

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



This Sunday marks the beginning of Advent 2024! This year we are once again partnering with our friends at “A Sanctified Art” to bring HOPE another beautiful Advent theme, “Words for the Beginning.” Here is more about the theme from its creators:

“Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ’s birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on. In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings—large and small, personal and political. But Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new. Christ’s birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike—all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ’s story to an end. When we ourselves navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown.

We have crafted an Advent series filled with blessings, with the words we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. We imagined the words Mary would speak to her newborn son. What scriptures and stories would she impart to him? What lessons would she teach him as he grew? And so, our weekly themes may feel like the lessons we teach to children, but in reality, these are lessons we continue to learn and relearn as adults. They may sound like the messages we impart to loved ones during special ceremonies or sacred rituals. We intentionally selected scriptures that may be frequently used in weddings, ordination services, or baptisms. And so, **we invite you to enter this Advent season as if you are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will bolster you for the journey ahead.** As you journey through this season, may you find words for belovedness and hope. May you find words for beginning again. For no matter what you are facing, no matter what this new day brings, ***love is your beginning.***

We have some special tools to enhance your exploration of this Advent Season.

Make sure to pick up the following on the front table in the sanctuary:

1. A beautiful, full-color Advent devotional specific to this year’s theme
2. An advent calendar fit for individuals, families with children, or couples
3. An advent photo challenge grid so you can share your Advent journey with those in your social circles, and perhaps invite them in for the season!

Join us Sunday mornings at 9:30AM for inspirational worship and on Wednesday evenings for meal fellowship and a centering time of music, prayer, and word 5:45 -7:15PM.



The First Sunday of Advent | WORDS FOR THE BEGINNING
YOU ARE A BLESSING

JOY AND CELEBRATION

You are a blessing.
If you hear nothing else,
if the wind howls,
if your brain runs amok,
if rebuttals and denials line up like little toy soldiers,
then hear *this*—
you are a blessing.

I knew it the first moment I met you / heard your name / learned there are 7 billion of us
on this planet.
I knew it in my bones,
the way my feet know the way home.
You are a blessing.

For our creating God
breathed life into your being.
And there is simply no way that,
along with that life,
some of God's goodness
didn't slip right in.

So tell the rebuttals to rest.
Tell the toy soldiers to find another hill,
because this one is reserved for joy and celebration.
You are a blessing.
Breathe it in.

Poem by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

**THIS SUNDAY WE NEED:
ALTAR FLOWERS
IF YOU CAN SERVE PLEASE [SIGN UP HERE!](#)**

The Ministry of HOPE's Council: Naming Our Values Deep Look at Value 4

HOPE Values...

- All people without exception
- Serving generously
- Spiritual Nourishment
- **Our connection with creation**

This week I'd like to share more with you about our fourth and final value, "Our Connection with Creation." (For further background on HOPE Council's work on naming our values and information on the first 2 values, please see previous week's [TWAH articles](#)). As a reminder, all of our values branch out from our mission statement:

HOPE is called by God to look beyond ourselves.

We walk together in faith, treasuring all people and sharing with them the love, hope and acceptance that is in Christ.

From HOPE's inception, the people here have valued the beauty of God's creation, and particularly the plot of land we have been entrusted to care for. Over time this appreciation has grown to a wider concern for not just tending the land of our congregation's physical footprint, but to live into God's mandate in Genesis 1 to have dominion (responsibility) over what God had created. HOPE was an early partner with "Hope for Earth" (formerly "Hope for Creation), a River Falls organization *founded to create a hopeful, ecologically sustainable future through collaboration, education, partnerships, advocacy, and action. This partnered work began in 2014.*

In spring of 2021 the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Assembly (which we are part of) passed a resolution in [Support of Creation Care](#). This resolution encouraged individuals and congregations *to exemplify personal and institutional care for Creation by practicing energy conservation, purchasing energy efficient items, investing in renewable energy, and eliminating single-use plastics. It also encouraged all congregations in the synod to celebrate a four-week Season of Creation in the fall, and the Synod [to] provide preaching and worship resources for this season. In the summer and fall of 2021 a small group of HOPE members came together to form our own "Green Team" to explore early practices we could encourage and to plan for our first celebration of the Season of Creation. Then in spring of 2022 the NWSWI Assembly passed another resolution for "Care of Creation Green Teams" which stated, congregations in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin commit to taking the faithful step of caring for God's creation by forming congregational Green Teams whose on-going purpose is to promote awareness while challenging the congregation to implement effective practices that protect and promote the health of creation. HOPE was ahead of the curve for this work and our own team has assisted other local congregations in establishing their own. All of this work is rooted in long-standing theological understandings of the ELCA as discussed in the 1993 ELCA Social Statement, ["Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice."](#)*

The Ministry of HOPE's Council: Naming Our Values Deep Look at Value 4

In fall of 2023 during our Cottage Meeting conversations, multiple responses to the four questions that were asked revolved around an appreciation for God's creation as well as a concern for and call to care for creation. This was seen in comments like:

- I see God in my everyday life
... in nature, the earth, and the seasons
...in watching birds
- I have seen or experienced God at work through HOPE...
...when HOPE brings awareness about sustainability/environmental concerns and encourages people to think how they are being called to care for environment
...in outdoor services
- We sense God leading us
...Through our care of the environment and work with other community members/organizations
...To be wise with the use of our land and have it be used as a respite for community
- I think we value:
...sustainability
...environmental concern
...stewardship of the earth

During our council conversation this value continued to emerge. We all agreed that we have been richly blessed by this particular plot of God's creation. We know that our outdoor, "Winds of the Spirit" pavilion is a tremendous asset to our congregation and wider community. It is clear that our neighbors appreciate the community garden and nature trail spaces as a place of respite. As the development increases to the north of our facility, we appreciate the expanse of nature we still have and hope to use it in a way that honors God, our neighbors, and our mission. We celebrated that we have become 100% renewable and named that although it can be a "pinch" at times, we value the work we've done to reduce our use of one-time plastics across ministry teams. When HOPE has provided simple opportunities for people to practice new ways of being sustainable, they have embraced them. Our battery recycling, plastic film recycling, and celebration of the Season of Creation are examples of that. As "HOPE Journeys Forward" we pray that God guides us in our efforts to honor and tend to God's creation faithfully.

As you can see, this value is nestled in the work and beliefs of our own congregation, the city of River Falls, the synod which we are part of, and the wider Church body of the ELCA. It is a testimony to the beautiful ways in which we are strengthened by working together with other communities of faith and our local neighbors. God does amazing work when we look beyond ourselves!

What other ways would you like to see HOPE live into this value? How might valuing our connection with creation help us live out our faith more fully? What other relationships do you think it could help us strengthen? How might people experience God's grace through this value? Please join me in prayerfully pondering these questions.

Blessings,
Pastor Annie Ladnier

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS DECORATING!

All are invited at 9AM on Saturday, November 30th to help decorate for the season!

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024

ADVENT FAIR: WE HAD A BLAST LAST WEEK!

Thank you to all who made our 3rd Annual Advent Fair so much fun!
If these pictures make you jealous, make sure to join us next year!

A special thank you to:

Project Hosts: Darcy Boock, Andrea Boock, Sammy Brill, Karen Rodewald, Diane Clark, Paula Klacan & Linda Jacobson, Debra James, Sue & Sam Schuettpelz, Karen Brohaugh, and Pastor Annie

Meal Hosts: Congregational Life & Membership Ministry Team (Nancy Sailer, Karen Brohaugh, Vicki Siebold, Mary Thompson, Nancy Peters, Karen Hamilton, Leonard Juiare, & Jeff & Karen Rodewald)

Set-Up/Tear-Down: All involved!





This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



Advent Project Theme is “Words for the Beginning”

A Giving Tree with ornaments listing items for two families from Turning Point with gifts they would like for Christmas will be the main project. Gift cards to Target/Walmart need to be received at church by **December 8th** so that the older youth can go and shop for the gifts.

Gas cards are also needed. Darcy Boock has \$25 and \$50 Kwik Trip gas cards that can be purchased from her that will also benefit Our Neighbors Place.

Items that will be purchased by members of the congregation (who have taken an ornament with an item listed on it) need to be received at church no later than **December 15th**. All gifts need to be unwrapped and will be delivered to Turning Point on **December 16th**.

There will also be items on the tree that can be purchased throughout the duration of Advent to be collected for Turning Point and Our Neighbors Place

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



Lefse Day

You don't have to be Norwegian to spend a morning at HOPE making lefse. Please join us on **Saturday, December 14th 10:30**. Bring your own lefse dough, one quart ziploc type bags, griddle, turning stick etc. The tasty lefse will be sold during fellowship time on **December 15th**



Christmas Bake Sale

Baked goods and holiday treats are needed for HOPE's Bake Sale on **Sunday, December 15th**. Proceeds from your lefse, cookies, bars, breads, pies, cakes, snacks, candy etc. will be donated to the River Falls Backpack Program. Remember to bring your checkbook or cash so you can go home with some delicious homemade goodies.

Please price your baked goodies before the sale!



College Care Packages

Congregational Life & Membership would like to remember our college students as they are preparing to take their semester finals.

Please submit your students' addresses (*your children, grandchildren, or nieces and nephews*) addresses by November 24th.

You can fill their names and addresses to Olive via email to [hopelutheranoffice.rf@gmail.com](mailto:hopolutheranoffice.rf@gmail.com)

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



United Way St. Croix & Red Cedar Valleys and the River Falls Rotary Club would like to express our heartfelt thanks for your support of the recent River Falls community diaper and baby wipes drive. Our goal was to have 15,000 diapers and 15,000 baby wipes donated to the United Way diaper bank for distribution in our area. As a result of the support from local churches and the River Falls elementary schools – Greenwood, Montessori, Rocky Branch, Westside and St. Bridget Parish – the drive was a huge success. **47,665** diapers were donated as well as **62,640** baby wipes. We appreciate your kindness and generosity.



Greetings and Happy Thanksgiving!

Thank you again for hosting the November 22nd HOPE Lutheran Church blood program.

We saw **20 total donors**, collected **21 units of blood**, **6 of which critical need blood types** through Power Red donations. When divided into 3 separate blood products, we have the potential to help up to **63 patients** in need in the coming weeks!

Thank you again for your participation!

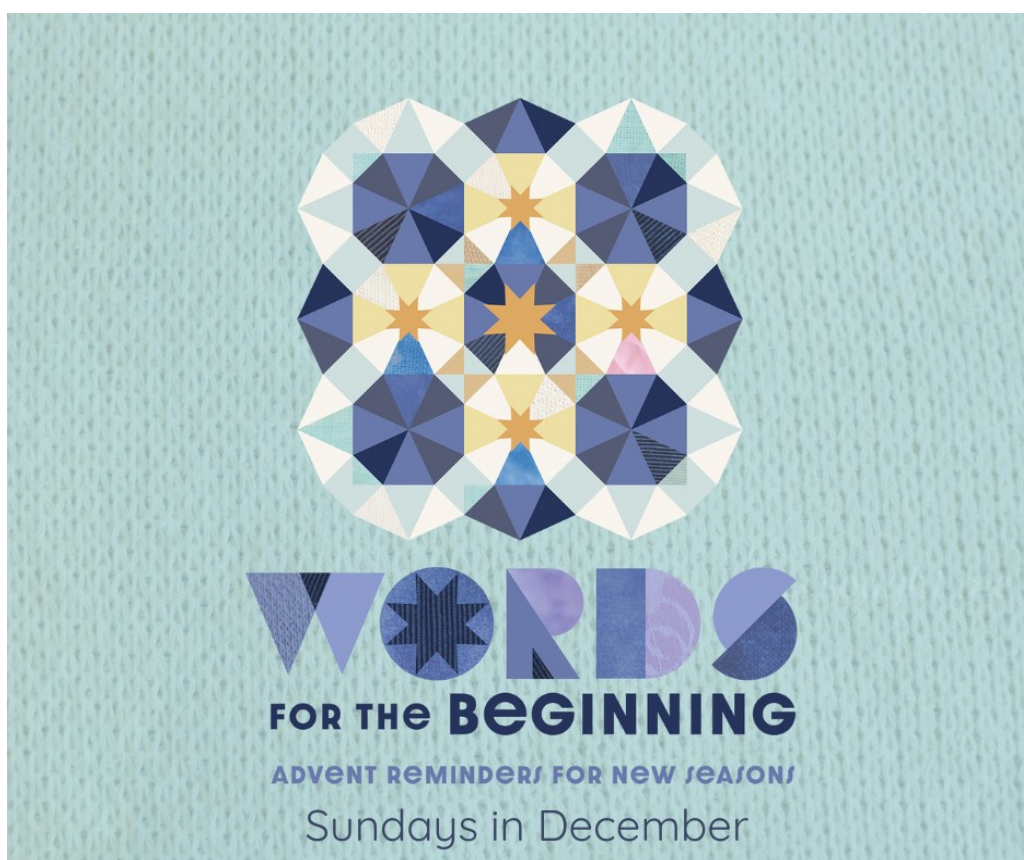
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Did you know HOPE is on Facebook in TWO places?? Public HOPE Facebook Page

For public information, events, and Gospel sharing
Private HOPE Facebook Group

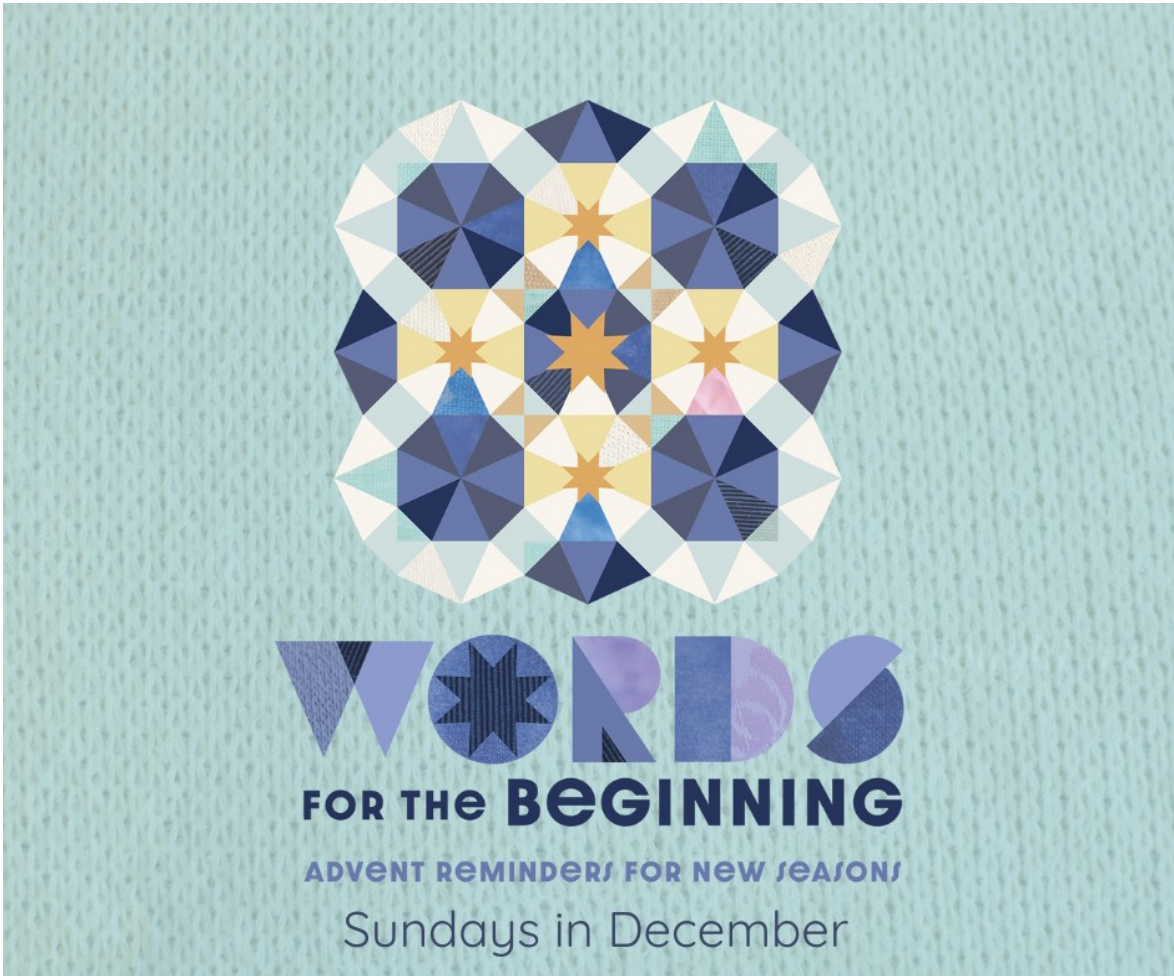
For private events, picture sharing, sharing joys & prayer concerns,
and living out our faith together
Make sure to like, follow, and join both to stay up to date!



This Week at HOPE November 26, , 2024



COMMUNITY EVENTS HAPPENING THIS SEASON



Join us for a FREE drive through

Living Nativity

December 7&8 from 5-7pm each night

Our Christmas gift to you! Drive through scenes with actors and live animals that depict the events of Jesus' birth.



First Covenant Church
1374 N. Main Street
River Falls, WI

Across from Kwik Trip
Enter from Quarry Road
rfcov.org

SPANISH LANGUAGE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Saturday, December 22nd

2:30PM

First Covenant Church

1374 N Main St, River Falls WI 54022

A festive poster for a holiday sing-along. The background is light beige with white snowflake patterns and hanging Christmas ornaments in shades of blue, gold, and grey. A Santa hat is on one of the ornaments. The text "Songs & Suds" is written in a large, green, cursive font, with "Holiday Sing-Along" in a smaller, grey, cursive font below it. A light blue box contains the event details: "Monday Dec. 16, 6:30 pm @ Rush River Brewery Everyone is welcome!". To the left of the box is a glass of beer, and to the right is a guitar and musical notes.

Songs & Suds
Holiday Sing-Along

Monday Dec. 16, 6:30 pm
@ Rush River Brewery
Everyone is welcome!

Carols and Candles

Sunday, December 8, 4pm

Carols and Candles Choir Rehearsals

Monday, Nov. 11, 6:30pm

Monday, Nov. 25, 6:30pm

Monday, Nov. 18, 6:30pm

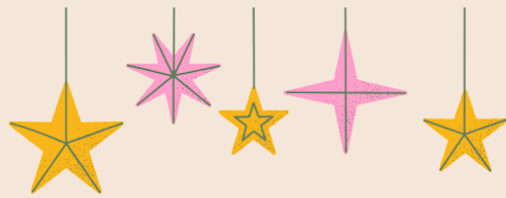
Monday, Dec. 2, 6:30pm

Saturday, Dec. 7, 9:30am

The Carols and Candles Choir welcomes all singers of all abilities, high school age and up. Attend as many rehearsals as your busy schedule allows. Join the choir this year, bring a friend, and enjoy Christmas in song!



DECK THE HOUSE



AND SOCIAL

JOIN OTHER FRIENDS AND OUR PARTNERS FOR A FUN CELEBRATION AS WE DECORATE THE HOUSE FOR CHRISTMAS.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP JOURNEY HOUSE?

- DONATE OLD CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS,
- GIFT A FINANCIAL GIFT,
- SIGN UP TO BE A JOURNEY HOUSE FRIEND.

DROP OFF DONATED CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS ANY TIME BEFORE DECEMBER 8TH.

12/8/2024
1:00PM -3:00PM

JOURNEY HOUSE
143 E. Cascade Avenue
River Falls, WI 54022



This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



Sunday, December 1, 6:30 PM
Meet at Veteran's Park
All are welcome!



HOPE FOR EARTH INVITES YOU TO:

Entering Advent

A CANDLELIGHT RIVER WALK



We will gather by our beautiful
Kinnickinnic River to walk,
reflect, and greet Advent

Please bring a flashlight
Check www.hopeforearth.org
in the event of bad weather



ELCA Truth & Healing Movement Opportunities!

Last November, Rev. Sara Bishop, NWSWI Synod Advocate for Right Relationship, joined us for an Indigenous People's service and learning opportunity on a synod resolution for Land Acknowledgements. Since then we have been studying and learning more from our indigenous siblings. We have read and discussed *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*, have learned more about the *Doctrine of Discovery* and the ELCA's repudiation of it, and broadened our conversation to wider civic life and faith concerns as we explore how our past informs our present. All of these efforts are in line with the ELCA's wider work, "The Truth and Healing Movement," which serves to put legs onto our official repudiation statement. This fall there have been a number of opportunities for further exploration, learning, repentance, hope, and looking toward a more just future together. As we move into the winter, opportunities continue to be available on the [ELCA's Truth and Healing Movement website!](#) Make sure to check back often to continue to challenge your understanding and grow in your love of our native siblings.

Our next upcoming opportunity will be on **January 19, 2025** when you are invited to join Pastor Annie for a discussion on *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* by Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux). This book has been commended to us through the ELCA's Truth and Healing Movement's new Reading Circle. This is an opportunity for us to participate in a much wider conversation across the ELCA in its many expressions. This will be the second book written by an indigenous author that we will explore together in Christian community here at HOPE. This author brings with him a theological perspective, having graduated from one of our ELCA Seminaries, Lutheran School of Theology.

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



WEDNESDAYS 5:45-7:15!

Fall Session: September 18th-November 20th

Fall session ends with our cross-gen Advent Fair on November 20th!

THIS DECEMBER:

All WOH families are invited to join the wider HOPE congregation for our mid-week Advent meal & worship services:

Dec. 4, 11, & 18th

5:45: Meal

6:15: Holden Evening Worship

Winter Session: January 8th-February 26th

Exploring: New Testament stories, Parts of Worship, Souper Bowl, and BINGO

All K-10+ children and youth are encouraged to register and attend!

Friends are always welcome!

3 Sessions throughout the year:

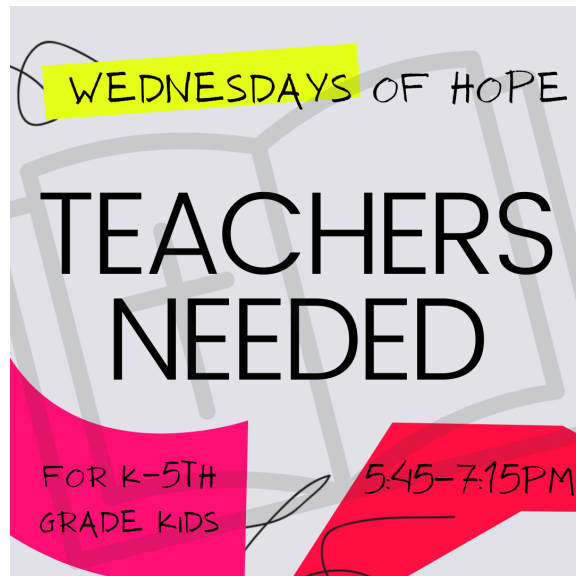
Spring Session: April 30-May 21

MEALS NOW PROVIDED EVERY WEEK!

Click below for more info & to register:

[2024-2025 WEDNESDAYS OF HOPE REGISTRATION](#)

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



[TEACHER SIGN UP HERE](#)



WEDNESDAYS OF HOPE MEAL HOSTS NEEDED! [SIGN UP HERE AT THIS NEW LINK!](#)

This year we would like to provide a SIMPLE, kid-friendly meal each Wednesday evening for our Wednesdays of HOPE ministry. This helps families participate in our ministry with one less thing to worry about on a busy weeknight, helps our youth and mentors connect over a meal, and provides an opportunity for other HOPE adults to engage with our children and youth!

Meals need to be ready at 5:45 and we expect to serve 15-20 people total. *Free Will donations will be collected to offset expenses. Donations of money for pizza nights are also being accepted.*

Please prayerfully consider if you/your ministry team would like to host a meal this year! Fall session is currently our biggest need!

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



Please lift up the following people in prayer

Steve and Diane Meyer

Ethan Sailer (Family Friend of Faye Perkins)

Family of Rosina Hendrikson (Family of Mary Thompson)

Ellen Roose

Andy Haugen (Relative of Ellen Roose)

Derrek Lettich (Relative of Karen Brohaugh)

The Family of Teresa Jonas (Friend of Kay & Bill Montgomery)

Connie Juaire

Scott Uring (Friend of Jeff & Karen Rodewald)

John Cain (Family friend of Olive Olson)

Robb Scott

The Family of Woody Fangmeier (Friends of Jeff & Karen Rodewald)

Family of Kermit Paulson

Marcus Stack (Friend of Steve & Karen Kaste)

Jeremy Martinson (Brother-in-Law to Elise Forward)

Family of Teajai Schmidt (relative of the Boocks)

Jacob Dan and family (Friends of Jeff Rodewald)

Patricia Miller (Sister of Carl Warren)

Rhiannon Bondhus (Niece of Bondhus family)

Lori Snyder (Friend of Nancy & David Peters)

Ed and Gwen Paulson

Randy Dopkins (Family friend of Olive Olson)

Eden Annoye (Relative of Debra James)

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)

Hannah Forward

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

Daryl Kleeman (brother of Darcy Boock)

David Boock (Relative of the Boocks)

Lee Hill (friend of Naomi)

Gary Siebold

David Hendrickson

This Week at HOPE November 26, 2024



November Birthdays

Dianne H-Robinson	1-Nov
Linda Yde	1-Nov
Greta Wunrow	3-Nov
Diane Meyer	5-Nov
Linda Jacobson	7-Nov
Grace Hansen	8-Nov
Heathley Neuhaus	8-Nov
Charles Bricton	16-Nov
Mallory James	16-Nov
Mikey Langlois	16-Nov
Karen Rodewald	21-Nov
Phillip Klacan	22-Nov
Deb Tokheim	29-Nov



November Baptisms

McKenna Brill
Karen Brohaugh
Russ Jiskra
Jane Terkelsen
Dan Rodewald
Linda Yde



November Anniversaries

Steve & Diane Meyer
Nick & Stacia Johnson
Annie & Lucas Ladnier

Date
25-Nov
08-Nov
07-Nov

Years to Celebrate

46
16
9

This Week at HOPE November 20, 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](#)



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.

Discussion time includes group check-in, opening meditation, and study of the week's worship texts.

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88419155061?pwd=di9hUXlraeDdzM0dCK0pPMDNtbHczZz09>