



HOPE UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
the church by the lake

## DIGITAL NEWSLETTER

HUC Issue 0723 - July & August 2023



**CONNECT. NURTURE. PRACTICE.**

210 Michaels St | PO Box 28 | Cochrane, WI 54622

[hopeunitedcochrane.org](http://hopeunitedcochrane.org)

the church by the lake

608.248.2481

We are excited to announce our  
official web site!

**LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK**



Keep up to date on events, worship changes, and access newsletters. We will be adding more information and photos, archiving past newsletters, and linking with our facebook page (hopeucccochrane). Let us know what you think.

**HOPEUNITEDCOCHRANE.ORG**



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# Pastor's Letter:

## July 2023

As we turn the calendar to July, we are well into the hazy, lazy days of summer (made hazier by the smoke from the Canadian wildfires.) Normally this is a time that church life slows to a crawl. But as I look over the upcoming two months, there is still plenty happening in addition to our services.

- First, St. John's Church will switch worship times with Hope United Cochrane, and begins meeting at 10:30am starting July 2, through until the last Sunday of June 2024.
- Saturday, July 22 is the next evening Vespers service at Eagle Valley Church at 7:00pm. followed by refreshments. The service opens with a hymn sing.
- Sunday, July 30 is our next "Fifth Sunday" joint service with Hope United Cochrane. It will be at St. John's Church at 10:30am. It will be a "hymn-centric" service. If you haven't already, please let me know via email one or two of your favorite hymns by July 17. I'll tally up these requests along with the ones submitted on the June 25 and July 2 bulletin inserts, then build the service around these hymns for us to share.
- Sunday, August 20 Hope United Cochrane has again invited St. John's Church to join them for their service at 10:30am followed by their Annual Social outdoors (weather permitting.) We will not hold a worship service at St. John's Church that morning.
- The following week, Sunday August 27, St. John's Church is invites Hope United Cochrane to join us for the annual service at Eagle Valley Church at 10:30am followed by lunch in the shelter. (Whether this will be a potluck or food provided will be announced in the August newsletter.)

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# Pastor's Letter:

**July 2023**

I hope to see you at one or all of the special services and social gatherings. Whatever you do, I hope it is blessed by God with joy, safety and the reminder of the love of God and this faith community with you.

**God's grace and peace.**

Pastor Deb Kunkel

Congratulations to Naomi (Fogel) and John Schmidtknecht who were married here on June 24, 2023. May God bless their union with joy, devotion and love.

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## Mission

**CONNECT. NURTURE. PRACTICE.**

We extend hospitality to all as a sign of God's inclusive love. No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!

We CONNECT through shared life experiences and search for a spiritual presence in our lives.

We NURTURE spiritual growth for all ages by encouraging curiosity about Jesus Christ's message and how it relates to our world today.

The Spirit invites us to PRACTICE the language of hope.

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# Eagle Valley Church

## Special Sunday Worship

There will be an open invitation for all members of Hope UCC and St. Johns UCC to attend on Sunday, July 22 @ 10:00am. It will be followed by a picnic and their Annual Meeting. There will not be regular service at Fountain City or Cochrane.

### EAGLE VALLEY CHURCH

Sunday, July 22, 2023

Starts @ 10:00am

S2664 Co Rd G

Fountain City, WI

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# Fifth Sunday

## Special Sunday Worship

Hope United Church is invited to join Worship Services with St. John's Church on Sunday, July 30, 2023 at 10:30am in Fountain City, Wisconsin.

### ST. JOHNS CHURCH

Sunday, July 30, 2023

Starts @ 10:30am

S2664 Co Rd G

Fountain City, WI

# Pastor's Letter:

**August 2023**

A friend recently introduced me to the writing of Katie Bowler. The title of Katie's book "Everything Happens for a Reason (and Other Lies I've Loved)" led me to immediately purchase the book and read in two sittings. Katie is a professor, author, researcher, and mother who at age 35 was diagnosed with Stage IV Cancer that had a life expectancy of 1 year. Experimental treatments helped turn her cancer into a currently chronic conditions that she continues to deal with each day as she parents, spouses, writes, and continues to teach at Duke University. Her writing details her journey, and more importantly, the struggle with something hard and people trying to reassure you with platitudes.

And so she writes blessings that she sends out each week: "A Blessing for the Life You Didn't Choose", "A Blessing for Waking to Summer" and "A Blessing for When You are Feeling Grouchy" are just a few. When this week's blessing came, I knew I wanted to share it with you. Whoever is struggling now, has struggled in the past, or will struggle in the future (which is all of us) I hope you find the blessing contained within this poem.

A blessing for when you realize everyone is struggling

blessed are you who have realized that life is hard. and it's hard for everyone. your awareness came at a cost. you lost something you can't get back. you were diagnosed with chronic pain or a degenerative disease. your family fell apart and things have never been the same.

blessed are you who gave up the myth that the good life is one of happiness, success, perfection. the life that looks beautiful on Facebook, but isn't real. you who realize it is okay to not be okay. To not have a shiny life, because no one does.

blessed are you who see things clearly, where struggle is everyone's normal. you walk among the fellowship of the afflicted, a club no one wants to join.

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# Pastor's Letter:

**August 2023**

and while this life isn't shiny, it does come with superpowers. superpowers of ever-widening empathy and existential courage that get you back up after another fall and a deepened awe at the beauty and love that can be found amid life's rubble.

like flowers that grow from the cracks in the sidewalk. these virtues blossom in you. and thank God for you.

blessed are all of us who struggle, for we are in good company, and we'll never walk alone.

Katie doesn't believe that hard times or tragedies are given by God so that we can learn by wrestling a blessing out of it. The blessing is not because of the situation but in spite of it. Likewise, I believe that the God who loves us doesn't bless us with struggles to learn, but blesses us within our struggles with love, presence, and companionship. For somehow, knowing that you aren't alone, that others have faced similar situations and challenges, can make us feel a little more connected, a little less adrift, and a little less alone.

Which is part of the reason we are to gather each Sunday. So that we can be with each other in times of struggles in ways that bless within the struggle, then share it with others in the community and world. Just as Jesus did, and still calls his followers to do today.

If you are struggling and would like to talk, need a listening ear, or just want companionship to sit silently with you, please reach out to me at 239-994-2528. For to paraphrase the last line of the blessing: blessed are all of us who struggle, for we are in good company, and we need never walk through it alone.

**God's grace and peace.**

Pastor Deb Kunkel

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# Eagle Valley Church

## **Worship, Meeting & Potluck**

There will be an open invitation for all members of St. John's Church and Hope United Church to attend on Sunday, August 27 @ 10:00am. It will be followed by a picnic and their Annual Meeting. There will not be regular service at Fountain City or Cochrane.

### EAGLE VALLEY CHURCH

Sunday, August 27, 2023

Starts @ 10:00am

S2664 Co Rd G

Fountain City, WI

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# God2L Education

## **Children's Christian Education**

Children from 4 years old to 6th grade meet weekly during the school year on Wednesdays after school. Each week they play, enjoy a snack, pray, study a Scripture lesson aided by our "Picture the Bible" materials and learn with fun hands on activities. This year we have 24 children enrolled. Marilyn Bollinger, Jenny Ehlenfeldt and Audrey Holien provide weekly leadership with the help of several wonderful parent and church volunteers including Donna Halling, Karen Auer, Amanda Lacey, Sarah Kramer, Michaela Flippin and Josh Ehlenfeldt.

### SEPTEMBER 2023 THRU MAY 2024

Every Wednesday

Starting 3:15pm to 5:00pm

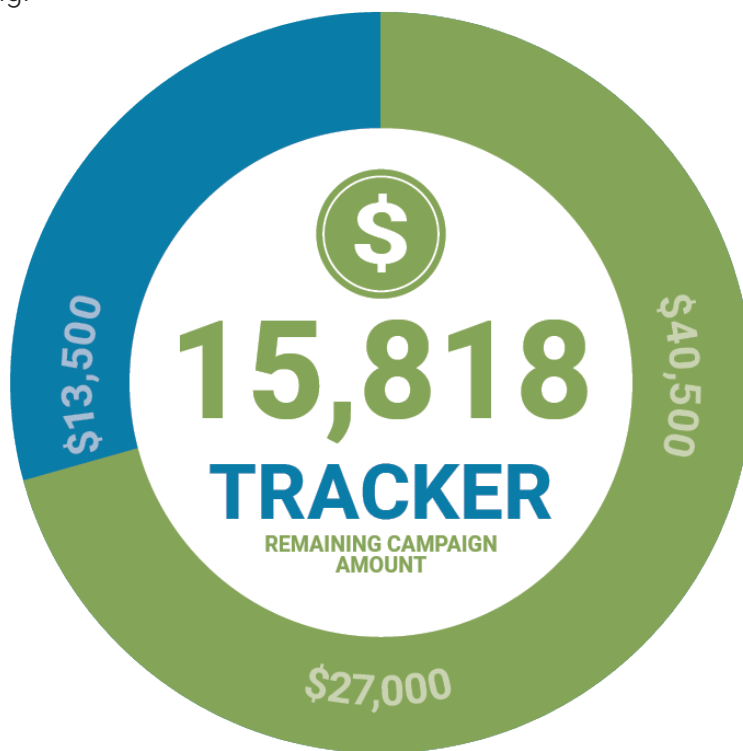
God2L is canceled on school closing days, or early dismissals due to the weather.



# Lifting Up Hope For All

## Here Is Your Chance To Help

While the Capital Campaign has ended we are still working to pay for Lifting Up Hope for All accessibility addition. If you are interested in helping any donation amount is appreciated for this ambitious undertaking.



**LAST UPDATED**  
**09.29.23**