



HOPE UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST
the church by the lake

DIGITAL NEWSLETTER

Issue 1123 - November & December 2023



CONNECT. NURTURE. PRACTICE.

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

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) in the coming months. Let us know what you think.

HOPEUNITEDCOCHRANE.ORG



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Pastor's Letter:

November 2023

How did it get to be November already? Thanksgiving is coming up soon, and then it will be time for all the preparations for Christmas. (Of course the stores have had Christmas items since the beginning of October.) Already the church calendar is starting to fill up.

Here are a few of the happenings going on here over the next month or so.

First: The Women's Guild Fall Bazaar is on Saturday, November 4 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm There will be baked goods to buy, gift baskets to take a chance on, and coffee and refreshments available to have while you browse or sit to catch up with people you haven't seen in a while. (Thank you to Hope United Church for their donation of a dog themed basket for the raffle.)

Second: The Deacons are asking us to focus for the month of November the Deacons on the spiritual practice of stewardship - which is about more than what you give to the church. It is not only about how we care for our finances, but also our time, our energy, our relationships, and even Creation itself. My sermons during November will also focus on the multitude of areas of life that are shaped by this spiritual practice. The Deacons chose the theme "Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives".

Third: Starting Tuesday, December 5, I am offering an Advent/Epiphany Study at 5:30pm here at St. John's Church. It's a little lighter than my previous offerings - it's based on the small book "The Heart that Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch." Using Dr. Seuss's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" we will explore some of the faith themes in this Christmas classic, including how exactly one's heart can grow three sizes? Each class will be about an hour. The schedule will be:

[Tuesday, December 5, 2023: When everything is wrong.](#)

[Tuesday, December 12, 2023: When Christmas isn't Christmas.](#)

[Tuesday, December 19, 2023: When Light Shines.](#)

[Tuesday, January 2, 2024: When Joy is Our Song.](#)

Pastor's Letter:

November 2023

While it is helpful to buy the book to read before each week's class it isn't required. I will have several copies available for purchase starting Sunday, November 12. And if you need a refresher on the Grinch, I have a few copies on my own bookshelf that I can loan out. And Hope United Church members are welcome to join.

And don't forget Hope United Church Soups & Chili Supper Fundraiser on Friday, November 10, 2023, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm in Cochrane, Wisconsin. See hopeunitedcochrane.org for full details.

Of course that isn't all that will be happening – please check the rest of the newsletter for more events and experiences, and then December's for details of special Christmas services. Hope to see you at some (or all) these!

Pastor Deb Kunkel
Hope United Church of Christ
210 Michaels Street
Cochrane, WI

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Cell: 239.994.2528
debrev2002@aol.com

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
12.26.23

Pastor's Letter:

December 2023

As December begins so does the season of Advent. Not the Christmas Season, but the Advent Season.

Now before you think I am a Grinch who hates Christmas, I love Christmas and all its trappings- shopping and giving presents, the trees, the lights, and Christmas Cookies. I love singing Christmas Carols- once the Friday after Thanksgiving comes around (please save me from the stores that start playing "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" on Halloween.)

But as Christians, we are also aware that Christmas celebrates God incarnate, God as one of us born as a baby. Emmanuel-God with us, now and always.

So before Christmas there is Advent. Starting on the first Sunday before Christmas and continuing for four Sundays until ending on Christmas Day. We spend Advent in anticipation, preparation, waiting, expectation.

But anticipation of what? Part of that answer is Christ's birth. But that's not the whole answer. The word Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*", which can be translated as "coming" or "arrival". Early Christians established the period of Advent as a time of preparation for the birth of Christ, similar to Lent as preparation for Easter. Later it also become a time of anticipation of Jesus second coming into the heart of the believer, as well as when God's just and loving reign is over all Creation.

Advent express one of the paradoxes of Christian faith: that we live in a time of already/not yet. At Christmas we celebrate that Emmanuel is here born to us as child, but that the purpose for this child is not yet fully realized. Advent celebrates the future hopes that infant embodies.

And so we light a candle each Sunday symbolizing the growing Light coming into the world. The first is for Hope, then Peace, then Joy, then Love. All qualities seen in the birth of Christ.

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Pastor's Letter:

December 2023

They also are what we look forward to being fully realized in God's coming reign. Advent encourages us to seek God's grace to be the channels through which God is bringing them about in this world. Advent reminds us that we are to be living testimonies to the reality that these qualities are possible, not merely ideals that can never be obtained.

Just as I feel we diminish our experience of Easter if we try to rush our way through or skip Lent, I feel we lose something of Christmas if we ignore Advent.

For now I will wish you a blessed Advent Season. I will wait until the evening of December 24th to wish you a Merry Christmas. But I'll be on the lookout before then for some holiday cheer. (Probably singing "Jingle Bells" and "Joy to the World" as I do)

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P.S. This year the fourth Sunday of Advent is also Christmas Eve. That Sunday we will worship here with Hope UCC at a special time, 9:30 a.m., for the last Sunday of Advent, hearing "What Mary Knew" from an older Mary – sneaking in a little of Christmas Eve. Then on Christmas Eve we will begin the Christmas Season with our candlelight service at 6:00 p.m. Please see the rest of the newsletter and the website for more Advent and Christmas opportunities here.

Soups & Chili Supper

Friday, November 10, 2023

All you care to eat. Serving a variety of soups, chili, breads and pies. While supply lasts. Dine-in or Carryout Available. In honor of Veterans Day all Veterans eat FREE. Thank you!

\$12 Adults

\$5 Kids 6-12

Age 5 & Under - Free

HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Starting @ 4:00pm



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SOUPS & CHILI SUPPER
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4:00pm to 7:00pm
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Bible Study

Advent/Epiphany Study

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Pator Deb

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Advent/Epiphany Study

Starts @ 5:30pm

303 S Hill Street

Fountain City, WI

Tuesday, December 5, 2023: When everything is wrong.

Tuesday, December 12, 2023: When Christmas isn't Christmas.

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Eagle Valley Church

Saturday, December 16, 2023

There will be an open invitation for all members of Hope United Church and St. John's Church to attend the Advent Vespers with Christmas Hymn Service on Saturday, December 16, 2023 at the Eagle Valley Church at 4:00pm. We'll share the Christmas story, sing favorite Christmas hymns and experience together this special time of the year. We hope you can join us.

The Church in Eagle Valley was historically preserved and donated to St. John's in 2003. Friends of Eagle Valley Community Church, an independent ecumenical committee, manages its use and maintains the restoration. As it is now named, this Community Church is available for any church to use for worship services, memorials, or weddings. In 2011 a pavilion with tables was added on the church grounds to accommodate gatherings of church or family.

EAGLE VALLEY CHURCH

Christmas Hymn Service @ 9:30am

Hope United Church & St. John's Church
Invitation
S2664 Co Rd G
Fountain City, WI



Christmas Eve Worship (Morning)

Sunday, December 24, 2023

There will be a Joint Morning Christmas Eve Worship at St. John's Church at 9:30am location in Fountain City, Wisconsin.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Joint Worship @ 9:30am

Christmas Eve Worship (Evening)

Sunday, December 24, 2023

Hope United Church will have a Afternoon Christmas Eve Worship in Cochrane on Sunday, December 24 at 4:00pm.

HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Candlelight Service @ 4:00pm

Online Calendar

Keep Informed

Visit us online for up-to-date information on special events and Hope United Church news.

hopeunitedcochrane.org/calendar.html

Fifth Sunday Service

Sunday, December 31, 2023

Hope United Church is invited to join Worship Services with St. John's Church on Sunday, December 31, 2023 at 10:30am in Fountain City, Wisconsin.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Joint Worship @ 10:30am
303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI



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.

Hope Kids 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

Starts Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Ends Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Every Wednesday

Starting 3:15pm to 5:00pm