

Wandering Heart Wonderings...

From Pastor Annie Ladnier

This is our final week of our Lenten/Easter series, *Wandering Heart: Figuring Out Faith with Peter*. As we enter the 2nd Sunday of Easter we will celebrate the depth of Christ's love in redeeming Peter post-resurrection with the "feed my sheep" story of John 21.

I hope you have enjoyed this series and the opportunity it created to reflect on your own discipleship journeys in light of Peter's. Here is our final, beautiful poem of the series written by Rev. Sarah Speed:



THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Wandering Heart: "Here's my heart"

Inspired by "The Lanyard" by Billy Collins'

Here's My Heart

As a child I made a nativity set for my mother—
pinch pot clay, uneven angel wings,
hair made with the help of a garlic press,
Joseph's staff rolled out like I was God
and it was an earthworm.

There was nothing beautiful about it,
nothing whispering of talent,
but I made it for my mother!

So I wrapped
that questionable piece of art in a box
and gave it to her
like I was handing her a Picasso.

Here, mother,

you carried me in your womb.

You bandaged my knees when I fell.

You made soup when I was sick.

You rocked me to sleep as an infant

and sewed my costumes by hand.

In return, I made you this haphazard nativity!

And in my childlike mind,
I thought that the small white lamb,
molded from a lumpy piece of clay,
could somehow make us even,
could somehow balance the scales,
could somehow pay her back.

And bless my mother,
because in her grace,
she smiled and she displayed that
hodge-podge nativity set
on the mantel

as if it were her pride and joy.

(I believed that it was.)

Maybe that's the way it is with God.

I say, *Here's my heart*

and God smiles.

And God takes it.

And despite the ragtag nature of my
human-hearted faith,

whatever I can give always ends up on
God's mantel.

Whatever I can give always calls for
pride and joy.

May your wandering heart be blessed, beloved.



Easter 2024 A Message from Bishop Laurie *AN INCOMPLETE SENTENCE Mark 16:8*

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

The gospel of Mark begins with this verse, Mark 1:1, *The beginning of the good news¹ of Jesus Christ*. Then it ends with an incomplete sentence¹. Mark's Easter Story ends with an incomplete sentence. What was the editor thinking? Where are the punctuation police when you need them?

Look at it for yourself. Mark 16:8 in Greek

καὶ ἐξεληθοῦσαι ἔφυγον ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου, εἶχεν ἰσχυρὰ αὐτὰς τρόμος καὶ ἔκστασις· καὶ οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ



See, it ends with the word "gar" which can be translated "for or because." Why did the writer of Mark end the gospel with the word "because?" Word-for-word the last part of the verse reads *to none nothing they spoke they were afraid because*

So just to be clear, the purpose of the gospel of Mark is to tell the good news of Jesus Christ and then it ends with an empty tomb and the only witnesses to it run away in fear saying nothing to anyone because...

It should be noted there is no punctuation in the original Greek and we can of course rearrange the English words and make a sentence, but still the incompleteness of the Greek sentence, abrupt ending and the incompleteness of story itself are telling.²

Matthew, Luke and John end their Easter story with Jesus appearing to the disciples after the resurrection. These gospels end with proof of the resurrection that others see with their own eyes and some even touch Jesus. Mark has no proof of the resurrection. He doesn't even finish his last sentence.

Mark 1 was intended to be just **the beginning** of the story of the good news of Jesus. It can't be completely recorded with paper and pen because it is still being written in the lives of the believers today. Friends, the story of Easter didn't end with the frightened women. If it did we wouldn't be here today. Some of Mark's Easter story will be written by your life, my life, our witness to the empty tomb and the transforming power of God love in our life. The rest of the story will be written by those who come after us and whose lives bear witness to God's power to transform death to life. We are proof of the resurrection. Our lives transformed by the power of God's love and forgiveness are proof that Jesus rose from the dead. We are writing new verses and chapters for Mark's gospel, so that the next generation will come to know and love Jesus and all generations will experience God's grace.

Rev. Laurie Sta. Johnson

Mark 16 *When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid*

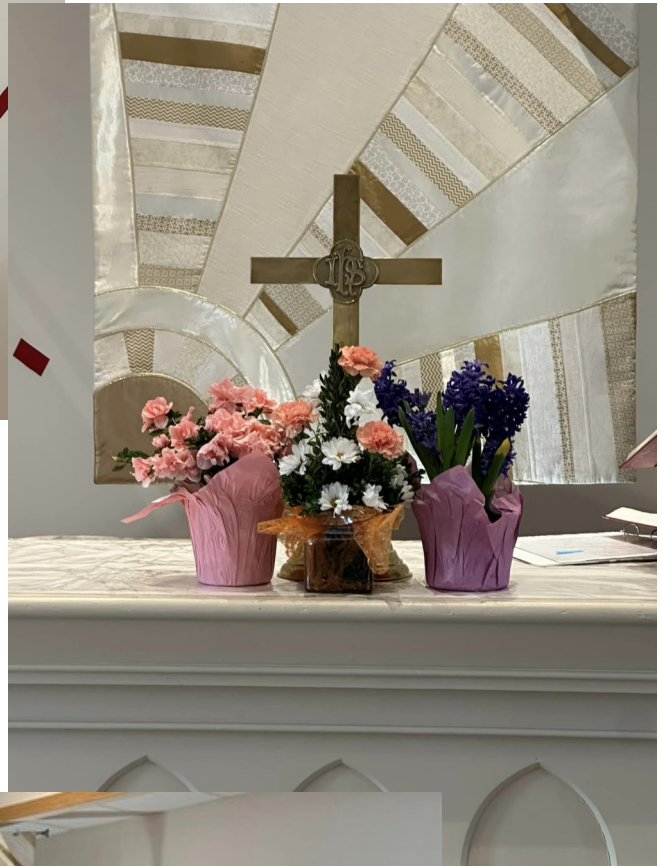
¹ McCoy and Fistler, Pulpit Fiction Podcast #540, Easter 2023

² Mark has two alternative endings (Mark 16:9-20) which many biblical scholars believe were added at a much later date by those who couldn't tolerate ending with an incomplete sentence!

³ Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024

Easter Sunday at HOPE



This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



Dear Faith Community Supporters,

Since 2009 when Assistance & Resource Center, Inc. (ARC) took its place as the primary source of short-term financial assistance to residents of River Falls (Ellsworth was added to our service area in 2013), the faith community has been a consistent source of program funding, providing approximately 30% of ARC's annual budget. ARC is grateful for your belief in our mission as well as your faithful support of it!

This letter is to inform you that Assistance & Resource Center, Inc. will cease to operate as a non-profit at the end of fiscal year 2024.

Short term financial assistance will be provided to clients, as requests are approved and funding is available, throughout this fiscal year with the goal of having all treasury funds expended by December 31, 2024.

It has been the passion and the privilege of every person involved with ARC to promote its mission through addressing the individual needs of folks needing a "hand up" to see them through a financial shortfall or unexpected household crisis.

Thousands of individuals and households have received assistance as ARC clients in the past 15 years. During that time, hundreds of referrals to other partner helping agencies have also been made. Due to the astounding amount of volunteer hours driving the entire mission of this organization, the total amount of direct financial aid provided to clients, in turn cycled back into the local economy, exceeds *\$1.2 million*.

Thank you and **God Bless You!**

March 2024

Assistance & Resource Center, Inc.

PO Box 223, River Falls, WI 54022

(715) 338-0755

www.arcriverfalls.org

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



“WATER IS LIFE” BISHOP’S INITIATIVE

This coming Sunday will be your last opportunity to donate to this year’s Lent/Easter project: the Northwest Synod of WI’s Bishop’s Initiative, “Water Is Life” to help raise a collective \$40,000 to build 2 solar powered, deep drilled wells in our companion synod of Malawi!

BISHOP'S INITIATIVE

WATER IS LIFE

WELL PROJECT
With the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi

Malawi's population is 18.6 million. More than 50% of the population is under 18 years old.

65% of rural areas have access to clean water services.

1 in 3 people don't have clean water to drink.

Thousands of children die each year due to water-borne illnesses. This worsens after natural disasters.

73% of health care centers don't have access to sanitation facilities.

Access to clean water increases safety and education for women and girls.

Deep-drilled wells can provide clean water for thousands of people in a single area.

Solar well designs can withstand more effects of climate change & extreme weather disasters.

GOAL:
\$40,000 raised by Synod Assembly - June 7-8, 2024

PROJECT:
Assist ELCM in building **two** new solar powered deep drilled wells.

Gifts for this initiative can be given via check, online, or on the synod app.

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
"Bishop's Initiative - Water is Life"
944 24 1/4 Street Suite 2
Chetek, WI 54728

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



Are you a sewer, quilter, or crafter with a fabric stash that needs downsizing?

The Green Team is seeking fabric in shades of blue, white, red, green and yellow for an Earth Fest project. Solid or softly patterned woven (not stretchy knit) fabric in pieces 8"x6" or larger would be greatly appreciated!

Fabric can be brought to the Eidskog room and placed in the box labeled "Green Team" from Sunday, March 17 until April 14.

Thank you!!

HOPE SERVICE PROJECT NIGHT!

All HOPE members & friends are invited to join us on Wednesday, April 17th from 6-7PM as we prep for our prayer flag project! Bishop Laurie Skow Anderson will be with us for the fun. Helpers will sort and cut fabric, help our sewers make a loop, and organize supplies for Saturday. It promises to be a fun night of service together!

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



YOUTH NEWS



Spring Session begins April 10th! Join us as we explore: “Faith in Daily Life”

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!

This spring we are focusing on “Faith in Daily Life” and we’ll be learning about and experiencing different dimensions of our discipleship:

April 10: Exploring different ways to pray

- ✝ April 17: Faith in Service with HOPE’s Green Team to prep for EarthFest with guest BISHOP LAURIE SKOW-ANDERSON
- ✝ April 24: Exploring Our Faith through ART (with special leader Karen Rodewald)
- ✝ May 1: Holy Communion Milestone Night 1: exploring how Holy Communion nourishes us to live out our faith (night 1 of 2)
- ✝ May 8: Holy Communion Milestone Night 2 & END OF YEAR WRAP UP!

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!

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



Making Magic with Ken Burns
Jacqueline Schwab
in concert

*"Jacqueline Schwab brings more feeling and intensity
to music than anyone I know," - Ken Burns*

FREE CONCERT

Sunday, April 14th
4:00 PM



Facebook Event

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
110 N 3rd St. River Falls, WI
firstchurchrf.org | 715-425-2052

Known for her work in over a dozen Ken Burns' documentaries, pianist Jacqueline Schwab will perform pieces from *Civil War*, *Baseball*, and *Mark Twain* as well as traditional Scottish tunes and her own works inspired by Ken's piercing window into American history.

This poster has been designed using assets from Freepik.com



Synod Women's Organization of the
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Morning of Renewal *St. Croix Valley Conference* *April 20, 2024* *First Lutheran Church* *218 County Road K, New Richmond, WI*

All My Deserts Are Rivers of Joy

Ginny will encourage us with stories of God's faithfulness to revive us in our desert seasons and situations. We will remember the Biblical heroes of our faith and be encouraged by their unexpected joy as God made a way where there didn't seem to be a way. Ginny will share her personal experience of finding hope in the hard places. Together we will reflect on God's goodness and deepen our trust in His love for us.



Isaiah 35:1-2

The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

Speaker *Ginny Rassier*

- Local friend, wife, mother and grandmother who loves Jesus.
- Grateful to have been a lifetime part of the church community.
- Involved in prayer, youth and recovery ministries.
- Loves people and conversations with friends and family.



8:30—9:00 am — Registration
9:00-11:30 am — Program
11:30 am—12:30 pm — Lunch
Registration Fee \$15 (at the door)

Grace Place will also be presenting

We will be collecting an in-kind donation of paper products: Paper Towels and Toilet Paper, please bring what you can to the event. Thank you!

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024

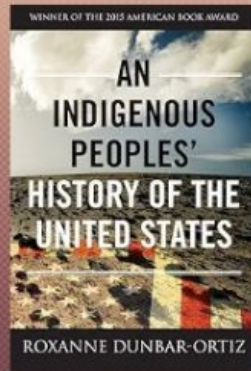


You're
Invited!

HOPE Community Book Read & Discussion

*"My hope is that this book will be a springboard
to dialogue about history, the present reality of Indigenous peoples'
experience, and the meaning and future of the United States itself."*

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz



First discussion April 14
following worship

Chapters 1-5

Books available for free in the Eidskog Room

Discussions related to the history of the United States from the Indigenous experience
as a step toward Truth & Healing.

What does this mean for us as people of HOPE?



15TH ANNUAL

SHOE SOME LOVE 5K 2024

ALL PROCEEDS PURCHASE ATHLETIC SHOES FOR LOCAL KIDS IN NEED

27/APR

Member FDIC

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF RIVER FALLS

- Start: 8:00 AM | Kid's Fun Run: 9:15 AM
- \$30 before March 31st | \$35 April 1st and after
- Kids 12 and under & Fun Run are FREE

For more info & registration:
SHOESOMELOVE.COM

FIRST NATIONAL BANK
of River Falls
www.fnbrf.com

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



The St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity Women's Build Week

[YOU CAN SIGN UP FOR A BUILD DAY HERE](#)

Workdays are from 9-3:30, with half shifts available

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old,

Volunteers under 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

This year's build is a bit different – rather than a new, ground-up build, we will be rehabbing a town home in Somerset! We're very excited to be expanding the scope of our projects in this way, as a shorter construction period will allow us to take on more builds and serve more families! Spring schedules can be busy, so talk with your HOPE friends about a day/time that works best for you and sign-up! Women and men are welcome on these project days.

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



All are invited & needed to participate in the leading of worship!
Please prayerfully consider sharing your time and talents!

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

Want to help but not sure what the job entails?
Learn more in our [Worship Volunteer Guide](#)

2024 ALTAR GUILD/COMMUNION SET-UP HELP STILL NEEDED!

We are still in need of people willing to prepare the Altar for Sunday morning worship each week. This opportunity allows you the opportunity for a monthly rotation. Please sign up here:

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

For a description of how to fulfill this role check out the [Worship Volunteer Guide](#)

SUNDAY MORNING FELLOWSHIP HOST STILL NEEDED!

We have been blessed with a pretty steady return of our Sunday fellowship time, but we do have an opening this coming Sunday!

You can [SIGN UP HERE](#) or contact Pastor Annie if you are able!

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



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!



We have eggs again!

\$3.00 a dozen donation.

You can find them in refrigerator.

The donations will go to Youth Ministry events.

Thanks for supporting our youth here at HOPE!!

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



Bakken-Young
Funeral & Cremation Services

Death of a Parent: Am I an adult orphan?

Tuesday, April 23, 2024 | 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Via Zoom Webinar

Bakken-Young Funeral and Cremation Services invites you to a free grief webinar for those who are coping with grief after the death of their parent(s).



Presenter, Kenneth Doka will discuss:

- Describe the manifestations and process of grief noting the ways that the death of a parent can be disenfranchised
- Discuss the ways that a parent's death can influence the adult child's development and family dynamics
- Describe self-help strategies in assisting adult children cope with parental loss

Join **Kenneth Doka, PhD, MDiv, FT**, Professor Emeritus at the Graduate School of The College of New Rochelle and Senior Vice-President for Grief Programs for the Hospice Foundation of America. He is the author of numerous books and publications and the contributing author of *Dying & Death: Life & Living*. He has keynoted conferences throughout North America and other countries.

Register at: bakken-young.com/event/grief-webinar

Questions? Contact Julia Rajtar, Grief Support Coordinator
(715) 781-4003 or julia@bakken-young.com

Bakken-Young Funeral & Cremation Services
River Falls (715) 425-8788 | info@bakken-young.com | New Richmond (715) 243-5252
Visit our grief support page for more information on events and resources at: bakken-young.com

This Week at HOPE April 3, 2024



April Birthdays

Name	Birthday
Will Bohnert	2-Apr
John Hamilton	2-Apr
Sawyer Filarsky	4-Apr
Michael Stang	5-Apr
Jean Loudon	11-Apr
Traci Wolfe	11-Apr
Cathy Wunrow	11-Apr
Faye Perkins	14-Apr
Lori Leitch	29-Apr

April Baptisms



Margaret Anderson
Louis Bernard
Charles Eaton
Marc Guthrie
Hazel Ladnier
Sharon Paulson
Jack Stang
Maxwell VanOverbeke
Ben Wunrow
Amanda Ziebarth



		Celebrating
Gary & Vicki Siebold	21-Apr	23 Years
Eric & Lisa Rydland	30-Apr	19 Years

This Week at HOPE April 3 2024



Please lift up the following people in prayer

Breccan Olson and family

Patricia Miller (Sister of Carl Warren)

Rhiannon Bondhus (Niece of Bondhus family)

Sharon & Kermit Paulson

Barbara McIntosh (Mother of Joe McIntosh)

Brooke Grant (niece of Margaret Anderson)

Family of Mike Roy (Friend of Karen Rodewald)

Lori Snyder (Friend of Nancy & David Peters)

David Anderson (Karen Brohaugh's brother)

Ed and Gwen Paulson

Randy Dopkins (Family friend of Olive Olson)

Eden Annoye (Relative of Debra James)

John Weller (Cousin of Karen Brohaugh)

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)

Beth Lindgren Family (Dan Malaney)

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)

Linda Shurden (Friend of Nancy Sailer)

Joyce Kendall (Mother of Cara Getschel)

Hannah Forward

Amanda Olson (daughter of Olive Olson)

Ella Conover (Phil & Paula's Klacan's Niece)

Daryl Kleeman (brother of Darcy Boock)

David Boock (Relative of the Boocks)

Teajai Schmidt (Relative of Boock family)

Lee Hill (friend of Naomi)

Gary Siebold

David Hendrickson