

United Church

December 2023

## Christmas Program

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

The Christmas program will be on Sunday, December 17th during the worship time. Bells will also be playing, as well as an accordion!



There will be two Services on Christmas Eve. Morning worship service at 9:30 am and then the candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 5:00pm.

# ADVENT

A SEASON OF SURPRISES



GOD IS SPIRIT,  
AND THOSE **WHO**  
**WORSHIP HIM**  
MUST WORSHIP  
IN SPIRIT  
AND **TRUTH.**

*John 4:24*

ALL OF MY *Life*  
**IN EVERY SEASON**  
YOU ARE  
**STILL GOD**  
*I have a reason TO SING*  
I HAVE A  
**REASON TO** *worship*

**There's no  
greater act of  
WORSHIP  
than giving  
GOD**



## YOUTH WORSHIP NIGHT

The youth will be holding a worship night on Thursday, December 28, 2023. Be watching in the bulletin for more information.

### FAMILY SPOTLIGHT—MICHAEL & MARGARET WHITE



Hello, my name is Michael White, and my mother's name is Margaret White. I have two younger siblings, one brother, Nathan (41), and one sister, Alison (36). My brother and I are single and neither of us have children. My sister is married and has two children, one boy, Remington (8), and one girl, Meredith (5). Alison, Ryan, and the kids live in Onawa, IA. Meredith is in preschool and Remington is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

My mother is retired, and she likes to spend time baking and watching some of her favorite tv shows. She enjoys to see her grandkids, too. I enjoy some reading, am a big sports fan, and doing some cooking and baking.

We started attending the United Church a few years after my father (Larry White) passed away in 1992. I was confirmed in the church in 1997, and was baptized in 2000. I am a member of the choir, bell choir, and I serve on the Christian Education committee. I am involved as one of the children's leaders in the Shine, program, too. I also church as the church custodian.

We've been part of the Canistota community since I was three. Canistota will always be home to us. We love being a part of this community.

## PASTOR'S CORNER

When our oldest daughter, Alina, was three years old when she offered her first solo prayer. It happened during our nightly bedtime ritual. As was custom, my wife or I would read a book to her, tuck her into bed, recite our memorized prayer, and she would drift off to sleep. One night, though, as I was tucking her into bed she said, "I want to say my own prayer tonight." I obliged, and she began. For the next 6-7 minutes she proceeded to give thanks for each item in her room. With eyes wide open, and gratitude in her heart, she named purple clothes hangers, pictures of grandma and grandpa, fuzzy socks, and her giant Nemo stuffy, to name a few. I was caught between the sweetness of the moment and the angst of her potentially delaying bedtime. When she exhausted all the objects in her room, she said "amen," and gave me a high five. Content with her first solo prayer she peacefully drifted off to sleep.

As my wife and I over-analyzed our daughter's prayer later that night, we wondered if it was perhaps an invitation for us to notice what we overlook. Honestly, it never once crossed my mind to give thanks for clothes hangers or stuffed animals. But perhaps I should. After all, a blessing is simply something, or someone, that I can trace back to as a source of my wellbeing, peace, or joy. Frankly, clothes hangers do make life a bit easier.

As we enter this sacred season of Advent, may you and I continue to discover all for which we have to give thanks, and offer words of gratitude for the things that may get overlooked.

"O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever." – 1 Chronicles 16:34 (NRSV)

In Christ,

Pastor Jerry Bertelson

**Reminder—Youth Mission Trip forms are due  
December 15th!**

**The mission trip youth will be hosting a  
fundraiser during fellowship time on  
December 17th.**

## ANNUAL MEETING

### Mark Your Calendar!

Our annual church meeting will be on January 28, 2024.

We will have a potluck right after worship and then go right into our annual meeting.

All of the chairpeople for each committee please start talking to your committee and pick a delegate and an alternate. Also please start working on your annual reports! Thank you!

Mary is the new Eve, and in her trust, offers a new way of being.

Eve says, let me have it. Mary says, let it be.

Eve came from Adam, But the new Adam, came from the new Eve.

- Rich Villodas



A black poster for a New Year's Eve event. At the top, there are several colorful fireworks in shades of red, orange, and yellow. The text 'You're Invited' is in a white serif font. Below it, 'New Year's Eve Fun!' is written in a large, bold, white serif font. The event details are listed in a smaller white font: 'Dec. 31st ~ 8:30 pm - 12:30 pm', 'Games, snacks, movie, &amp; ball drop on tv', 'Meet at United Church of Canistota', and 'All are welcome!'. There are more fireworks at the bottom corners.

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PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE