

HOPE LUTHERAN ELCA

Hope Journeys Forward

*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.*

December 15, 2011

Lefse Saturday & Bake Sale Sunday

Everyone is invited to assist with lefse making on Saturday, December 17, 9:00 am in the First Congregational Kitchen. Look for a sign-up sheet next week. **No previous experience with lefse is required**, just come and find out how it's done.

The lefse will be sold after worship on the 18th. We invite everyone to bring holiday cookies, bars, breads, candy etc., to donate to the sale. Craft items will also be accepted. **Please price all bake sale goodies and crafts before bringing them to church on the 18th.** *All bake sale proceeds are going to Hope's Travel Fund supporting our delegates to the New Orleans ELCA Youth Gathering in July 2012.*

Quart size zip lock bags are needed for lefse packaging.

New Orleans Bound! Students are encouraged to help package lefse and candies for the HOPE Bake Sale. Please join in the activity on **Saturday, December 17th**. Baking, wrapping, etc. will take place at the UCC Church. Plan to arrive by 10:00. Many thanks!

*Children's Program
Sunday, December 18th
9:30 am*

This is an ALL CALL for children who will be participating in the Children's Christmas Program (its not too late!)
Speaking parts mandatory attendance!
Practice Sat. AM - 9:30 - 10:45 at Newman Center
Costumes will be given out and we will practice songs with piano.



To all Carols and Candles participants:

Thank you so much for your gift of words and music for last Sunday's Carols and Candles. The service was made special by your continued dedication to Hope and to your love of the music and the message of the season. Without you this wonderful service would not be possible. Compliments and congratulations to all of you!

With deep appreciation,

--Phil and Paula Klacan

Prayers are requested for:
Kris Allen (friend of Linda Jacobson & Bill Warner), Zora Anderson (HOPE member), Gordon Brandt (Jerry's brother), Amanda Brown, Grace Coggio & family (friends of the Lesmeister family), Jody Fink, Avery Gallagher, Ruth Hilleren (Sue Warren's mother), June Hirsch, Cindy Hogan, Gloria Jacobson (Linda Jacobson's mother), Mike Jacobson (Linda Jacobson's brother), Lynn Jermal (friend of Linda Jacobson), Tammy Johnson (friend of Tonja Lesmeister), Living Water Lutheran Church (Cameron, WI), Pat Lubich (Jeff Rodewald's aunt), Hannah Manche & the Manche Family (friends of Teresa Ginn), Chris Pageant (friend of Jeff Carlson), Elaine Peterson (Sharon Paulson's mother), Patrice Rasmussen (friend of Anne Anderson), Derrick Ricketts (Latidra Lesmeister's Grandfather), Ervin Schmidt (Lisa Rydland's father), the Schoen family (Jeff Rodewald's cousins) and Matthew Schultz (Pastor Carol's brother).

We pray for our sister parish, the Mwanza Mission Area in Malawi that they may grow in Spirit and grace. We also pray for our sister synod Sinodo Centro Campanha Sul in Brazil. We also pray for Robins Nest Children's Home & Melody House Home for Girls.

Prayer requests can be sent at anytime.

Please notify HopeNotes when you would like a prayer request removed.

Sunday, December 11th

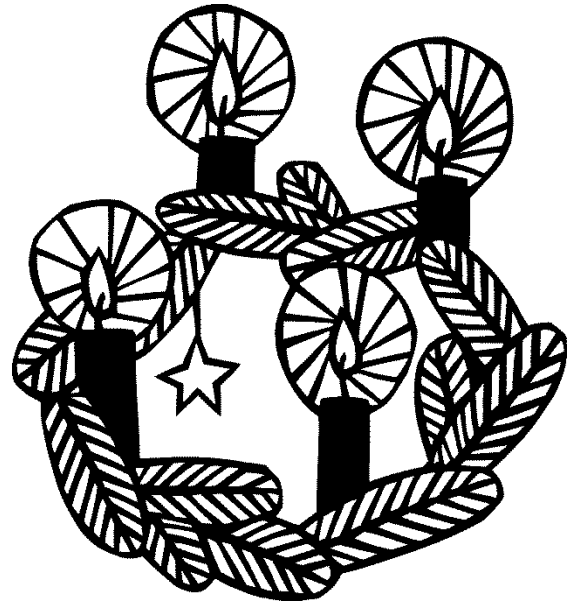
General Fund - \$1,818.00

Building Fund - \$412.00

Our Neighbor's Place - \$20.00

Food Shelf - \$10.00

Attendance - 86



HOPE Confirmation News

CONFIRMATION CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Families are invited to gather for faith-focused festivities of food, fun and fellowship!

Gather at *Servant of the Shepherd*, Wednesday December 21st beginning at 6:30.

Please RSVP by Sunday, December 18th to the church office via phone #715-425-9750 or email pastor@hopelutheran-riverfalls.org

Last names beginning with: A – G please bring a side dish
 H – P please bring a main dish
 Q – Z please bring a sweet or treat

(Students, remember we'll share the scripture verse and a fond memory of our first semester together.)

Parents of High School Youth:

We could use your help! Even though HOPE's youth are busy, involved people, we'd love to build an identity as **HS Youth of HOPE**. Communicating is tricky since most of them don't use old school e-mail:-) and their schedules are only partly under their control.

SO, we're asking that you be their "social secretary"--pin them down on what they're interested in and available for, and **RSVP for them**. It's difficult to plan when we don't know if there will be one, two, or fifteen!

While we're open to making events happen as there is interest, we're hoping to make the "re-occurring rock" the "HS Youth Breakfast on HOPE" where we go out for breakfast after church **on the third Sunday of each month**. The church as "host" picks up the bill!

This Sunday, December 18 is a **third Sunday** and to celebrate the holidays, breakfast will be at the Loudon/Hedahl's home at 1765 Golf View Dr after church at 10:45 ish. If transportation is tricky, just let us know and we'll get people here and there. (**Home phone: 426-6082 or call/ e-mail the church office.**)

Menu: Made to order pancakes--various add-in's and batter at the ready! Bacon, juice, etc.

Activity: caramel wrapping and cookie decorating--baking for those who can hang out awhile. Everyone can assemble their own cookie tray to give away. We'll brainstorm likely candidates.

Thanks for your help, parents! One last note--we've been telling them that bringing a friend is always appropriate--just add them to the count.

Blessings to all of you as we continue to prepare for this year's celebration of that miraculous gift--Jesus.

Jean Loudon, Nurture Chair and Fan of Teens

Pastor Sandy

P.S. As you hear things from your teen that will help guide our planning, please pass it on!

Leading Us in Worship	
	December 18
	NTF
	Children's Program
Presiding Minister	Sandy Johnson
Assisting Minister	Sammy Brill
Pianist	Michael Stang
Reader & Prayers	Dan Wunrow
Ushers	Joe McIntosh & Jed Reiten
Acolyte	Carly Wunrow
Coffee	Nancy Peters

Leading Us in Worship – Christmas Services			
	December 24 - 5:00 PM	December 24 – 10:00 PM	December 25 – 9:30 AM
	NTF	NTF	Setting #4
Presiding Minister	Pastor Sandra Johnson	Pastor Sandra Johnson	Pastor Sandra Johnson
Assisting Minister	Bill Berndt	Grant Klacan	Carl Warren
Pianist	Betty Lou Oppegard	Phil Klacan	Phil Klacan
Reader & Prayers	Milo Oppegard	Kathy Scott	David Peters
Ushers	Jerry Brandt & Jeff Carlson	Lisa & Spencer Ziebarth	Need a Volunteer
Special Music	Anna Skelton – Vocals Michael Stang - Instrumental	Carrie Hendrickson	Carl Warren
Communion Preparation	Margaret Anderson	Margaret Anderson	Margaret Anderson
Communion Assistants	Naomi & Jerry Brandt	Need a Volunteer	John & Karen Hamilton
Acolyte	Camryn Shea	Spencer Ziebarth	Camryn Shea
Coffee			No Coffee
Bread Bakers	Jed Reiten	Jed Reiten	Jed Reiten

Leading Us in Worship		
	January 1	January 8
	Setting #4	NTF
	Food Shelf Sunday	
Presiding Minister	Pastor Sandy	Pastor Sandy
Assisting Minister	Need Volunteer	Need Volunteer
Pianist	Betty Lou Oppegard	Phil Klacan
Reader & Prayers	Ethel Johnson	
Ushers	David Hendrickson & Steve Koecher	Ed & Gwen Paulson
Special Music		
Communion Preparation	Darcy Boock	Darcy Boock
Communion Assistants	Need Volunteer	Need Volunteer
Acolyte	Need Volunteer	Ethan Sailer
Coffee	Need Volunteer	Need Volunteer
Bread Bakers	Karen Hamilton	Karen Hamilton

A Christmas Message from Bishop Pederson

Most of us will be in worship on Christmas Eve. We'll listen to Luke 2, the nativity account beloved by most, and we will envision a manger scene with animals and angels and three gift-bearing kings. Our tradition creates a glow around this scene — star light illuminating the baby Jesus surrounded by the adoration of various players in a holy drama.

Our tradition has made it somewhat crowded around the manger. Our tradition tends to favor a cattle feeder in a wooden shed, not the possibility of a cave commonly used as animal pens. Never mind that the angels left after announcing the birth; never mind that no animals are mentioned in the story; never mind that gift-bearing men are not identified as three or kings or that they wouldn't make an appearance until much, much later. Yet, we crowd all of these details and characters into a sentimental image we hold about the birth of Jesus.

Confession: I am not that sentimental. I am perfectly content to remove the animals and angels and three kings, and all the other unattested, pietistic additions to the scene of the manger, *so that there can be room **for you and me!***

You see, it's very comforting to crowd this Christmas scene with all kinds of pretty images that make us feel good. But the danger is that we fill that scene so full that we don't really have to get ourselves into the picture. I want *you* to get in there!

The traditional image might be cherished and lovely, but the sentimental image is not necessarily what we need, even though it may be what we like. The *child* is what we need, and it may be that many of us who celebrate the birth of Jesus *need* to unclutter our picture of the manger a bit, so that the Christ who came to save us can actually get close to us; *close enough to allow the newborn Jesus to unsettle our lives.*

For Jesus has a habit of embracing the lost, the least, and the last, and calls us to do the same.

For Jesus completely claims us as his own, and invites faith and commitment completely in him.

For Jesus reveals God's grace in his self-giving, and bids us to share this same unmerited love with all, even the most undesirable or difficult to love.

There is no guarantee that this child is going to bring you the warm fuzzies many of us look for when we hear the Christmas story, light the candles, and sing of a silent night. But this child *will* bring you a sense of God's nearness, a promise of love that will never end, and meaning for your life that sustains through thick and thin. Note that the story itself doesn't do that. The child does. A story crowded with pietistic, sentimental notions will not do this. The Christ who calls you unto himself does.

Merry *Uncrowded* Christmas!

Bishop Duane C. Pederson

Calendar

Saturday, Dec. 17	9:00 am	Lefse Making @ First Congregational Church
	9:30 – 10:45 am	Children's Program dress rehearsal
Sunday, Dec. 18	9:30 am	Children's Program
	10:15 am	Bake Sale & Craft Sale
		"Breakfast on Hope" @ Jean Louden's
Monday, Dec. 19	7:00 pm	Council meeting @ River Falls library
Wednesday, Dec. 21	6:30-7:45pm	Confirmation: Family Christmas Gathering
Friday, Dec. 23	6:45 pm	Bowling for HOPE, St. Croix Lanes
Saturday, Dec. 24	5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
	10:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
Sunday, Dec. 25	9:30 am	Worship (No Sunday School)

Save the Date

- ❖ HOPE'S annual Burning of the Greens will be at Rodewald's on **Sunday, January 8 at 4:00 pm**. This is a FUN FAMILY EVENT so please plan to attend whether you have Christmas greens to burn or not. There will be a sheet on the HOPE TABLE for you to indicate what you'd like to bring for supper (soup, bread etc.).

In this season of giving we want to express our gratitude for your pledges and gifts that move the mission and ministry of HOPE forward. Trusting that all we have has been entrusted to us, we as God's good stewards, return these gifts by sharing our time, talents and our treasures. Thank you for sharing.

Income	Current Month 11-30-2011	Year to Date	Over (under) monthly budget	Monthly	Loan Balance 11-1-11	Annual Budget	Over (under) annual budget thro 11-30-11
Offering	\$6,641.85	\$90,711.32	(\$1,965.90)	\$8,607.75		\$103,293.00	(\$3,973.93)
Building	\$3,123.00	\$40,387.62	(\$452.00)	\$3,575.00	\$215,650.00	\$42,900.00	\$1,062.62
Mission gifts	\$380.00	\$3,854.41					
Benevolence NWSynod	\$664.18	\$9,421.51					
Robin's Nest	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00					



Daytime Book Group January information will be posted soon!



Evening Book Group The Evening book club will meet next at 7:00 pm on January 30th at Bill & Kay Montgomery's home. They will discuss The Lord is My Shepherd by Rabbi Harold Kushner.



Happy Birthday to the following Hope members & friends

- | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|
| 12/1 | Kaija Warner | 12/14 | Ryan Hartleben |
| 12/2 | Zoe Tokheim | 12/15 | Ty Tokheim |
| 12/3 | Amy Kolpin | 12/17 | Delores Sylte |
| 12/3 | Derick Graves | 12/17 | Grete Rehbein |
| 12/3 | Alexis Rehbein | 12/17 | Karen Hamilton |
| 12/5 | Mark Bondhus | 12/20 | Sherry Powell |
| 12/7 | Tim Steinhoff | 12/26 | Jana Elsesser |
| 12/10 | Deb Goree | 12/27 | Rachael Engesether |
| 12/11 | Judy Karshbaum | 12/27 | Alyssa Boock |
| 12/11 | Nancy Christensen | 12/29 | Fred Lemke |
| 12/11 | Wendy Tokheim | 12/30 | Carter Egerstrom |
| 12/14 | Lucas Hartleben | | |



Happy Anniversary to the following Hope members & friends

- 12/19 Sarah & Ben Casper
- 12/11 Pr. Sandy Johnson & Jed Reiten
- 12/27 Kari & Gregg Heinselman (25th Anniversary!!)
- 12/31 Jean Loudon & Gorden Hedahl

***Please contact the church office if a birthday/anniversary has been missed!**

Community Announcements

Interfaith Volunteers are needed to transport and man to Hudson twice a week for the YMCA, companion with a man in River Falls, assist a woman with bookwork and rides to the stores, light housekeeping for a woman in her apartment, errands to the grocery store for a woman. For information contact Nancy at 715-381-4360 or email nancya@co.saint-croix.wi.us

You are invited to attend:

BLUE CHRISTMAS

What is *BLUE CHRISTMAS*?

It is a feeling of being “blue or down.” For some people, Christmas is NOT a joyful time, but one of increased stress and feeling overwhelmed. Stress may come from pressure and expectations of our family and friends as well as advertisements pressuring us to buy more than we can afford. BLUE can manifest if there has been an illness, death, family problems, loss of job or home, divorce, loneliness, or sad and painful memories.

Please join Dr. Mary Del Vecchio and Mary Camber, Pastoral Minister & Chaplain, as we gather to acknowledge our BLUE and, as a Christian community, to offer each other HOPE and SUPPORT through prayer, music and reflection.

Date: Monday, December 19, 2011

Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. with social to follow.

Location: Upper Room at St. Bridget Catholic Church. (There is elevator access to this room.)

Questions: Contact Mary Camber at 715-425-1879, x120, or e-mail visitation@stbparish.com

Seventh Annual Twelfth Night Concert

Presented by Twin Cities Bronze

The Premiere Handbell Ensemble

of Minneapolis-St. Paul

Saturday, 7 January 2012

Peace United Methodist Church

5050 Hodgson Road

Shoreview, Minnesota

2:00 p.m.

Tickets **In Advance:**

Adults \$ 10.00

Children (under 12) \$5.00

Family Pak: \$ 25.00(2 Adults + children under 12)

Tickets: **At The Door:** \$ 15.00

Order and purchase tickets at: www.twincitiesbronze.org

Gift Basket Auction

Dessert Reception after the Concert

Featuring HOPE Member
Alyssa Boock



HOPE Lutheran Church
Pastor Sandy Johnson

P.O. Box 287
River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-9750

Office address:
117 E. Maple St., Suite C
(Entrance behind
Travel Leaders/Suntime Travel)

The HOPE office is staffed
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday
10:30 – 12:30 a.m.

Feel free to contact Pastor
Sandy to schedule an
appointment!

HOPE's website:
hopelutheran-riverfalls.org

Pastor Sandy's email:
pastor@hopelutheran-riverfalls.org

Teresa's email:
secretary@hopelutheran-riverfalls.org

Facebook:
hopelutheranchurchriverfallswi

Skype:
hopelutheranchurchriverfalls

ADRC - Aging and Disability Resource Center for St. Croix County

The ADRC is once again sponsoring a Secret Santa Program. The purpose of the program is to brighten the lives of older adults and persons with disabilities, who may be alone on the holiday, suffered loss, have limited means or no family in the area. Is there someone in HOPE's congregation who would benefit and enjoy receiving a little surprise around the holiday season? If so, please email tracyd@co.saint-croix.wi.us with the name, address and phone of the individual(s). Self referrals are also accepted.

Secret Santa gift bags will be put together the week of December 12th and be ready for delivery later that week. If you would like to contribute a monetary donation to the Secret Santa Program, that would be appreciated. Please call (715) 381-4360 for more information.

Quick Links - Please click on the following links to visit these suggested sites:

NWSWI

Synod Resource Center

ELCA

Living Lutheran

Cherish Our Children

Lay School of Ministry

Announcement Deadlines

Send announcements to secretary@hopelutheran-riverfalls.org

Website by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays

Hope Notes by 9:00 a.m. on Thursdays

Bulletin by 9:00 a.m. on Fridays

