



Eagle Grove and Goldfield United Methodist Churches

Love God, Love Others, Change the World

“Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World”

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December 2022



The season of Advent, which comes from the Latin word *adventus* meaning "coming" or "visit," begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the beginning of the church year for Christians.

During Advent, we prepare for and anticipate the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for and need of forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning. Even as we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming.

The Advent wreath began as a German and Scandinavian home devotional practice used to mark the four weeks of Advent. Families would light a candle for each past week and the current week at their dinner or evening time of prayer. The configuration of candles, whether in a line or a circle, did not matter. Neither did the color of the candles (all colors are used in homes in Europe). What mattered was the marking of time and the increase of light each week in the face of increasing darkness as the winter solstice approached.

As Advent wreaths began to be used by congregations on Sundays in some places in Europe and America beginning in the late 19th century, several adaptations were made to make them work better in public worship spaces. Candles needed to be larger and more uniform than the "daily candles" handmade or purchased for home use. They also needed to be more uniform in color to fit with other décor in the sanctuary. That is why candles used in the Advent wreath to coordinate with color of the paraments used during this season. The blue of Advent is the color of hope.

Silent Night, Holy Night, sung on Christmas Eve as we hold lighted candles, has become the best-loved worship moment of many Christians — even those who only come to church once a year. Something mystical occurs as we light our candles and sing the hope of “all is calm, all is bright”.

This Advent season, we’ll celebrate the carol’s message over the entire season of Advent, exploring one verse each week as we light the candles on our wreath, and reflect on Scripture: *Sleep in Peace* (Peace) - *Glories Stream* (Joy), *Redeeming Grace* (Love), and *Let Us Sing* (Hope). Some ideas for your personal time of devotions are posted on the webpage under the newsletter link, available on the table in the entryway, or are included with this newsletter if you receive a copy in the mail.

We’ve set the chancel to be like a calm, bright night sky; a manger will hold items that can help the baby feel peace, joy, love and hope. Even though we won’t sing the carol until the “traditional time” at the close of Christmas Eve service, we can still feel its calming presence.

Advent invites all into a time of remembrance - recalling the activity of God and the response of humankind throughout the ages.

Come, Worship

Eagle Grove

Sundays – 9:30am
Christmas Eve – 7pm

Goldfield

Sundays – 11am
Christmas Eve – 5pm

Longest Night

Worship @6pm
Tue, Dec 20
@EGUMC
see article

Many thanks to those who are sharing a devotion on Dial A Devotion. We invite and encourage you to share a devotion with the community. Contact church office if you wish to be a part of this ministry.

Dial a Devotion December 2022

December 6—Sharon Seibert

December 13—Melody Amonson

December 20-- Sharon Seibert

December 27—Maggie Wright



Longest Night Service

The Winter Solstice brings the longest night of the year. At 6pm, Tuesday, December 20, UCC pastor Todd Edeker and I will lead an ecumenical service of candles, readings, music and quiet time here at EGUMC. All are invited.

In the midst of all the holiday celebrations, it's too easy to forget these times are not a happy for everyone.

Many struggle with darkness and grief as they're faced with living with loss. Dealing with the death of someone close, or the burden of caring for a loved one. Loss of a job, loss of health, an addiction. Oppressive financial difficulties, strained family relations, divorce or separation. Anxiety, fatigue. The list goes on and on. For many in our community, life is just hard, very hard.

For some, Christmas may simply bring up memories of a difficult and troubled past. Perhaps they have been unable to have a child, or have suffered through an emotional trauma. Or perhaps they feel pressured and overwhelmed by holiday preparations. And for some, they have been confronted with their own mortality, having been told that this may be their own last Christmas.

When your life has been turned upside down by these or other circumstances, the last thing you feel like doing is singing with the angels. It's all too easy to think we ought to just put aside our problems and troubles. In reality there are often many who are hurting or in pain, living in turmoil. Even candles, poinsettias, laughter and joy don't make things easier.

This service will create a safe and sacred space. Gathering together just a few days before Christmas, we can recognize that Jesus came to offer hope, even as we struggle day-to-day. You may know someone who would like to come, perhaps one unchurched, or angry at God, feeling hurt. Tell them about this service; consider coming with them. The power of presence is amazing. —*Pastor Alaire*

Fellowship Coffee—

Share your goodies after church service! Contact office 515-448-4701 or Sharon 515-293-2599



December office schedule

Tue, Dec 6, 13 and 20...open 10-11:30

Closed Thursday, Dec 22 – Mon, January 2. Emails and calls will not be answered. Amy will be on vacation 12/24-1/2.

Contact Pat Manues or Del Crees in case of an emergency.

Pastor Alaire will be on vacation 12/25 until 1/7. Del, Pat and/or Amy will have emergency contact info for pastoral care during this time away.

-The January newsletter will be sent the week of January 10. Email any info you have to the EGUMC office by 1/5.

Worship Updates

--**Christmas Day** worship will be shared by our Iowa Conference Cabinet and staff. The online link will be sent the week before, and posted on Facebook. You will be able to watch with your family at a convenient time.

--There will be NO in-house worship on **December 25** or **January 1**.

--**January 8**, we will begin 2023 with the Wesley Covenant Worship Service and Communion.

--Beginning **December 11**, we will resume passing the offering plates during the service, as well as having them by the elevator and stairs. Remember you can send your tithes and offerings via www.tithe.ly Including the processing fee is appreciated.

Wednesday afterschool schedule:

Dec 7, 2-5pm...K-4, middlers meet
5:15...confirmation

Dec 14, 2-5pm...K-4, middlers meet
5:15...Family Night. (no separate confirmation class)

We'll take a holiday break, resuming Wed, Jan 18 (because of school schedule) with both afterschool and confirmation.

The Chrismos that adorn our sanctuary tree were begun in about 1968, and they repaired 10 years later. Thanks to all those who gave countless hours (and likely many sore fingers) including Dianne Ellsworth, Betty Wilde, Marilyn Helmick, Gloria Becker, Cheryl Jacobsen, Mary Derscheid and members of the Ruth Circle. Beautiful work!



**SPIRIT-FILLED FAMILY NIGHT
EVERYONE IN THE WHOLE
CHURCH FAMILY
INVITED!!!**

Wed, Dec 14, 5:15-6:15pm

Chili supper, carol singing and the Christmas story presented in an unforgettable way!

Free will offering bucket will be out.

TIA for your generosity!

Mark your calendars for Family 5th Quarter, Sunday late afternoon, Feb 5. Pizza and games!

Eagle Grove UMC

egumc@goldfieldaccess.net

515-448-4701

Goldfield UMC

goldumc@goldfieldaccess.net

515-825-3754

Eagle Grove Office open Tuesdays from 10:00 am-11:30 am

Dial a Devotion 515-448-3355

Sermon by phone– 515-212-2802

One of the best things about **#Being UMC** is the abundance of connections that help us be in mission – globally and in our conference, as well as here in town, outside our building. We can look back over 2022 and give thanks, not to boast, but to comprehend the possibilities we've created!

GLOBALLY WE GAVE HELP... \$7800+

Church World Service received **\$1000**. This will purchase 100 blankets, sent where there's need.

In the spring, we collected over **\$1500** worth of clothing that was sent to help **Ukrainian refugees**. Through "connections", we utilized a "real person"; we know things will get to the right places.

Late August had us hosting a **Meal Packing Event**, through Midwest Mission, a UMC connected depot that works directly with multiple global agencies for relief work. In under 4 hours, volunteers from EGUMC, Goldfield UMC, and several other UMCs created 2025 bags. Each bag feeds 6 people. The cost of \$2/bag, was covered by several congregations. EGUMC gave about **\$1000** towards the \$4050 bill, and donated the lunch for the workers.

Fall saw us creating 111 Personal Dignity Kits, 113 School Kits and 12 Quilts of Love for the annual Ingathering. Those items valued just under **\$3600**, and we added **\$730** to finish and process them. Whew!

THROUGH THE IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE...\$2200+

Recovery work after spring storms was aided by **\$225**.

Camping is an integral part of conference outreach. We gave **\$500** for upkeep and maintenance, and perhaps more importantly, we helped 13 of our youth have a life-changing experience attending camp, giving over **\$2000** for camperships to defray costs (up to \$200/camper). More amazing – we raised about **\$4000** through a Bake Sale and lunch...and better yet, almost all those campers are already thinking about next summer's camp!

LOCAL SHARING MAKES AN IMPACT...

A list (likely incomplete!):

DSAC (shelter in Ft Dodge for victims of sexual abuse) - \$100

No Child Hungry (food packs for kids to help over school breaks) - \$500

Share Christmas - \$500

Meals on Wheels - \$400

Cover unpaid lunch balances (in high school) - \$500

After-prom - \$100

Fire Dept safety education for kids - \$90

Financial help to families – at least \$500, probably more!

We've also given **\$2800+** and an **unknown number** of gently-used pieces of winter gear to the Eagle Grove Area Ministerial Association's **Closet** project to help families with clothing for school-age kids. Over 900 items, including 100+ coats, 100 pairs of boots, and about 60 pairs of snow pants will help kids from about 65 families stay warm and dry this winter.

Where did this money come from? You and your mission support gifts, and your support of the hard work of the United Women of Faith and their fund-raising meals.

Where did this money NOT come from? Your giving to the church budget! Budgeted expenses are the week-in, week-out bills (and they are many, and yes, they're going up!). Giving to mission projects is ALL above and beyond our budget! The list doesn't include VBS or Afterschool – they're on-going programs that are really part of general giving to the church so we can do our "work" inhouse of making disciples.

Our mission giving is directed and dedicated to being the hands of Jesus in this world, doing the work spoken of in the Gospels. The joy of mission giving is that you are reaching out, beyond self, and building God's kingdom here on earth, one blanket, one pencil, one meal at a time. **Thank you, Thank YOU, THANK YOU!** And what's really great about this list...I know it's incomplete. It's also un-completed, and you all live into that. God bless you. May we keep making a difference. –Pastor Alaire