

Grace Notes

December 2024

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of
Peace.
(Isaiah 9:6)*

December first marks the beginning of Advent. Advent is about fixing our eyes on King Jesus and keeping perspective. At a time when many in the world are anxious. At a time when many are anticipating joyful things and many others are anticipating not so joyful things, Advent reminds us that we have a firm foundation in King Jesus.

We do not put our confidence in the stability of an earthly government, program, or even a church. We put our confidence in the stability of King Jesus. Because Jesus was king yesterday. Jesus is king today, and no matter what happens, Jesus will be king tomorrow. Regardless of what is swirling around in our lives or in the world, we can stand steady in knowing who holds each of us in his loving embrace.

The thing about King Jesus is that he is always surprising people. He is always defying expectations. John 6 records that after Jesus performed the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, the people wanted to make Jesus their king.

The problem was that the people's agenda didn't line up with Jesus' agenda. They assumed that Jesus would rule with power and authority. Jesus had all the gifts and resources to meet all their needs and wants, but he was going to do that out of love for them and not through worldly powers. Jesus didn't come to this world to meet the expectations of others about what a king would be. He was going to love self-sacrificially. He would literally give himself up for the salvation of all.

Later in John, Jesus stands before Pilate as Pilate questions him. Jesus replies to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place" (John 18:36). Jesus defines his kingship by stating what it is not. He didn't come to do what the people thought the Messiah would come to do. He came to bring salvation but in a very different way.

My encouragement to each of us as we enter Advent and focus on King Jesus is to be careful not to put Jesus in a box and think that he is going to answer the problems in our lives and our world in a specific way. Jesus turns things upside down and does things in unexpected ways. He is all about self-sacrificial, other-oriented, enemy-embracing love. He comes under folks to lift them up. This is vastly different than what we often expect or think we want or need.

Think about it. Pray about it! I hope to worship with you this Advent and Christmas season.
Pastor Kevin

Phone: (785) 232-3333
Email: graceumc27@gmail.com
Office Hours: Tues. 11-4, Thurs. 11-3, Fri. 11-4

Sunday School: 9:30am
Worship: 10:45am

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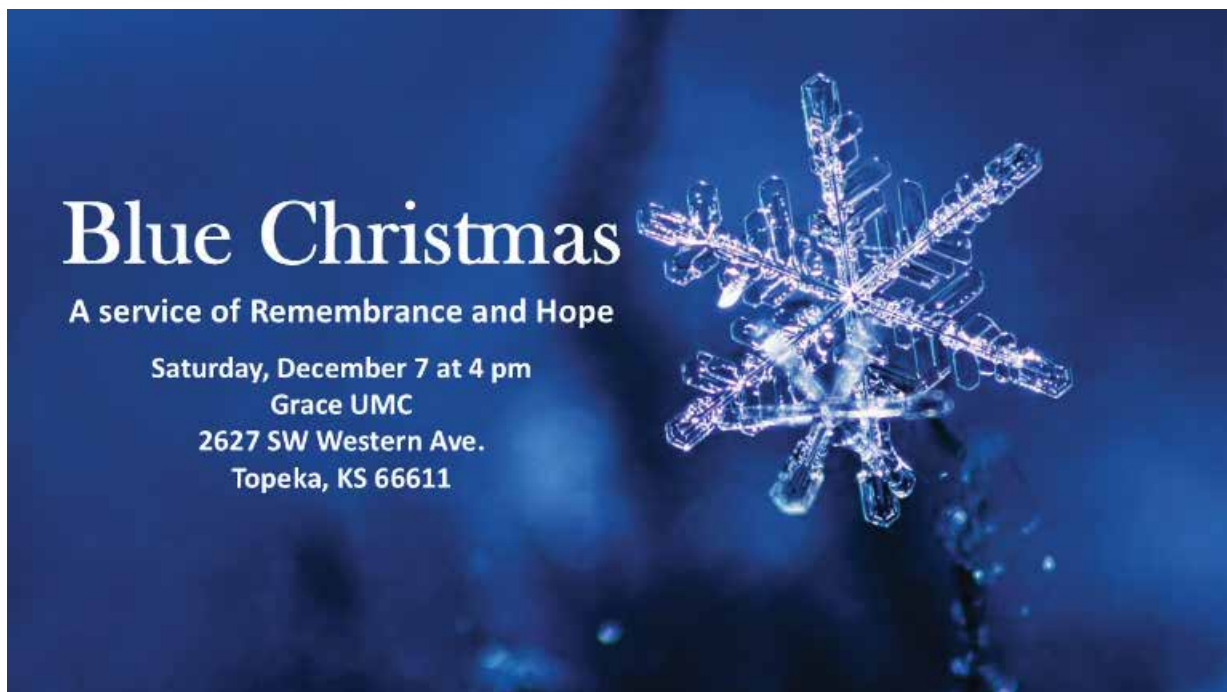
Announcements

Advent devotional booklets are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary. They begin on Monday, December 2nd and run from Monday-Saturday every week until Friday, December 27th.

If you're not able to pick up a physical copy, we will be posting the weekly devotional on our website www.graceumctopeka.org!

Blue Christmas

Saturday, December 7th @ 4pm



A Blue Christmas service is a time to acknowledge the “Blue” feelings we may have at Christmas time. It might be memories of past experiences or the pain of recent experiences. If you or someone you know is feeling “blue” this year, we welcome you to join us for this service.

The theme of this year’s service is “Everything has a Crack.” Through this service, we pray that every person finds hope and comfort in knowing that they are not alone.

Blissful Bonanza

Sunday, December 8th
After Worship - 12:00pm

This year we will have our cookie/candy exchange again! It will be held during fellowship time after worship on Sunday, December 8th.

We would like everyone to share your fun holiday cookies, candies, soup mixes, or homemade ornaments! Please plan to come & enjoy this annual festive event at our Blissful Bonanza.

If you have questions, please contact Angel Washington.

Birthday Gift for Jesus

During Advent, we will have envelopes available for you to give a "Birthday Gift to Jesus". The empty envelopes are on a tree in the foyer. The envelopes with your special offering should be placed in the offering plate.

These offerings will go toward our 2024 Mission Shares. This money is used in many ways: Great Plains Conference staff (Bishop Wilson, the DS's, etc); UMCOR; Great Plains Disaster Relief (Holly Tapley's team); Campus Ministries; Church Camps; New Church Starts (example: Cafe Quetzal); and a number of other ministries. Thank you from your Church Council!

Spaghetti Dinner Thank You

Our spaghetti dinner was a success! A huge thank you to Dave and Claire Roth, who spent countless hours preparing the delicious homemade meatballs, spaghetti sauce, and garlic bread. Thank you to the volunteers helping in various areas, donating desserts, and covering meal expenses.

We enjoyed having members from Crestview & Highland Park church join us and we served around 70. The donation basket raised \$531! Praise the Lord!

Crestview United Women in Faith Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, Dec. 14
from 9:30a-1:00p




Crestview United Methodist Church
2245 SW Eveningside Dr.
Topeka, KS 66614
785-272-3676



Cookie and Candy Corner
homemade treats - \$10 lb.

Crafts and Baked Goods
priced as marked

Soup and Sandwich Lunch
- 11:00 to 1:00 and
Freewill donation 

Soup with Sandwiches, Dessert & Drink

Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 24th
@ Crestview UMC

5:30pm - Christmas Music & Meditation
6:00pm - Candlelight Christmas Eve Service





Birthdays

Jordyn Hibbert	12/1
Matthew Hastings	12/2
Adam Wolf	12/2
Steven Iwig	12/6
Harry Stewart	12/25

Anniversaries

Harry & Leanna Stewart	12/21
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December Fellowship List

December 1st:	Hibbert Family
December 8th:	Blissful Bonanza
December 15th:	Claire & Dave Roth
December 22nd:	-----
December 29th:	Kerrie Bacon & Donna Freel

Please sign up any time! The sign up sheets are on the bulletin board next to the office.

Scripture Readings

December 1

Jer 33:14-16
Ps 25:1-10 (UMH 756)
1 Thess 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-36

December 8

Mal 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79 (UMH 208)
Phil 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

December 15

Zeph 3:14-20
Isa 12:2-6
Phil 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

December 22

Mic 5:2-5
Luke 1:46-55 (UMH 199)
Heb 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45

December 29

1 Sam 3:18-20, 26
Ps 148 (UMH 861)
Col 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

Holiday Scripture Readings

Christmas Eve

Isa 9:2-7
Ps 96 (UMH 815)
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

Christmas Day

Isa 52:7-10
Ps 98 (UMH 818)
Heb 1:1-4 (5-12)
John 1:1-14

New Years Eve

Eccl 3:1-13
Rs 8 (UMH 743)
Rev 21:1-6a
Matt 25:31-46

The deadline to submit information for the Grace Notes or calendar for January 2025 will be December 23rd. Anything submitted after that date won't be guaranteed a place. If there is an emergency addition please let the office know ASAP.

DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	3 4:00pm : Grace Circle - Annie's Place 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	4 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	5 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	6 6:30pm: NA - #3	7 4:00pm: Blue Christmas Service
8 12:00pm: Blissful Bonanza	9 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	10 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	11 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	12 9:30am: Coffee with the Pastor - Café Quetzal 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	13 6:30pm: NA - #3	14 9:30am - 1pm: Crestview UWIF Christmas Bazaar
15	16 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	17 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	18 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	19 9:00am: Senior Day Out 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	20 6:30pm: NA - #3	21
22	23 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	24 5:30pm: AA - Parlor 5:30pm: Christmas Eve Music & Meditation 6:00pm: Christmas Eve Service	25 5:30pm: AA - Parlor	26 5:45pm: Women AA - #3 6:00pm: TOPS - Parlor	27 6:30pm: NA - #3	28
29	30 12:00pm: AA - #3 7:30pm: NA - #3	31 5:30pm: AA - Parlor				