



For The JOURNEY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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With Christ as our center, we are called to reach out and share God's love with all.

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A Message from Bishop Hee-Soo Jung: God Is With Us - Emmanuel

[Source: www.wisconsinumc.org]



“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.” (Isaiah 43:1-2)

As I reflect on what may be coming in the days of the new year, I keep coming back to the famous Chinese poet, Li Bai (701-762) and his vision toward hope and life in face of the difficult challenges. Here is a passage from his poem, The Troubled Road:

*“The road is difficult, the life is difficult
There are many crossroads, so where am I standing now?
When the big wind comes when it meets the waves
(I will) cross the blue sea with my sail on the clouds right away”*

I am inspired by the simple truth that we sail across the troubled waters; that difficult roads are the normal part of life; that big winds do not necessarily knock us down, but fill our sails to take us to new places. And with the assurance of the prophet Isaiah, as we pass through these uncharted waters into new realities, we know that God is with us.

This is the message of Christmas and the powerful attraction of Epiphany. Emmanuel, God with us, draws wise travelers across difficult roads, perhaps even stormy seas, to seek out new opportunities and possibilities – life-changing and transforming. The roads that Joseph, Mary, the baby Jesus, and the magi traveled were dangerous and difficult roads, but they were essential roads. Without passage through the troubles, the glorious will of God could not be fulfilled.

(Continued Page 2)



ZOOM LINK for ALL ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

<https://umcom.zoom.us/j/94890292077?pwd=ekxnanU5THc2eEdLK1ZpRIIKYUZ4QT09>

OR Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 948 9029 2077 / Password: 512603

(Bishop Hee-Soo Jung's Message – continued from page 1)

Following the end of this 2020 pandemic year – a year fraught with dangers of racial injustice, brutality, wildfires and hurricanes, contentious political debate and division – we may well be looking for calmer waters, and a return to a greater sense of security, safety, and comfort. Perhaps this will be the gift of 2021, but perhaps not. Perhaps our difficult road, our wind-tossed sea, is not at an end. Only God can tell.

But there are some significant realities that we have as we move forward, and they are simple but powerful.

First, God is with us. Never lose sight of this. When the road is difficult, when the storms of life rage, when all feels unsafe and unfamiliar, know this: God is with us. No matter who leads the country from the White House, what viruses and plagues spread through our world, what new natural disaster fostered through climate change, what the volatile stock market is doing: God is with us. The recurrent message of Advent carries forward through the new year: fear not. God is with us.

Second, God's gifts to us did not end with Jesus, but continued through the call to Christian fellowship and community: we have each other. The glorious vision of Jesus, the disciples and apostles, and all the leaders of the early Christian movement is unity in Christ. By our faith, by our baptism, by our commitment to Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are "one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world." Some weaker voices may cry out for division and exclusion, but the true result of the gospel is this: in Christ, we have each other.

Third, we have a purpose and a call: "to discern what is the will of God; "what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2b). What does the Lord require from us? "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8b). Or, keeping it as simple as Jesus, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). And as the incarnate body of Christ, we serve Christ best when we feed the hungry, give the thirsty something to drink, welcome the immigrant, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit those in prison. Then we hear Jesus affirmation, "Truly I say, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:31-46). When we stay focused on seeking, understanding, and carrying out the will of God, we pass through troubled waters in power and strength.

As I prepare my heart and mind for 2021, Li Bai's question haunts and compels me: "There are many crossroads, so where am I standing now?" I am standing on the rock of my salvation (2 Samuel 22:47). I am standing on the promises of God (Galatians 3:21). I am standing with Peter and the apostles as they proclaim the good news: God is with us (Acts 2:14-21).

The journey of faith is not always an easy one, but like the magi we follow the blessed light of God to our Savior and Prince of Peace. We may struggle. We may suffer. We may grieve and worry and sacrifice. But it will all be well, because at the end of our journey is the blessing of the Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, God is with us, every step of the way. Let us rejoice in the gift of the new year – come what may – and let us lift our voices in praise: thanks be to God!

Monthly Sermon Series

- January 3 Epiphany Sunday - Matthew 2:1-12
- January 10 Baptism of the Lord - Mark 1:4-11
- January 17 Second Sunday after the Epiphany - John 1:43-51
- January 24 Third Sunday after the Epiphany - Mark 1:4-20
- January 31 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany - Mark 1:21-28

January Scripture Readers:

- January 10 Ruth Nyland
- January 17 LeeAnn Richards
- January 24 Stacey Curtis
- January 31 Connie Jacobsen



The Administration Council has been diligently working to come up with our church goal for 2021. Because of COVID-19, some of the activities will be on hold until it is safe to gather again.

Hope's Goals for 2021:

- Create and develop an intergenerational ministry that provides for the current members while reaching out to the surrounding neighborhood and community.
- Facilitate a connection between Hope congregants with people in the neighborhood and community: ex. Dinner Church...
- Continue reaching out to children and young families in the community: ex. Trunk or Treat...
- Support young families by continuing to develop the connection with Meadowview school and the neighborhood: ex. Kids meal program, Little Library...

UPCOMING EVENTS



NOTICE: Other than Sunday Worship, in-person activities are on hold until we have more direction regarding when we will be able to meet.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- Jan 4th Nurture Committee 5:00pm
- Jan 4th Faith Formation 6:30pm
- Jan 10th Trustees 10:45am
- Jan 11th SPRC 5:30pm
- Jan 11th Finance 6:30pm
- Jan 18th Ad Board Meeting 6:30pm

Northwest District Gathering 2021

Radical Hospitality

January 23rd
9am-4pm

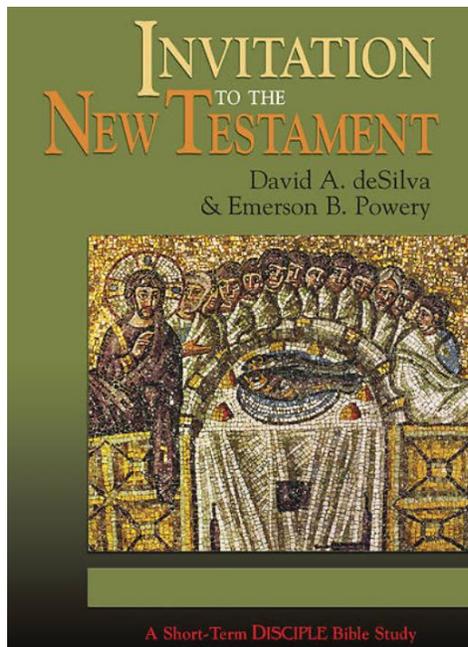
(more details Page 5)

FAITH FORMATION NEWS

DISCIPLE Bible Study

Wednesdays at 6:00pm

January 6th – February 24th



VIRTUAL YOUTH GROUP

**All Youth Zoom Check-In
Wed, January 13th
at 6:30p**



NORTHWEST DISTRICT NEWS

North West District Gathering 2021: Radical Hospitality

January 23, 2021, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Zoom Workshop via Zoom

Join us for worship, training, conversation, and celebrating our district.

Objectives for the day:

1. Learn discipleship methods (in person and virtual)
2. Relaunch and revision church culture in 2021
3. Connect to available resources

Speakers: Rev. Rachel Gilmore, Director, Recruiting, Assessing & Training for Church Planting and Rev. Bryan Tener, Director, Contextual Evangelism, Community Engagement & Church Planting/Path 1.

Register: eventbrite.com/e/north-west-district-gathering-radical-hospitality-in-2021-tickets-133598834711

Apportionment dollars make this workshop possible.



J.O.N.A.H. NEWS & UPDATES

(Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope)

JANUARY CALENDAR

- January 6 – Criminal Justice Task Force, 5pm Zoom
- January 7 – Affordable Housing Task Force, 5:30pm Zoom
- January 7 – Environmental Task Force, 7pm Zoom
- January 10 – JONAH Board Retreat, 3-6pm Zoom
- January 11 – Executive Committee, 10:15am Zoom
- January 11 – EXPO Meeting
- January 12 – Religious Leaders Gathering, 12:30pm Zoom
- January 12 – Interfaith Anti-Racism Group, 6pm Zoom
- January 14 – Child Poverty Task Force, 4pm Zoom
- January 18 – Immigration Task Force, 4:30pm Zoom
- January 19 – JONAH Full Board, 5:30pm Zoom
- January 27th – JONAH Book Group, 3pm Zoom

CURIOUS ABOUT A TASK FORCE MEETING?

If anyone is interested in joining or checking out a task force meeting, now is a great time to “go” to a meeting. All task forces are meeting virtually, so you can easily “go” and see what a task force meeting is like. Contact Joanne Mellema if you are interested.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT SURVEY

From now until January 10 the residents of Eau Claire have a tremendous opportunity to impact our community plans around health by participating in the Community Health Assessment Survey put out by all three Eau Claire County hospitals and the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. Each of JONAH’s issue areas has impacted people’s health and the health systems - all justice issues are health issues. This is a lens that people can connect to, and our health department in particular gets it and our hospitals have power.

As you complete the survey, and encourage your groups to complete this, you can complete from the standpoint of of justice work: root cause and social determinants of health. How does housing and transportation access impact one’s health? How does oppression and the environment you are raised in impact one’s health? How is our community’s health impacted by people living in poverty?

So please complete this survey and share it widely! Particularly with those whose voice typically goes unheard. This is our opportunity to shift the narrative around health and social determinants in how the health systems layout their processes and community support.

Here is the link to do so:
<https://bit.ly/CVHealthSurvey>

VISIT THE JONAH WEBSITE FOR UPDATES & INFORMATION www.jonahjustice.org

*“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it”
- Psalm 24:1*



GREEN TIP: Make Your New Year Resolutions Green

Take some time to reflect with your family on ways to be greener in 2020! Can you invest in solar energy panels? Share your New Year’s Resolutions with us at Creation Justice Ministries for the chance to be featured on our social media.

**LAY PASTORAL
CARE TEAM
CONTACT
INFORMATION**



If you could use support, or if you know of someone who might, please contact a member of our Lay Pastoral Care Team.

- Judy Ganong 715-514-0258
Connie Jacobsen 715-838-9594
Jan Lorentz 608-886-0668
Nancy Troyan 715-878-9099



GIVING

We can still continue our ministries whether we are meeting in-person, or online.

It's a time to remember the church is not about the building, but WE are the church.



MAIL: Please feel free to send your offerings in mail:

**Hope United Methodist Church
2233 Golf Road
Eau Claire, WI 54701**



ELECTRONIC GIVING:

Call or email the church office to request an Authorization Form for Automatic Withdrawal

715-835-5310 (leave a message)
hopeumcec@yahoo.com

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

9:15am Sunday Worship

We will begin in-person worship, but will continue to offer online streaming of the service through Zoom.

HOPE UMC OFFICE HOURS

Tues, Wed, Thurs 9:00am- 1:00pm

HOPE UMC STAFF

Pastor Rev. Hyejung Hwang
Office Manager . . . Kristen Kirchman
Pianists Andrea Blaeser
& Ben Kittilstad

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Mon, Tues, Wed 9:00am - 5:00pm

FOR THE JOURNEY Newsletter articles and updates should be submitted to the church office by the 20th of each month. Contributions are welcome.

HOPE UMC website:
www.hope-eauclaire.org

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Hope United Methodist Church

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From our website, click the "Like Us on Facebook" button just above the map showing our location