This Week at HOPE February 24, 2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

A MESSAGE FROM LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE ON TEXAS RELIEF EFFORTS

"*I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth*" (Psalm 121:1-2).

The last year has been full of changes and challenges for all of us. Now we are again witnessing a devastating disaster amid the ongoing pandemic. As neighbors in Christ, we have an opportunity to share God's hope, healing and renewal with each other.

Beginning Feb. 14, a polar vortex descended over the United States. Subfreezing temperatures and heavy snow swept across the country, impacting millions of people. The harsh conditions severely impacted Southern states, such as Texas, which lack the infrastructure to handle the freezing temperatures and record-setting snow and ice. This has led to power, food and water shortages throughout the region. At its peak, 4.5 million homes and businesses in Texas were without power. With bursting pipes and broken water systems, around 10 million Texans are facing water disruptions. As temperatures rise, melting ice and snow is expected to cause more water damage.

Lutheran Disaster Response is collaborating with the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, the Southwestern Texas Synod, the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, and Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response. Congregations are already conducting relief efforts such as supplying water, food and generators to those in need and opening their doors to serve as shelters. Long-term recovery may include repairing water-damaged homes, disaster case management and supporting vulnerable populations.

GIVE TO LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE FOR TEXAS RELIEF

Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support for those whose lives have been impacted by severe winter storms and subfreezing temperatures in Texas. Doing this we reflect Christ's light and hope to our neighbors in their time of need. For updates on this and other disasters, follow Lutheran Disaster Response on Facebook.

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Wednesdays @ 6:30 on ZOOM
Meeting ID: 842 1690 1030
Passcode: 198284
Sundays @ 9:30 on YouTube

Lent is traditionally a contemplative span of 40 days (not counting Sundays) when we strip things down and re-center ourselves on Jesus, practice repentance of the things which have turned us from God, and remind ourselves of the work of discipleship. We trust that God speaks to us anew in this season each year. It is a season where we are intentional about connecting to the Divine in a deeper way.

This Lent will also mark a full year of pandemic living and in many ways, our whole year has felt like Lent. Perhaps this year has afforded you opportunity to re-center your own lives on what has been important, or forced you to strip away layers of busy-ness to notice different gifts in your midst. So this year, we will take a pause to intentionally explore how God has used and is using this time to re-open us to God and our neighbor! Each Wednesday evening will serve as the interactive kick-off point for each week's theme. Sundays will provide more personal reflection space on the same theme.

To aid you in your Lenten experience, the Worship Ministry has assembled WONDERFUL Lent-At-Home kits! They are designed to partner with the included devotional and have materials to help you connect each week:

- Week 2 (Feb 24 &28): Open My Eyes, Lord
- Week 3 (Mar 3 & 7): Open My Hands, Lord
- Week 4 (Mar 10 & 14): Open My Ears, Lord
- Week 5 (Mar 17 & 21): Open My Mouth, Lord
- Week 6 (Mar 24 &28): Open My Life, Lord

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This Lent, we pray, "***Open My Life, Lord!"*** Jesus comes to us in new ways to break open our very lives for the sake of our neighbor. These acts of service strive to help us learn about various ways to serve our community anew.

The Mission Ministry has planned weekly activities during this Lenten season for members of HOPE to practice repentance serving.

- On February 17th Jesus will ***Open Our Hearts*** - by the faithful act of repentance during Ash Wednesday worship and an opening of our hearts to the weeks ahead.
- ***On February 24th*** *Jesus will* ***Open Our Eyes*** *- by hearing about the Lions Club glasses collection and encouraging donations of glasses in the our Lion's bin.*
- On March 3rd Jesus will ***Open Our Hands*** - by hearing about 2 different service projects in our area by Habitat for Humanity. We will also be collecting gloves at HOPE.
- On March 10th Jesus will ***Open Our Ears*** - to a conversation with a Pierce County Restorative Services representative. We will hear about ways to volunteer/donate to various programs at that time.
- On March 17th Jesus will ***Open Our Mouths -*** with a Criminal Justice emphasis by collecting donations ($10 each) to purchase "Hear My Voice: A Prison Prayer Book" to donate to a local jail/prison.
- On March 24th Jesus will ***Open Our Lives*** - by emphasizing ways to donate blood/ plasma.

We will introduce these opportunities every Wednesday during Lent and further reinforce these themes on Sundays. We encourage everyone to prayerfully consider how you can participate.

We will grow together in our understanding of and practice of repentance serving as we journey through Lent toward gratefulness for our RISEN LORD!

Refractive errors can be easily corrected with eyeglasses, yet millions living in low and middle income countries lack access to basic eye care services. Lions have recognized the urgent need for corrective lenses and collect usable glasses in their communities to support the Lions Recycle For Sight Program.

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Listening Our Way Through Lent

As I prepare my spirit for this Lent, I have found my soul longing to connect through music. I suppose it's because I'm longing to have all of your beautiful voices surround me again. Your voices carry the very voice of God to me, and I miss that. I figure I am not alone.

Music is absolutely devotional. It opens us in ways that even the most powerful written scripture or proclaimed sermon cannot. If your soul is longing for this kind of connection right now too, then allow me to share the following 3 beautiful playlists with you. These are from Spotify (but you do not need to have a paid account to listen!). Some of the songs on them are also included as listening suggestions in your "Open My Life, Lord" devotional.

The first two lists are somewhat similar and provide a mix of hymns, contemporary Christian songs, and other non-Christian music that lifts up Lenten themes of journeying, stillness, quiet, and wilderness.

The final list is Gregorian Chant. These are not Lenten-specific chants, but all chanting rooted in the Christian tradition. If you don't have an understanding of Latin, you can listen and still be moved. I encourage you to check out this style before or after your own daily devotion time to serve you in centering prayer (seriously give it a shot, you will be surprised at how it moves you).

Playlist 1: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1SHwpXzolqZzYxd5lOCwrk?si=66df35ea5465451a

Playlist 2: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6K1aQJXz0GNJXJYSZYBhFs?si=14c3a28eaed94fa7

Playlist 3: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5dEIAWS7FNY5ZKMKPHSQkw?si=5921ab649c6c498e

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent – self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love – strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Leaders Desk Edition)

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The 1st Sunday of each month at HOPE LUTHERAN is River Falls Food Pantry Sunday!

Every $1 donation equals $5 of food purchase power!
IT'S MAGIC!

The need for food and basic household items continues to be great in our community. You may be wondering what happened to Jim Pratt's MAGIC BOX? COVID-19 social distancing has temporary sidelined the box. But the magic is still there by donating the following ways:

Items to Donate:
Meal kits that include all the ingredients
Pancake or muffin mix that only requires water
Canned soups, pasta, and meat
Baking supplies (flour, sugar, oil, shortening, baking soda/powder, vanilla extract)
Seasonings of all kinds (garlic, pepper, salt, chili powder)
Rice and beans
Cereal
Feminine hygiene products
Baby diapers and wipes
Paper products (toilet paper, paper towel, facial tissue)

To donate cash online via HOPE: http://www.hopelutheranrf.com/giveonline/ and select River Falls Food Pantry or mail/drop off a check with "Food Pantry" in the memo line to Hope.

Curbside Pickup and Drop Off Hours at River Falls Food Pantry (weather permitting)

Monday:	10 -12 noon & 6- 7:30
Wednesday:	1-5 pm
Thursday:	6-7:30 pm
Friday:	10-12 noon

RFC FOOD PANTRY CONTACT INFORMATION: PHONE: 715-425-6880,
EMAIL: INFO@RFCFP.ORG, **PHYSICAL LOCATION:** 705 ST. CROIX ST., RIVER FALLS, 54022,
MAILING ADDRESS: PO BOX 341, RIVER FALLS, WI 54022

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WHO: EVERYONE! Family, friends and neighbors!

WHAT: Enjoy a winter snowshoe/hike around our luminary-lit pond followed by a hot cocoa and cookie pick-up in Winds of the Spirit afterward!

WHEN: Saturday, February 27, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

WHERE: HOPE *Winds of the Spirit* & Pond trail

WHY: A safe & family friendly activity during this socially distant time, chance to see & connect, get some exercise, and enjoy the beauty of nature at nighttime!

Please wear a mask and stay socially distanced from other families.

(Thank You in advance!)

SUNDAY MORNING ZOOM FORUM
CONTINUES THROUGH FEBRUARY!
Holding Space Together:
Entering in Civic Discussion Faithfully

In June of 2020, the ELCA published a social message on the rather timely and pertinent topic: Government and Civic Engagement in the Unites States: Discipleship in a Democracy. This forum is a 4 week discussion series on this social message, utilizing ELCA prepared resources. In preparation for our time together, I encourage you to read the full message! **This Sunday we will discuss pages 14-17!**
You can access that document and download it for your own study here:
ELCA Social Message on Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy
There is also a full participant's Study Guide we will use for our conversation.You can download that here: Social Message Study Guide
You are invited **to hold space together on this each Sunday in February at 10:45AM via Zoom**.
Join Zoom Meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87242470037?pwd=NDJKZ3l6NE5XQ3luNVJESEtKRXdtQT09
Meeting ID: 872 4247 0037
Passcode: 413427
One tap mobile

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WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS!

If you are interested in helping to make our Sunday LIVESTREAM worship possible, we'd love to incorporate your gifts! Pastor Annie is still looking for readers/prayer leaders for the next 4 weeks and we are always open to others willing to learn the A/V technology! Check out THIS GOOGLE DOC to sign-up to help!

Coffee & Faithful Conversation

Join Pastor Annie and others every Tuesday morning at 11AM for "Coffee & Faithful Conversation." This time has proved to be incredibly fruitful as many of us remain socially distanced from others. We spend time each week checking in on one another and engaging a series of faith-based questions/topics as we grow in faith together!

So brew your own cup and join us via Zoom meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/424556345?pwd=TllRQTlKY1dDdkkvK3RHdnl6a0Jjdz09

Meeting ID: 884 1915 5061

Passcode:593674

JOURNEY HOUSE BOARD NEEDS

Board Members and Treasurer needed! The Journey House Board is looking for a few good people to join the board after this spring. If you are interested in the overall success and wellness of students at UW-River Falls or CVTC in River Falls, please think about serving them and the wider community as a board member. If you think that role is right for you, start by talking to your pastor or members of your congregational leadership. **Right now, there is a more urgent need for a treasurer to help with financial oversight and record-keeping**. Please contact Deacon David at journeyhouse-campusministry@gmail.com or 715.425.2391 for more information.

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John Coughlin Food & Resource Center

FREE Food Distribution

(COVID Food Assistance Program)

Open to all households that are in need!

February 25, 2021
March 25, 2021
April 22, 2021

11am – 1pm
(while supplies last)

Pierce County Fairgrounds
364 N Maple St Ellsworth, WI.
East entrance

Each household will receive:
1 large box of assorted food items

second harvest HEARTLAND

HUNGER PREVENTION COUNCIL
PIERCE COUNTY

ST. CROIX VALLEY FOOD BANK

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Please lift up the following people in prayer

Jim & Judy Vitale (friends of Dick & Carolyn Jackson)
Kathy Anderson (Karen Brohaugh's sister-in-law)
Dave Hallquist (Friend of Bill Montgomery)
Kris Miner (Friend of Faye Perkins)
Roger Hammer's Family (Friend of Bill Montgomery)
Candy Simpson (Cameron Shea's aunt)
Barb Grubba (friend of Naomi & Jerry Brandt)
Lee Hill (friend of Naomi & Jerry Brandt)
Duane Hall (friend of the Brohaughs)
Judy Karshbaum
Susan Traynor (Friend of Kathy Scott)
Carol Moenke
Gary Siebold
Oak Reile (Nancy Sailer's Cousin)
David Hendrickson
Rev. Tommy Lineberger (friend of Pastor Annie)
Jim and Ila June Pratt
Bud Ziebarth (Mark's father)
Jerry Brandt
Lisa Sigfrids (relative of the Boocks)
James Glaubitz
Jon Boyce
Jay and Jeri Jorgenson (friends of the Bohnerts)
Marilyn & Fred Schmidt (Darcy Boock's sister-in-law)
Steve & Beth Pugh (friends of Karen & Jeff Rodewald)
Rod Cina (son of Mary Solum)

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February Birthdays

Name	Birth Date
Bill Montgomery	04-Feb
Gwen Paulson	05-Feb
Susie Rudesill	05-Feb
Lisa Ziebarth	07-Feb
Michelle Hansen	10-Feb
Kyle Rudesill	10-Feb
Teresa Ginn	11-Feb
Connie Kurten	11-Feb
Dan Wunrow	15-Feb
Mischa Carlson	15-Feb
Ryan Leitch	19-Feb
Diane Clark	20-Feb
Paul Perkins-McIntosh	21-Feb
Nikida Sandberg	22-Feb
Ryan Brill	23-Feb
Charles Eaton	24-Feb
Richard Jackson	25-Feb
Rosemary Nelson	25-Feb
Michael Hansen	26-Feb
Eric Rydland	27-Feb
Meghan Malaney	27-Feb
Darcy Boock	28-Feb
Craig Olson	28-Feb
Jody Rahn	28-Feb

February Baptisms

Cecelia Bernard
Grete Rebein

This Week at HOPE February 17, 2021

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Bakken-Young
Funeral & Cremation Services

Bakken-Young Funeral & Cremation Services sponsors a virtual six-week grief support group for adults who are grieving the death of a loved one. We ask that you participate in all 6 sessions, if possible.

Bakken-Young Grief Support Group meets
Mondays, 6:00-7:00pm
Jan. 25, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, March 1, 2021

This group will meet via Zoom meetings.

Anyone is welcome to participate in the group and the sessions are free.

Group Facilitator:
Julia Rajtar, M.A.P.S., BCC, Grief Support Specialist
Bakken-Young Grief Support Coordinator

To register please rsvp by Jan. 24, with your name, phone number and email at: julia.rajtar@bakken-young.com
For more information, call or text Julia at 715-781-4003.

Visit "Grief Support" at www.bakken-young.com
for additional groups and other grief support resources
or join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/bakkenyoung

Where should I get the COVID-19 Vaccine?

Local Health Care Provider

Many providers in the area have vaccine. Please contact your healthcare provider first.

Organization and location	Websites	Phone Numbers
Allina Health River Falls	https://www.allinahealth.org/	715-307-6600
Hudson Physicians Hudson	https://hudsonphysicians.com/	715-531-6800
Mayo Clinic Red Wing	MN Vaccine Scheduling Website: https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/find-vaccine/index.jsp	651-267-5000
Stillwater Medical Group Stillwater	MN Vaccine Scheduling Website: https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/find-vaccine/index.jsp	651-439-1234
Vibrant Health River Falls	https://www.vibranthealthclinics.com/	715-425-6701
Western Wisconsin Health Baldwin	https://www.wwhealth.org/	715-684-1111
Westfield Hospital & Clinic New Richmond	https://www.westfieldshospital.com/	715-243-3400

Pierce County Public Health

Clinics are targeted for people over the age of 65 who are unable to get a vaccine through their regular doctor.

Make an Appointment **Online:** https://piercecountycovid19vaccine.as.me/
or Call: 715-307-9567 Monday-Friday, 8:30AM-4:30PM

PIERCE COUNTY Public Health

This Week at HOPE February 17, 2021

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Holy Communion in the Time of Pandemic

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes…
For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body
eats and drinks judgment on himself…
So then, my brothers when you come together to eat, wait for one another"
1 Corinthians 11:26, 29,33

As we make the difficult, but faithful choice to worship from home in care of our neighbor at this time, we acknowledge that this time is mostly unprecedented. There is no scripture that specifically guides us on how to celebrate the Eucharist during a pandemic! So we lean on a few things to faithfully guide us: what scripture *does* say, how Christian history, our theology, and those who have navigated similar situations in the past can inform us, and where the Holy Spirit is leading us.

For the last few months I have spent time in prayerful consideration and study about how best to move forward with our celebration of Eucharist in the midst of a pandemic. I have listened to the guidance of our synodical and national leadership and wrestled with my own theology of the sacraments. As Lutherans, we confess that it is necessary to be gathered together as the body of Christ to celebrate this Holy Meal. In my ordination vows as a minister of word and sacrament, I promised to nourish God's people with the word and sacraments and to hold the celebration of our sacraments "in good order." In the Lutheran church we have two sacraments: Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. These are always celebrated in the context of our Christian community, except for in the case of an extraordinary circumstance, such as a hospitalization or other crisis. **It is within *this* framework of understanding that I feel we can faithfully move to the celebration of in-home communion while we gather for worship until further notice. This means there will no longer be drive-thru communion during cold months.**

This is absolutely an extraordinary circumstance, and as we enter our ninth month of pandemic living, we are called to make some extraordinary adaptations. As we do so, we trust that Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, is faithfully present with us across time and space to unite us from our many tables into one body with Him. We trust that God welcomes and affirms any attempt of ours to gather in Christ's name to worship and glorify our creator and redeemer. We trust that God IS present, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in our online spaces. Christ *does* join us as we livestream on YouTube or share in holy conversation via Zoom, or learn together via webinars. That is just as equally holy space, as our physical sanctuary. And we also acknowledge this is an extraordinary way to celebrate the Eucharist in an extraordinary time, **so in faithful hope, we commit to our return to one table together when it is safe to do so, marking that we are *not* normally called to celebrate communion, apart.**

PASTOR ANNIE INVITES YOU TO:

1. Make preparations for the celebration of Holy Communion from your at-home worship space. *This means, not waiting until Sunday morning, but engaging in a spiritual practice of giving this thought ahead of time*. If you need to purchase something, please do.
2. Please have *actual* bread or crackers ready.
3. Please have *actual* wine or fruit juice ready.
4. Please remember this is a holy meal, so we eat of the bread and drink of the cup in reverence, remembering the night in which he was betrayed…
5. At the appropriate time in the livestreamed worship, lift up the elements with Pastor Annie during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. If gathered with others, serve one another the bread and wine. If gathered solo, know that your Christian community celebrates this meal with you in Spirit.
6. If you still prefer an in-home communion visit from your pastor, I am happy to do so (distanced and masked). Do not hesitate to make this request!

Now, come to the banquet, for all is now ready!