Join us for a meaningful and meditative worship experience centered on the story of what happened after the Last Supper. Join Peter, Peter's wife, Judas, and Jesus at the campfire as they share their stories.

In the event of strong winds, we will worship in Winds of the Spirit, with the fire of our imaginations. This is an outdoor experience, so dress for the weather. Please bring a camp chair if you have one! Masks are required!

You are invited to immerse yourself in the experience of Holy Week this year in a variety of ways. While most of our options remain virtual as we tend to our unvaccinated neighbors, there are a few options for in-person gathering as well. It is our prayer that this Holy Week helps you to connect with Jesus in new ways and to be transformed by the power of His Resurrection!

Maundy Thursday, April 1st:
2 options:
1. **An interactive Zoom worship** (6:30pm) includes celebration of Holy Communion, the traditional reading of Psalm 22, and stripping of the altar.

Maundy Thursday around the Campfire (7:30PM) focuses on what happens *after* the Last Supper. We'll hear from Judas, Peter, Peter's wife, and Jesus.This experience involves gathering around the campfire, storytelling, and a special liturgy of confession, forgiveness, and Holy Communion. Masks are required and social distancing will be practiced.

Good Friday, April 2nd:
Join us on YouTube at 7PM for a meaningful telling of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. This service will be done in partnership with Pastor Lucas Ladnier of Our Savior's Lutheran, Beldenville.

Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 3rd:
For those interested in an Easter Vigil experience, you are invited to join Our Savior's Lutheran, Beldenville for their day-long virtual vigil, ending in an in-person gathering at 7:30PM at the church. For more information go to: www.oursaviorschurch.info

Easter Sunday, April 4th: 2 Options
1. **Sunrise Worship 7AM -** A brief, outdoor, in person gathering to celebrate the Resurrected Jesus! This is a favorite for many, complete with live brass and plenty of Alleluias! Masks are required and social distancing will be practiced.
2. **Full Easter Morning Worship 9:30AM Livestream on YouTube-** Service will include live brass, our gorgeous Easter garden, interactive children's message, beautiful music, Holy Communion, and again, plenty of Alleluias! Make sure to share our YouTube page with friends and family! (www.youtube.com/c/hopelutheranriverfalls)

This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

A Message From Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

Crosses We Don't Choose[1]

Then Jesus told them, "… take up their cross and follow me." Matthew 16:24b

Dear Members and Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

My friend Julie's mom had dementia. Julie picked up that cross and carried it as her beloved mother faded away. Paul was in second grade when he was diagnosed with diabetes. It was a cross he would carry for the rest of his life. Erica's drug addiction was a cross she and her family carried for years until she found sobriety. They were all crosses they didn't choose.

Jesus carried his cross on the road to his crucifixion. Along the way he falls, and a man named Simon of Cyrene[2] is forced to pick up Jesus' cross and carry it the rest of the way to Calvary. Simon was most likely a reluctant cross bearer. Most of us are reluctant cross bearers. We don't choose the pain or suffering we've been dealt, and yet we carry the load. We don't choose to carry another person's cross when they are too weak to carry it themselves, but we are at times compelled by love to do so.

This month marks the one year anniversary of the pandemic. It is a cross that we've all carried to one degree or another. For some it has been an inconvenience and for others a heavy burden of suffering and profound grief. Theologically there is no way to put a positive spin on the coronavirus or 2020. It has been a cross we didn't choose. The strain of carrying this cross is evident in our country and congregations. We are all weary of it.

On Palm/Passion Sunday and Good Friday we are drawn into the story of Jesus' arrest, trial, and death. We walk alongside him in the crowd as he carries his cross, our cross, compelled by love. We walk with a suffering Jesus straining under the weight of this cross, stumbling, falling, getting back up and finally letting go, letting another carry it. Jesus knew pain in his human body, and so Jesus knows our every weakness. Jesus himself was beaten, knew suffering and was unable to carry the weight this cross. He falls to the ground under the weight of his love for us.

As a church we invite others to walk in the way of Jesus knowing that they are carrying crosses they didn't choose for themselves. We invite others to walk in the way of Jesus because as a community of faith we shoulder the burden and carry it all together. We help another carry their cross out of love. We are Simon of Cyrene.

Maybe that is what this past year has taught us; that we need each other; we aren't alone. We've been isolated, quarantined, but not alone. We can't take our congregations for granted. We need our faith communities and the relationships with other believers because we can't carry our own crosses. We follow the way of Jesus together bearing our neighbor's crosses out of love.

It is in the cross that Jesus carried and on which he was crucified that we can know the love of God and salvation. This is Luther's Theology of the Cross. It is in the crosses that we as a community of faith carry together as we follow in the way of Jesus that we too see and know the love God.

Dear friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, I am grateful for you, that during the pandemic, we were able to walk in the way of Jesus together. May you each know the joy of Easter! Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed.

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

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[1] Inspired by an article titled Crosses we don't choose in March 10, 2021 Christian Century by Debie Thomas
[2] Simon of Cyrene Matthew 27:32

This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

Pastor Annie on Vacation!

Pastor Annie will be out of the office from Monday, April 5-Sunday, April 11th. Please contact the church office with any questions. Enjoy Holy Humor Sunday, on April 11th with guest preacher, Rev. Samantha Johnson, all the way from Spain! Worship is set for 9:30 on YouTube

For Pastoral Care emergencies, please call
Rev. Kim Suhr: 715-821-6398. Pastor Kim serves Trinity Lutheran in Hammond.

EASTER GARDEN

There is still time to contribute to our 2021 Easter Garden! You are invited to bring in your offering of flowers and plants by 10AM THIS Saturday, April 3!

(Unfortunately, we can no longer accept memoriam/honor requests).

This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

HOPE's Communication Ministry has been working on a new logo for us. Shown below are the rough drafts we are leaning towards. The differences are the ELCA depiction and the color scheme. Gray scale is shown as well. If you have any comments please contact anyone on the Communication Ministry team. If you need a specific contact, please email Keith Getschel at keithgetschel@gmail.com

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This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

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!

2021 Lent Mission Projects You Can STILL Donate Through Easter!

- Donations of used eyeglasses for River Falls Lions (donation bin at church)
- Work gloves for Habitat (donation bin at church)
- Direct donations to St. Croix Valley Restorative Services: **https://restorativeservices.org/give/**
- *Hear My Voice: A Prison Prayer Book* **$10.00 donations to HOPE** memo line "HOPE LENT PRISON PROJECT. Books will be donated to Pierce County Jail and Stillwater Prison after Easter.

This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity®

Please let us know if you would like to sign up to join for this Summer's Habitat for Humanity project in New Richmond. We are looking for five more people in June and July, and seven more in August (see dates below). You can sign up for one, two, or all three Saturdays.

Construction experience not necessary! From their site, "Don't worry, construction experience is NOT necessary. We have a great team who will help you learn!" Age, 18+. Volunteers 16 & 17 years old are welcomed with an adult guardian.

When:

Saturday June 26 (5 spots left)

Saturday July 24 (5 spots left)

Saturday August 21 (7 spots left)

You can sign up on this Google Doc (or email dalebohnert@gmail.com)

https://docs.google.com/.../1-yLcF9dnruR3URj66sn9p0v.../edit

Let me know if you have any questions! In addition to "construction" workers (might be painting) we will also have additional ways for you to serve, e.g., serving meals, donations. Stay tuned!

Blessings!

Dale Bohnert

This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

Interested in organic gardening?

HOPE Garden has plots available (10'x50' or 10'x25'). Garden Rules are on the HOPE website main page under announcements. If interested, contact psrudesill@gmail.com by April 15th.

2021 Lent Mission Projects Donate Through Easter Sunday!

- ✞ Donations of used eyeglasses for River Falls Lions (donation bin at church)
- ✞ Work gloves for Habitat (donation bin at church)
- ✞ Direct donations to St. Croix Valley Restorative Services: **https://restorativeservices.org/give/**
- ✞ *Hear My Voice: A Prison Prayer Book* **$10.00 donations to HOPE** memo line "HOPE LENT PRISON PROJECT. Books will be donated to Pierce County Jail and Stillwater Prison after Easter.
- ✞ If interested in helping to organize a Blood Drive at HOPE, contact Olive in the church office! To donate financially or to give blood go to: www.redcrossblood.org. (There are 2 upcoming blood drives):
  - ⇨ UWRF Blood Drive, April 6th , 7th , & 8th, 12-6 pm, University Center, 410 S 3rd St, River Falls WI.
  - ⇨ First Congregational Church Blood Drive, April 16th, 2-7 pm, 110 N 3rd St, River Falls WI
  - ⇨ Give Platelets via Apheresis, St Paul Blood Donation Center, 177 S Robert St, Saint Paul, MN, or for more info call Anna-Marie at 651-290-8980

This Week at HOPE March 31,2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

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

This Week at HOPE March 31, 2021

HOPE LUTHERAN
Hope Journeys Forward

Please lift up the following people in prayer

MaryKay Mahler (Friend of Olive Olson)
Bill Smith (Friend of Bill & Olive Olson)
Rev. Sarah Mayer-Flatt (Friend of Pastor Annie)
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
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)