



## How does a weary world rejoice?

*We sing stories of hope*

In this, our 4th week of Advent, we celebrate the gift it is to *sing stories of hope* together. As we prepare to gather this Sunday for Christmas Eve, we will sing the songs we always do, we will remind ourselves of

The Fourth Sunday of Advent | How does a weary world rejoice?

*We sing stories of hope*

## The Sound of Hope

We've been singing a sad song  
for quite some time,  
the melody syncing with our heartbeats,  
the lyrics stamped to the front of our minds.  
You say, *sad songs are honest*.  
It's hard to disagree,  
for sad songs tap us on the shoulder.  
Sad songs remind us  
of the 100 different corners  
heartbreak could be behind.

But I don't have it in me  
to sing a sad song forever.

So despite the news,  
despite the aches in my body,  
despite the phone call last night  
that says she's waiting for the test results,  
despite yesterday's shooting,  
despite the unknown and unchanged,  
I am going to sing a song of hope.

Like a canary in a snowstorm,  
I don't need another song of what is;  
I need a song of what could be.  
So sing with me.  
Our voices may get drowned out by the wind,  
but surely someone will ask:  
Was that a flash of yellow in the snow?  
Was that the sound of hope?



Advent, Christmas and Epiphany blessings to you from Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson, Synod Ministers, Elizabeth Bartsch, Sara Villarreal Bishop, Diane House, Lidix Montoya, Randy Olson, Laura Ramlow

## Mary the Brave: Mary the God Bearer

As a young pastor and working mom, I struggled with the challenges of balancing work and home life, often while carrying a child in my womb, arms, on my hip, in a front or back baby pack, or car seat. Now my children are adults, and I have the joy of watching them carry my grandchildren. They do it differently than I did, their car seats are much nicer than the ones we had, but like us, they carry their children with much love.<sup>1</sup> I am still carrying my adult children and grandchildren and will always carry them, in my heart with much love. This Advent and Christmas season I'm reflecting on Mary, the God bearer. (In Greek it's Theotokos<sup>2</sup>.) Mary carried Jesus. Like all parents she carried her child with love, but she is also the God bearer. It was a brave thing Mary did to bear God into the world.

To love is a brave thing. It is a brave thing to become a parent. Mothers put their own lives at risk bearing a child in their womb and giving birth. It requires a measure of bravery for parents to bring a child into this world filled with the bad news of climate disasters, gun violence, war, political upheaval, racism, food/water insecurity, and escalating health and higher education costs.

History has painted Mary to be quiet, meek and mild, submissive to God's will, but a closer read shows us that Mary was brave. Mary was neither meek nor superhuman.<sup>3</sup> She had grit. She was faithful, courageous, strong and brave. Most of all, she was human. Her encounter with the angel Gabriel, the messenger of God made her brave. She knew that her pregnancy was dangerous and she could die giving birth. She also knew that as an unmarried teenaged mother it would cause upheaval in her family and community. She would give birth to Jesus during Roman occupation, a time of political unrest. Mary was *brave*. Her encounter with the living God made her brave

Her encounter with God gave her bravery and the faith to see that if God was calling her God would also protect her. It revealed to her that God chooses the people on the margins, those overlooked and underestimated. Bearing God in the world was to bring good news and hope to those oppressed. May Mary, the God Bearer, inspire us all to be brave!

This Advent and Christmas season, I invite you to be Theotokos, God Bearers. I invite you to carry the good news of Christ's birth, life, death and resurrection to all those we meet on this journey of life and the love of Jesus in your hearts always.

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

*Luke 1: 26ff In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you..." "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High,... the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God... For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.*

<sup>1</sup> Robert Munsch, *I'll Love You Forever*, Firefly Books (September 1, 1995)

<sup>2</sup> Since the 3rd century, Christians had referred to Mary as theotokos, "God-bearer." The first documented usage of the term is in the writings of Origen of Alexandria in AD 230. [Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God | uCatholic](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Mary the Brave: Neither Meek nor Superhuman - CBE International](#)

## This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023



Enhance your Advent journey  
with these resources:



Listen:

[The Advent We Actually Have Playlist](#)  
[A Weary World Rejoice Playlist](#)

Read:

*Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay  
*This Here Flesh* by Cole Arthur Riley

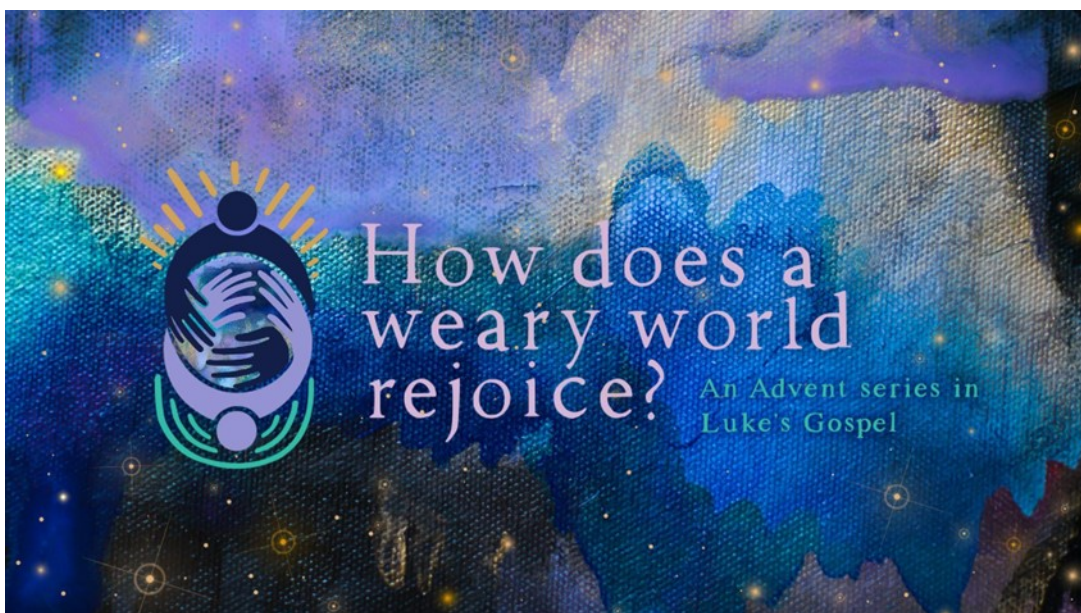


How does a  
weary world  
rejoice?

A Worship Service  
for the Weary

Wednesday, December 20th  
6:00 PM





As our Advent Journey nears its destination, I encourage you to take time to dwell in the beauty of these last few days before Christmas. We've been asking, "How Does A Weary World Rejoice?" as we've explored the first chapter of Luke's Gospel. We've held space for our weariness and our joy and sought a "thrill of hope" in our hurting world.

This coming weekend, we will welcome joy in its fullness! A joy that is not fleeting, a joy not only for ourselves, but a joy for all the weary ones of our world, especially for those like the prophet Isaiah, crying out for comfort (Isaiah 40:1).

**In these last few days, you are invited to engage with this theme in a variety of ways both on your own and in community:**

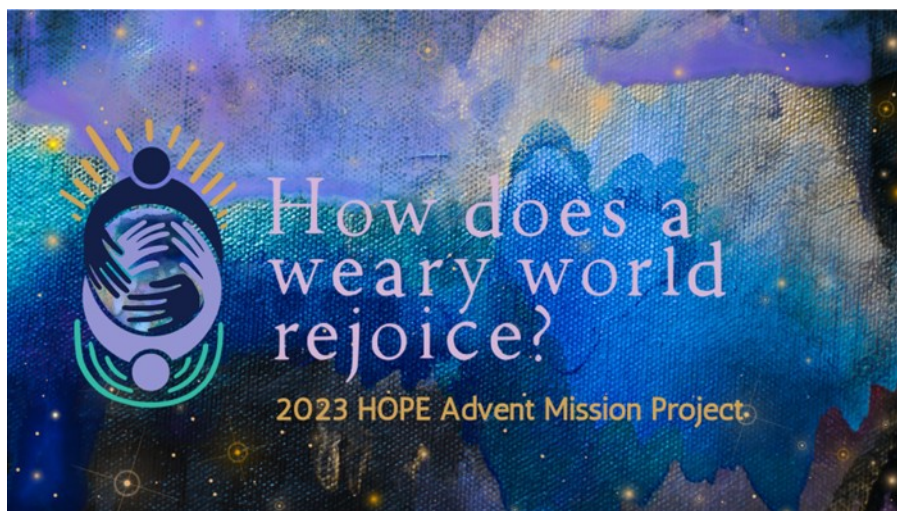
1. Join us on **Sunday mornings** at 9:30 as we acknowledge our weariness, find joy in connection, allow ourselves to be amazed, sing stories of hope, make room, root ourselves in ritual, and trust our belovedness.
2. Join us on **Wednesday evenings** Nov. 29-Dec. 20 as we nourish ourselves in body and spirit! We gather for a meal at 5:15 and Holden Evening Prayer worship at 6PM. The December 20th service will serve as our Longest Night Healing Service.
3. Engage in our Mission Ministry Team's **Advent mission project** (more info in following pages)
4. Make sure to pick up your age-appropriate **Advent Calendar** (one for children and one for adults/older youth)
5. Use the **Advent Devotional Booklet**. Paper copies are available at church OR find **AN ONLINE ACCESSIBLE DEVOTIONAL BY CLICKING HERE**
6. Use the "How Does A Weary World Rejoice?" **Playlist on Spotify**
7. Make sure to "like" our main page on **Facebook** and join the private **HOPE Lutheran Group** to engage in daily online discussion about our theme!

This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023

## Songs & Suds



## This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023



HOPE's Mission Ministry will continue to collect pillows and pillowcases (as many as possible) for Grace Place through January 4, 2024. Likewise, items for the Person Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief will be collected through January 4.

Our goal is to prepare 24 kits for the 24 days of Advent! Please refer to the **Google Drive document that shows what items have been donated thus far and what are still needed.** After church on January 7, you will all have the opportunity to help put these kits together for people in need throughout the world!

To put together an entire kit on your own or with your family, **CLICK HERE**

Thank you for your support in these projects.

Thanks,

HOPE Mission Ministry Team

# This Week at HOPE December 13, 2023



HOPE Lutheran Church  
Christmas Eve Services  
Sunday  
December 24<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 AM  
4:30 PM



[www.hopelutheranrf.com](http://www.hopelutheranrf.com)



The **Northwest Synod of Wisconsin** is starting the Reconciling in Christ process. We need volunteers for the team that will guide the synod through the process to publicly guide, practice, and teach particularly for LGBTQIA+, racial identity, and neurodiversity. If you think this is important enough to spend some time on Zoom each month, and maybe one in-person meeting or two, please send your expression of interest to [synodadvocate@nswsi.org](mailto:synodadvocate@nswsi.org). We only need eight more people, and if you represent one of these identified groups, we need



**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**2024 ANNUAL MEETING & CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY**  
Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 21, 2024  
Stay tuned for details on a Potluck meal!



FROM THE GREEN TEAM...

**Christmas lights recycling is now  
available at HOPE!**



**Lights can be deposited in  
the labeled bin in the entry**



**Dec. 17, 2023 - Jan. 31, 2024**

**And remember, you can always recycle your plastic films  
and batteries!**

AND THANK YOU FOR HELPING US CONTINUE TO GROW  
"GREENER" AS A CONGREGATION - YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS  
WILL ENABLE US TO GROW FROM PURCHASING 31  
RENEWABLE ENERGY BLOCKS IN 2023 TO 34 REB IN 2024.  
A WONDERFUL START TO THE NEW YEAR!





## **ADVENT OFFERINGS & WINTER SESSION INFO!**

### **ALL ARE WELCOME**

“Regular” WOH takes a pause during the Advent season. Students and families are strongly encouraged to attend our Midweek Advent meals & worship:

**5:15-Meal**

**6:00- Worship**

**(Holden Evening Prayer)**

**On January 10th, our Winter Session will begin.** All K-10th+\* grade youth are invited to join us on Wednesday evenings from 6-7PM for fellowship, family friendly worship & service, learning, and growing in relationship to Jesus and one another! Our evenings begin with a brief family style worship, where children & adults help with leadership and a true sense of community is fostered. Youth are then divided into elementary (Faith Adventures) and middle/high (Confirmation) classes for deeper engagement with the evening’s themes.

If you have not already done so, you can register for the Winter session here:

[2023-2024 Wednesdays of HOPE Registration](#)

Teachers and Snack Hosts are needed to make each night of Wednesdays of HOPE a **safe, engaging, and welcoming time for all!** Please consider sharing your time and gifts to help! Sign-up at the links above or contact Pastor Annie!



**Teachers and Snack Hosts**  
**ARE NEEDED for the Winter and Spring Sessions!**  
**Help make Wednesdays of HOPE**  
**a safe, engaging, and welcoming time for all!**

Please consider sharing your time and gifts to help!  
Sign-up at the links above or  
contact Pastor Annie for more information!

**This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023**



All are needed to participate in the leading of worship!

Ushers, Communion Prep & Assistants, Readers, Prayer Leaders, Fellowship Hosts, Special Music, Altar Flowers, & Worship Assistants all add to the beauty of our worship together!

[YOU CAN SIGN UP HERE FOR ANY UPCOMING SUNDAY!](#)

## **SPECIAL 2024 HELPERS NEEDED!**

There are two worship volunteer roles that work on a monthly schedule. Volunteers for these roles are encouraged to sign-up for an entire month at a time:

[COMMUNION BREAD BAKER SIGN-UP](#)

[COMMUNION SET-UP/ALTAR GUILD SIGN-UP](#)

**This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023**



All are invited to join Pastor Annie for this weekly small group conversation and Bible study!

This is a great chance to grow in relationship with God and one another.

We meet via Zoom so all can join from wherever you are!

# This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023



## December Birthdays

Zoe Tokheim	2-Dec
Alexis Rehbein	3-Dec
Dale Bohnert	5-Dec
Mark Bondhus	5-Dec
Wendy Tokheim	11-Dec
James James	11-Dec
Susan Schuettpeiz	11-Dec
Luke Filarsky	15-Dec
Sara Filarsky	15-Dec
Tyson Tokheim	15-Dec
Karen Hamilton	17-Dec
Grete Rehbein	17-Dec
Jason Neuhaus	20-Dec
Bruce Schuettpeiz	22-Dec
Gary Siebold	26-Dec
Alyssa Boock	27-Dec
Elizabeth Hansen	27-Dec
Noelle James	27-Dec
Cameron Leitch	27-Dec
Ella Wolfe	29-Dec
Hazel Ladnier	30-Dec

## December Baptisms

Phillip Klacan
Sawyer Filarsky
Lindsay Getschel
Kari Heinselman
Pastor Annie Ladnier
Eden Ladnier
Heathley Neuhaus
Robert Perkins-McIntosh
Piper Rodewald



## December Anniversaries

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Years to Celebrate</b>
Edward & Gwen Paulson	26-Dec	58
Gregg & Kari Heinselman	27-Dec	37
Ross & Tessa VanOverbeke	31-Dec	18

## **This Week at HOPE December 20, 2023**



**Please lift up the following people in prayer**

Eden Annoye (Relative of Debra James)  
Mary Jean Yde (Linda Yde's mother-in-law)  
John Weller (Karen Brohaugh's cousin)  
Ken Jones Family (Martie Guthrie 's father)  
Dave and Deb Haugen (Family of Ellen Roose)  
Phyllis and Tom Haugen (Family of Ellen Roose)  
John and Lisa Davis (Friends of Dale & Jan Wegleitner)  
Fatma Aljarrah (Friend of Faye Perkins)  
Lorraine Brask Family ( Mother of Karen Kaste)  
Beth Lindgren Family (Dan Malaney)  
Betty Lou Oppegard and Family  
Michael Jacobson (Brother of Linda Jacobson)  
Barb Carmichael (Friend of Nancy Sailer)  
Dennis & Sandy Schultz (Friends of Bill & Kay Montgomery)  
Nancy Miller (Friend of Paula & Phil Klacan)  
Family of Marc DuPaul (Nephew of Naomi Brandt)  
Linda Shurden (Friend of Nancy Sailer)  
Charli and Sam King (Friends of Faye Perkins)  
Joyce Kendall (Mother of Cara Getschel)  
Judy Branson (Relative of the Boocks)  
Hannah Forward  
Amanda Olson (Olive Olson's daughter)  
Jerry Gibson (Diane Clark and Karen Rodewald's father)  
Ella Conover ( Niece of Phil & Paula Klacan)  
Mary Babler (Friend the Dan Malaney)  
Daryl Kleeman (brother of Darcy Boock)  
Naomi Brandt and family  
Carin Perkins (Faye Perkins sister)  
David Boock (Relative of the Boocks)  
Nicholas Simpson (Boock family friend)  
Teajai Schmidt (Boock family friend)  
Rev. Sarah Mayer-Flatt (Friend of Pastor Annie)  
Lee Hill (friend of Naomi Brandt)  
Gary Siebold  
David Hendrickson