

November 15, 2023

The regular meeting of the GMW met at 9:30am at the Gladbrook Methodist Church in the Fellowship Hall.

President Dana led opened with a prayer. Joan Surber and Dana Brown served cranberry and orange bread and Banana Bread and coffee. Secretary Joan read the minutes of the October meeting.

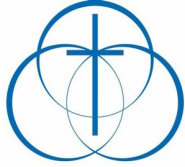
Dana read the Treasurer's Report. A check was issued to Linda Schneider to reimburse her for some of the items needed for the Trunk or Treat meal that was supplied to all the participants of the Gladbrook Beggars night. It was discussed that the church needs to look into holding another "Spring Shower" as we have held in the past. This event enables the church to save money by accepting specific donated items. Usually consisting of cleaning supplies, office supplies and items needed for Sunday school. We haven't held one since before the pandemic. We decided it is time to hold another one. Dana will head up this project. Volunteers to help with this project will be needed.

Terri Lamb provided the devotional. Our program consisted of filling 75 to 80 Blessing Bags that were filled for the local nursing home, Independent Living, and area shut ins.

Our next scheduled meeting will be **Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:30**. This will be our Christmas luncheon. All women of the church are invited to attend. We also would like to invite the women of the Chapel Peace and Lutheran churches. Please call Linda Schneider 319-610-3535 or Dana Brown 641-750-2219 to make a reservation. The kitchen committee for this luncheon will be Linda Schneider, Carolyn Moe, Avriel Koester and Dana Brown.

We will be setting up the committees for 2024. If you enjoy serving on a specific committee please let Dana know. She will have a sign up sheet at the luncheon.

Submitted by Joan Surber, secretary



The Gladbrook Methodist Messenger  
715 Lincoln Street  
Gladbrook, Iowa 50635



## DECEMBER WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

### **ACOLYTES**

Dec. 3 Clay Koester  
Dec. 10 Beau DeWitt  
Dec. 17 Tate Koester  
Dec. 24 Tate Williams  
Dec. 31 Beau DeWitt

### **PROJECTION**

Dec. 3 Jhona Lyn Gallo  
Dec. 10 Roger Luehring  
Dec. 17 Roger Luehring  
Dec. 24 Kyle Koester  
Dec. 31 Kyle Koester

### **LITURGISTS**

Dec. 3 Paul Koester  
Dec. 10 Roger Luehring  
Dec. 17 Richard Klinefelter  
Dec. 23 Sean Williams  
Dec. 24 Dave Koester  
Dec. 24 (Evening) Carolyn Moe  
Dec. 31 Lisa Koester

### **COMMUNION STEWARDS**

December 3- Scott & Kathy  
Vavroch

### **USHERS**

Jeff and Cheryl Bruene,  
Bob and Marcy Knaack

### **GREETERS**

Dec. 3  
Dec. 10 Dave & JoAnn Ruopp  
Dec. 17 Larry Pieper &  
Kristi Carlson family  
Dec. 24 Grant & Susie Strohbehn  
Dec. 31 Duane & Kari Groth

### **ADVENT READERS**

Dec. 3 Gallo Family  
Dec. 10 Children's Program  
Dec. 17 **Need a Volunteer**  
Dec. 24 **Need a Volunteer**

### **The Messenger**

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