

## Shine

#### "Let the light of Jesus shine through you!"

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#### **Upcoming Events**

Communion Sunday Sunday, January 5

Fellowship Sunday
Sun. Jan. 5, 9 a.m. @ Retreat

New Hope Board Meeting Sun. Jan. 12, 11:30 a.m.

Executive Board Meeting

Tues. Jan. 14, 6 p.m. @ Retreat

Annual Church Conferences
Sun. Jan. 19
during worship at each church

Fellowship Sunday
Sun. Jan. 19, 10 a.m. @ Liberty Pole

Sunday Bible Study
Mon. Jan. 5 & 19, 8:30 a.m.

Confirmation Class

Sun. Jan. 12 & 26, 3 – 5 p.m. @ New Hope

Wednesday Warriors
Every Wednesday, 3:30 p.m.

**Food Pantry Open** 

Wednesdays: 5 – 6:30 p.m. Thursdays: 9 – 11 a.m.

#### **New Beginnings & New Opportunities**

Here we are once again, set to turn the page and begin a brand-new year. During the festive holiday season, we move quickly from one holiday to another. Christmas Day and New Year's Day are just one week apart, yet sometimes it feels like they might as well be right next to one another. That week is a blur, filled with lingering festivities and Christmas leftovers as we long to celebrate the coming of the new year.

Do you ever think about why we celebrate New Year's Day? It is really just another day on the calendar, like any other day, so why is it so important for people to mark this date change on a calendar? I suspect it's because a new year offers a new beginning, the chance to start fresh. There's a reason January is the most important month of the year for gyms and diet programs, because it seems like a fresh chance to start again, to improve yourself. It seems like a natural time for beginning something, which is why lots of people make New Year's resolutions (whether they stick to them or not is another story!).



The Christian life offers lots of opportunities for fresh starts, for changing what we've been doing or beginning to live differently. And to make the most of each moment! I often overhear people exclaim how quickly the time passes. Anymore, the expression "time flies" seems like an understatement. Some of that sense may be due to the continuing emphasis that our culture places upon speed. We're always seeking ways to do things faster. However, as we cut down production time, we simply fill the time we save with more tasks. As we accomplish more, we're always seeking ways to accomplish more yet. It's a never-ending cycle!

With the passing of time, I've come to realize that the real basis of life does not consist in how many jobs we get done, how many promotions we accumulate, how much money we save or how many things we possess. What gives life meaning is our spiritual identity. We're created in God's image. He has an eternal home with Him prepared for us. Getting there, and hopefully taking others with us, is what life is all about. Teaching others the truth of God's sacrificial love is part of serving God here.

As the church, if we're not careful we can also get caught up in the material side of life. Our facilities are important, but they're only a means to an end, providing a comfortable and convenient setting in which to worship God, study His word and teach others the gospel. We need to focus on getting souls in the seats, people who need to hear the gospel. We need to reach out to them in effective, purposeful ways. And what better time than the new year as they're looking for a fresh start! Each day offers the opportunity to wake up and remember that God loves ALL people. Let's offer them the opportunity to begin a new relationship and introduce them to the God who loves them more than they could ever imagine! We've got work to do, let's not let a moment pass us by. Embrace the new opportunities!

## Notes from Pastor Sandy

Happy New Year! Bowl games are finishing (Baylor is playing, by the way!). College basketball is going strong. The Packers are the Wild Card in a crazy division. Soon we can say we have survived another Christmas season.

Thanks to all who contributed to the Samaritan's Purse drive. It is my sincere hope that along with the money, all those families know that we are praying for them.

A few reminders of upcoming projects as we start 2025. I hope some of you will volunteer to assist at the second podium at the front of the church and read prayers and the Scripture and give the final benediction. That gives Ron and me the opportunity to leave early if needed and it also gets more folks involved in the service itself. I cannot think of friendlier, more supportive folks than our brothers and sisters in Driftless Ministries. If you feel the Lord leading you in this way, Fear NOT! And talk to me about it.



Second, we will be updating our contact information for all church members, so expect to be stopped for a picture and a form. This is desperately needed as a lot of the old information is incorrect.

Confirmation will resume on January 12 at New Hope! We have had some wonderful testimonies from church members, and we will be going through the teachings, healings, miracles, and life of Jesus until April.

Finally, starting in January we will be spending four months in the book of Deuteronomy. This was one of Jesus' favorite Bible books. Remember, the New Testament did not exist, so Deuteronomy was the Bible that Jesus knew. It was also the words of His Father to humanity. It has so much to teach us about God and life. I look forward to preaching it. It would be a perfect opportunity to invite a friend to service as well. I would be willing to bet they haven't heard a lot of sermons from Deuteronomy!

Stay warm, stay safe, stay healthy and follow us in person or online as we continue to do the Lord's work. And Go Pack Go! (forgive me, Father).

Grace and peace to you all,

Pastor Sandy

#### **Annual Church Conferences**

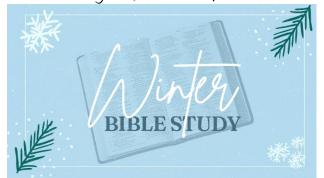
With all of the excitement that a new year brings, it is also vital that we take care of the "business" end of the church. While getting down to the "business" might not be the most exciting part of church life, it is vital to take care of it now so that we can focus on our mission, ministry and the people we serve the rest of the year! To take care of

the "business", each of our churches will be holding an Annual Church Conference on Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Similar to the "charge conferences" of the past, these church conferences will be held to vote and approve vital parts of the church business like roles, budgets, etc. However, unlike previous conferences, these will be more engaging as they will actually be incorporated into our Sunday morning worship!

Conference booklets for your respective church will be available for attendees to take, keep, and review at their leisure. We encourage everyone to come and participate in these vital services, however only members of our churches will have a vote in the business of their respective church conference. Please join us for these important services and help us prepare for our future ministry in the Driftless Region!





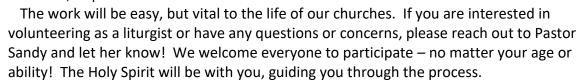
## Get a Spiritual Boost and Dive into the Bible with Us!

We invite you to renew your spirit as we jump into God's Word, grow in our faith, and discover how it applies to our lives today! Everyone is invited to join us for our Sunday Bible study at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at the Liberty Pole church. This Bible study is open to everyone, so come as you are and be ready to dive into the Living Word!

Sunday Morning Bible Study Sundays, January 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> @ 8:30 a.m. at Liberty Pole

#### **Get Involved with Worship!**

We are seeking volunteers in all three of our churches to step up during worship and participate as liturgists! These individuals will get to take a more active role in worship through the reading of prayers, Scripture, and the benediction. Through this work, you will enable Pastor Sandy and Ron more time to travel between services (always handy for the winter months) and also grant them more time to interact with members at each of our churches on Sunday mornings. This extra time is vital for them to build relationships and address any concerns or issues that may arise in our communities, churches, or personal lives.





#### **New Hope Food Pantry Blessed by Community Support**

'Tis the season of giving, for sure! Recently, the New Hope Food Pantry received generous donations from the Wheatland Fire & EMS (from their Breakfast with Santa!) and the Chad Wild Memorial Fund (which hosts a two-day fundraiser once a year to raise money to support the community).

The faces of those who stop by to donate always have smiles; they show pride, excitement, and a sense of fulfillment when they give. We have no doubt that they are receiving just as much as they are giving.

We are so thankful for the big hearts of those in our communities, both local and those beyond! With everyone's generosity, we have been truly blessed and have great hope for 2025 and beyond!

Many thanks from our grateful and love-filled hearts,

#### The New Hope Food Pantry





Liberty Pole, New Hope & Retreat Methodist Churches - Visit us online at: www.driftlessministry.org

#### **Prayers for January**

Each day of the week, use this simple prayer starter as part of your conversation with God.

#### Sunday

Dear God, thank You for loving me even though You know all about me. Please help me to walk well with You.

#### Monday

Father, only You know how I feel and what I'm going through. Please grant me the faith and patience to wait and to trust in You, for You're a just God.

#### **Tuesday**

Thank You, Jesus, for helping me with my fears and for showing me how to live courageously.

#### Wednesday

Almighty Father, please help me to stand firm on the wisdom of Scripture and not be deceived.

#### **Thursday**

Dear Jesus, thank You for the hope and peace You've brought to me. Help me to share it with those I meet.

#### Friday

Gracious God, please help me to surrender the need to always be right in exchange for the gift of unending learning as I journey with You.

#### Saturday

Father, please forgive me when I've chosen not to walk with You but pursued my own agenda. Help me keep in step with You.



#### **Working Together in Ministry**

It's easy to sit on the sidelines and watch the church do its ministry. But it is much more fun and gratifying to be a part of the action! You are invited to be a part of the work of the church! We encourage everyone to come and participate in the discussions at your respective church meeting. Your ideas are vital to our ministry!



New Hope Church Board Meeting Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m.

#### **Executive Board Meeting**

Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup> 6 p.m. @ Retreat

#### **Annual Church Conferences**

Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup> during worship



"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.

Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

~ Isaiah 43:18-19 (ESV) ~



#### **Food Pantry Needs**

The New Hope Food Pantry welcomes your generous donations to help those in need in our communities. This month the pantry is seeking donations of **tuna**, **cream of mushroom soup**, **mac** & **cheese**, **toothbrushes and toothpaste**. If you wish to donate items or funds, feel free to drop them off at any of our three churches.

You may also drop them off during the pantry's open hours: Wednesdays, 5 - 6:30 p.m. and Thursdays, 9 - 11 a.m.

The New Hope Food Pantry is located at E2286 State Highway 82, De Soto, WI 54624



## Reset, Refresh & Renew January Online Bible Studies

"Have you tried turning it off and back on again?" If you have ever had issues with technology, this phrase is likely not new to you! Occasionally, pieces of technology get bogged down, stuck, or have other operating issues where a reboot or reset can make a world of difference and solve a problem. Wouldn't it be nice if we could do the same with our everyday lives?

There are times in each of our lives where we want to press the reset button and find refreshment and renewal. Thankfully, our God offers us a kind of rest and refreshment that we could never find in this world! All we need to do is be open to the opportunities for renewal and refreshment that He offers us!

As we enter the new year, we invite you to join us on a journey where we will hit the reset button, rebooting our spiritual journey as we find refreshment and renewal in God's loving embrace. Use the links below to join us as we find the kind of renewal and refreshment that only our Heavenly Father can provide!



- **Times of Refreshing** begins on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> <a href="https://bible.com/p/70726759/5c10eb2e97e2272a52f7c44f4164b3dd">https://bible.com/p/70726759/5c10eb2e97e2272a52f7c44f4164b3dd</a>
- **The Reset** begins on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> <a href="https://bible.com/p/70726767/f0b03854422587ed334b1ca31cdfaccf">https://bible.com/p/70726767/f0b03854422587ed334b1ca31cdfaccf</a>
- O Reset: 7 Ways begins on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> https://bible.com/p/70726784/f2f2ba8affe412c95a854ce3dd9d228f
- Comparison of the Refreshment begins on Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> <a href="https://bible.com/p/70726789/fc7293282b40a2735e198762bc65ee5f">https://bible.com/p/70726789/fc7293282b40a2735e198762bc65ee5f</a>

This online study and more can be accessed through the Bible App or bible.com website, which are free resources. In addition to wonderful devotional and reading plans, they provide a verse of the day, and you will be able to read the Bible in a wide variety of versions. The Bible App is available in your app store on your mobile device, or accessible online at www.bible.com. Please note that Bible.com online will no longer support Plans with Friends. You will need to open the Bible App on your mobile device to continue to use this feature.

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#### **Liberty Pole Methodist Women**

The Liberty Pole Methodist Women group will not be gathering during the month of January. Stay safe and warm as you contemplate our 2025 ministry from the comfort of your home!



#### **Quilting from Home!**

There will be no Basement Quilters sewing days in either January or February. We will be taking our "winter break" to stay home and sew on our projects without going out in to the cold, or risking a fall or injury to any of the "sewists"!! We will again be making a variety of projects that we will donate to various organizations throughout the year. If you are aware of any family that has a quilting need, please notify one of the women who sew regularly. If you are interested in quilting or crafting, please feel free to join us when we resume in March. We do have a wonderful time together on the first and third Mondays of the month.





#### Helping with the Recovery

Thanks to the generous donations from friends and members of our churches, Driftless Ministries sent \$884 to Samaritan's Purse at the end of November. This donation will be used to aid in the recovery efforts in Western North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee following the devastation left behind by Hurricane Helene in the early autumn. The recovery effort continues as Samaritan's Purse remains in the region to build and repair houses in the area, as well as replacing manufactured homes. Donations for this mission continue to come into our churches, with another contribution planning to be sent in at the end of December.

If you would like to donate funds to the recovery efforts, you can join us in a few ways! If you attend worship in any of our churches, you can drop your donation into the offering plate/box with a note/memo that it is for hurricane relief. If you would like to mail in your donation, you can send your check, made out to one of our churches with "Hurricane Relief" in the memo line to: **Driftless Ministries, c/o Hurricane Relief, E2286 State Highway 82, De Soto, WI 54624** 



#### **Growing in Faith at Wednesday Warriors**

Over the past several months, the Wednesday Warriors have hosted approximately 15 kids each week for a meal, Bible lesson, and fun ways to learn about God and God's Word. The kids have loved learning about God, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit. The group has also been blessed to welcome Ron Conrad to the kid's ministry team, which is growing and becoming stronger! During worship at New Hope on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Wednesday Warriors hosted a Christmas program where they shared an important Christmas message with the congregation. The volunteers feel blessed and honored to serve these kids.



Praise God for our wonderful volunteers and the great youth in the program!





#### **Keep the Christmas Spirit Going Well into 2025!**

Make use of the slower winter months and get crafting! The Retreat Methodist Church invites you to participate in their Christmas in July Craft Show at the Viroqua Eagles Club (216 S Rock Ave., Viroqua, WI) on Saturday, July 12<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The show will feature handmade items only, no vendors. Crafters are wanted to fill the spaces! Each space will be 10 feet wide and cost \$25.00 per space. If you would like to reserve a space (or two) or if you would like more information, please contact Crystal Nummerdor at (608) 606-9082.

#### It's Time for a Snow Day!



Are you looking for a fun family friendly event for you and your children this winter? Get outside and enjoy this winter wonderland that God has given to us at Living Waters Bible Camp's Snow Day on Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>! This is your opportunity to discover what the camp is all about while having fun at the same time. Enjoy an afternoon of tubing, cross country skiing, and ice skating with lunch and hot chocolate included! The fun begins at 1 p.m. with lunch being served between 1 and 3 p.m. The cost for the whole day is \$7 per person (kids 3 years and younger are FREE). Each ticket includes the use of ice rink, tube hill, ice skates, cross-country skiing, and lunch. Find out more at <a href="www.lwbc.org">www.lwbc.org</a>. So come on out to Living Waters for an afternoon of fun in God's great outdoors!

Living Waters Bible Camp is located north of Westby just off Hwy 27 on Reo Avenue (E8932 Reo Avenue).

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#### Winter Fun Day!

Snow or no snow, it's a go! Everyone, young and young-at-heart, are welcome to come and enjoy a Winter Fun Day at Sugar Creek Bible Camp. The Winter Fun Day will be held on Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup> between 1 and 4 p.m. Sledding, tubing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and all sorts of outdoor winter fun will be available. The equipment is provided or you can bring your own. A lunch of hot dogs and chili will be provided along with cozy drinks. RSVPs are appreciated and can be made by calling (608) 734-3113 or emailing the camp office at office@sfrcreek.org. The cost of the day is \$10 per person; children age 4 and under are free. Head down to Sugar Creek with the family for an afternoon of winter fun!



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#### Voices of the Past: A Winter Poem

The words to the right are an excerpt of a three part poem penned in January 1888 for the Vernon County Censor by the Reverend William Haughton (1829 - 1905). May this excerpt of his poem give you hope that despite what may feel like a typical Wisconsin winter filled with snow and cold, the warmth and beauty of spring and summer are on their way and will soon be here.

Rev. William Haughton served the area of Western Vernon County during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, including the De Soto and Retreat Congregational churches. He was well loved by the communities he served and was well known for his poetry that he occasionally submitted to the county newspaper. Rev. Haughton later moved to Viroqua by the turn of the century and served as the city's librarian. He was later laid to rest in the Viroqua Cemetery in June 1905, leaving behind his wife, twelve children, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren at the time of his passing.

O beautiful night with the pearly zone;
O stars that gleam by the Master's throne;
O mists of the northland, shimmering far
In your waves of light to the polar star,
What message now through the lonely night
To the cradled earth in its robe of white?

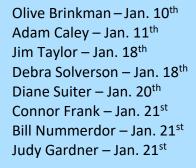
Sleep on, sleep on, for the day draws nigh With the vernal dawn and the purple sky, When woods shall wave, and the robin sing Its joyous song to the tuneful spring; The summer comes while a watch we keep O'er the silent earth in its restful sleep.

- "Winter Voices", Second Voice by Rev. William Haughton Retreat, WI - January 1888

### Shining Celebrations!

#### **Birthdays**

Frank Hammond – Jan. 1st Vicki Newsome – Jan. 1st Sheryl Haakenson – Jan. 3rd Nancy Cox – Jan. 4th Alma Robertson – Jan. 6th Oscar Johnson – Jan. 7th Casey Funk – Jan. 9th Ben Hanson – Jan. 10th



Debora Hornby – Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> Cheyenne Fedler – Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> Darwin Kumlin – Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> Roger Hanson – Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> Marian Whitney – Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> Chris Baker – Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> Mark Arneson – Jan. 28th



Dewey & Jodi Waddell – Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> Arthur & Terrah Mendoza – Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> Paul & Ann Adams – Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>



Did we miss your birthday, anniversary, or other special day? Let us know! E-mail us at <u>newsletter@driftlessministry.org</u>.

#### Join Us for Fellowship Sundays!

The next Fellowship Sunday at the Retreat Methodist Church is coming up on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> and everyone is welcome to stick around after worship and join in the wonderful fellowship. This month's host at Retreat is **Jeff Nelson.** We hope you can join us after worship on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> for some wonderful fellowship time!

This month's Fellowship Sunday at the Liberty Pole Methodist Church will be held on Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to join us following worship as we enjoy some snacks and have great fellowship together.

These Fellowship Sundays are a great way to catch up with your faith family. Be sure to check them out and enjoy some quality time with your family and friends at the church!



#### Church Contacts

Pastor – Rev. Sandy Conrad

(608) 881-4276

pastor@driftlessministry.org

**SPRC Chair – Barb Robson: (608) 606-5809** 

Lay Leaders - Debbie Groves: (608) 648-3684

Barb Robson: (608) 606-5809 Jeffery Nelson: (608) 379-2933

Food Pantry - Debbie Groves: (608) 648-3684

Robbin Henchen: (608) 804-0314



# January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
LP: Liberty Pole NH: New Hope R: Retreat	Driftless Ministries	Ministries	1	2	3 Pastors Sabbath	4
	Mobile: (608) 881-4276 Parsonage: (608) 648-2528 pastor@driftlessministry.org	ly Conrad 8) 881-4276 08) 648-2528 ssministry.org	HAPPY NEW YEAR	Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.		
5 Communion Sunday	9	7	8	6	10 Pastors Sabbath	11
Bible Study 8:30 a.m. @ LP Fellowship Sunday (R)			Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ NH Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.		
12	13	14	15	16	17 Pastors Sabbath	18
NH Board Meeting 11:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 3 – 5 p.m. @ NH		Executive Board Meeting 6 p.m. @ Retreat	Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ NH Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.		
19 Church Conferences	20	21	22	23	24 Pastors Sabbath	25
during worship Bible Study 8:30 a.m. @ LP Fellowship Sunday (LP)			Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ NH Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.		
26	27 ( newsletter	28	Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ NH	30	31 Pastors Sabbath	1
Confirmation Class 3 – 5 p.m. @ NH	Newsletter Submission Deadline		Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.		



Liberty Pole, New Hope & Retreat Methodist Churches c/o Jeff Nelson 120 Rosewood Ln N West Salem, WI 54669

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