

"Let the light of Jesus shine through you!"

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Upcoming Events

Communion Sunday

Sun. Dec. 7

New Hope Board Meeting

Sun. Dec. 7, 11:30 a.m.

Liberty Pole Board Meeting

Mon. Dec. 8, 4:30 p.m.

Retreat Board Meeting

Tue. Dec. 9, 6 p.m.

**Church Christmas Gathering
and Cookie Distribution**

Sun. Dec. 14, 9 a.m.

Christmas Eve Services

Wed. Dec. 24

4 p.m. @ New Hope

6:30 p.m. @ Liberty Pole

Food Pantry Open

Wednesdays: 5 – 6:30 p.m.

Thursdays: 9 – 11 a.m.

Wednesday Warriors

Wed., 3:30 p.m. @ New Hope

Good News of Great Joy!

O come, all ye faithful! As we enter into one of the holiest times of the year, it important that we slow down and focus on the true reason for the season. Sure, it's easy to get lost in the hustle and bustle of the holiday. From shopping and parties to baking and traditions, there is so much going on and it can be easy to lose our focus. But that is where YOUR church comes in!

This Advent, we invite you to join us for worship as we open our Bibles to the Book of Luke. Together we will examine the events leading up to the birth of our Savior and rediscover the season's purpose! It will be a wonderful and meaningful journey that you and your family will not want to miss!

And it all culminates as we celebrate the birth of Christ! To mark the special event, you and your loved ones are invited to join us for our Christmas Eve worship services. This magical evening will include two services featuring carols, scriptures, stories, and the lighting of candles that help us to focus in on the birth of our Savior. Worship will be at 4 p.m. at New Hope and at 6:30 p.m. at Liberty Pole. Simply choose the service that fits your schedule best!

As always, all are welcome to attend and participate, so we welcome you to extend a warm invitation to your family, friends, and neighbors. Come and hear the good news of great joy that the heavenly angels shared so long ago! It will make you want to go and tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere!



Christmas Eve Services

4 p.m. @ New Hope Methodist Church
6:30 p.m. @ Liberty Pole Methodist Church



"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

~ Luke 2:10-11 ~

Notes from Pastor Sandy

Merry Christmas to All! I can't believe it is time for the December Shine—Wasn't it summer a minute ago? There is much going on at our churches and I encourage you to read The Shine closely because Jeff is much more accurate about such things than I am. There will be cookies baked and apple crisps too. There will be the business of the churches as budgets are considered and approved for presentation in January. We continue to update the physical plants of our churches and that is a blessing. I will announce the West Prairie Singers concert in December—It's going to be wonderful.

We will start our study of Luke on November 30th — the first Sunday in Advent. We will introduce Luke on that Sunday and then work our way through the birth of John the Baptist, Gabriel's visit to Mary, and then the famous Christmas story of Luke 2 on the fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve. Watch for the Driftless Men's Group to start in January, and we will also be starting our study of Ruth—helped along by my buddy, Alistair Begg. It will last about 5-6 weeks and provides a different perspective on this wonderful story. Please join us.

Luke has much to tell us about salvation and the incredible blessing of Jesus coming into our world. Take time at this time of year to pray for all those who are NOT having such a Merry Christmas—those who have lost loved ones, those who are feeling lonely, those who are dealing with guilt and exhaustion, and health issues. You won't have to look far to find them—there are many in our churches. Pray for them and reach out to them with a call or a card if you can.

This season is all about looking forward. Looking forward to the birth of Jesus but, more than that, looking forward to the salvation that His birth brings to each of us and to our world. God is doing wonderful things. Unto us is born a SAVIOR! Never forget it. 'Tis Christ the Lord.

Merry Christmas to all,

Pastor Sandy & Ron



Never-Ending Christmas Joy!

Join us for a special joint worship service on Sunday, December 28th as we continue to celebrate the Christmas season! This special service will be held at 10 a.m. at the Liberty Pole Methodist Church and will feature scriptures, stories, and plenty of your favorite carols! Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us as we come together as one church family to continue sharing our Christmas joy! It will be a fun and wonderful time for all!



Spread Christmas Cheer!

It's important to celebrate and enjoy this time of year with your family... and the same can be said about your church family as well! So once again, the Retreat Methodist Church will be having a church-wide Christmas party and everyone is invited to attend! This year, the church Christmas party will be on Sunday, December 14th at 9 a.m. (following our 8 a.m. worship). There will be a potluck brunch in the Fellowship Hall so please bring a dish to pass. We will also be making cookie plates for our area shut-ins to spread some Christmas cheer throughout our community! If you would like to contribute to this festive Christmas ministry, we ask that you bring 3 to 4 dozen Christmas cookies for the distribution! ***Again, everyone is welcome to attend, even bring your friends!*** Great fun is sure to be had by all! Hope to see you there!



To Us a Son is Given December Online Study



As we begin the season of Advent and start counting down the days until the most significant birth in the world, it is good for everyone to take some time to pause and reflect on the happenings that led up to Jesus' birth. We invite you to join us for this month's online study, which is a 25-day journey that will guide us through scripture readings to help us contemplate the glorious truths that lead to the birth of the Messiah.

The "To Us a Son is Given" study begins on December 1st and leads us right to Christmas Day. To join this study, head over to our website at <https://driftlessministry.org/online-bible-study/>.

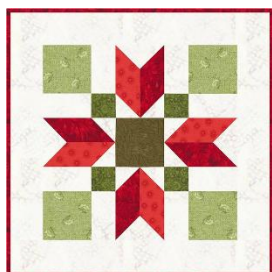


Annual Church Conferences

Similar to the annual charge conferences of the past, each of our churches will be hosting individual annual church conferences to review the previous year and plan for the year ahead. Currently, all three of our churches have each set a date for Sunday, January 25, 2026 for their church conferences. More information on these conferences will be coming in the next newsletter, so stay tuned. Until then, mark your calendars and make plans to join us as we prepare for our future ministry in our communities and beyond!



A Productive Year of Quilting and Crafting!



The Church Basement Quilters have had a very productive year of creative, fun, fellowship and gifting! Yet even as the weather turns colder, our love for quilting keeps us warm (and so do our quilts!). Our group is open to anyone would like to come do some crafting (it doesn't have to be quilting) or simply enjoy the fellowship. There's always plenty of fun and laughter. Come and join us on the first and third Mondays of the month! This month, we meet at 9 a.m. on Monday, December 1st and 15th (*weather permitting*) in the basement of the Liberty Pole Methodist Church.

Prayers for December

Use the following prayers throughout this month to help supplement your prayer time!

Sunday

Heavenly Father, renew my hope and help me trust in Your good and perfect plans for the days ahead.

Monday

Prince of Peace, please remove my anxieties. Fill my heart with Your peace that surpasses all understanding.

Tuesday

Almighty God, sometimes my will seems so far away from Your will. Open my heart to trust and follow Your guidance in every aspect of my life.

Wednesday

Lord, sometimes the road ahead seems quite scary. Grant me the courage and strength to walk boldly in obedience.

Thursday

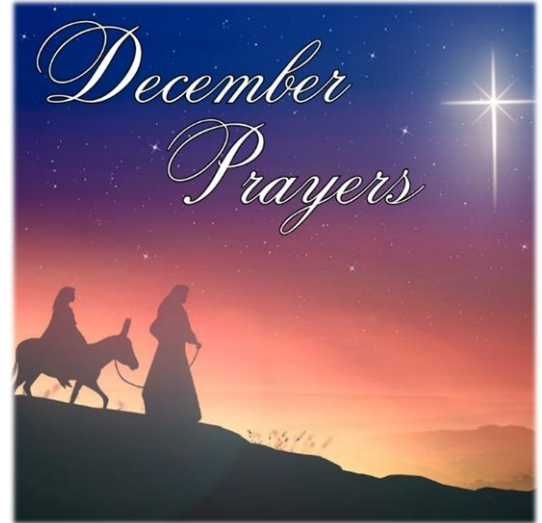
Christ Jesus, sometimes I feel lazy and just want to seek my own comfort. Please fill me with joy and compassion as I serve others, reflecting Your love in all I do.

Friday

Loving God, many in our world seem to becoming more and more isolated and alone. Be near to the lonely and guide them to meaningful connections and the love of community of Your church.

Saturday

Father, as I encounter those who do not know You, help me to be ready to share the hope and joy of Christ. Help them to see Your love through me.



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, December 7th, 11:30 a.m.

Liberty Pole Church Board Meeting

Monday, December 8th, 4:30 p.m.

Retreat Church Board Meeting

Tuesday, December 9th, 6 p.m.



Time for a Puzzle Swap!

With the long, cold winter months approaching, there is interest in setting up a puzzle lending library at the Retreat Methodist Church. You can bring your puzzles in, set them on a table, and pick up one you find interesting to put together at your home! Many of us have puzzles that we've already done, but don't want to throw them away. Give those old puzzles new life and share them with your neighbors and friends, providing our community hours of entertainment during some of the most reclusive months of the year!



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 **peaches, pears, bread, dish soap, and deodorant**. In addition to these items, the food pantry also greatly appreciates your monetary donations!

If you wish to donate items or funds to the New Hope Food Pantry, 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**



Interested in Joining a Men's Group?

Our three churches, in conjunction with Northwest Prairie Lutheran, are looking into starting a men's group! All men in the area (regardless of age) are welcome and encouraged to participate, whether they are connected with our churches or not. Participants will meet to talk about everyday life and offer support, encouragement, and advice to one another – something everyone needs in life!

This group is currently anticipated to meet at least once a month in various locations around the region, mixing it up each time to keep things fresh and convenient for all. The men's group is anticipated to begin meeting after the start of the new year in January. If you or someone you know is interested, please reach out to Ron Conrad for more information on how to participate!

Driftless Ministries

MEN'S GROUP



Bible-in-a-Year Plan

December Scriptures

- 1 – 1 Sam. 1-2:10; Ps. 50; Acts 20:1-16
- 2 – 1 Sam. 2:11-36; Ps. 51; Acts 20:17-34
- 3 – 1 Sam. 3; Ps. 52; Acts 21:1-36
- 4 – 1 Sam. 4-5; Ps. 53; Acts 21:37-22:29
- 5 – 1 Sam. 6-7; Ps. 54; Acts 22:30-23:22
- 6 – 1 Sam. 8; Ps. 55; Acts 23:23-24:9
- 7 – 1 Sam. 9-10:16; Ps. 56; Acts 24:10-27
- 8 – 1 Sam. 10:17-11:15; Ps. 57; Acts 25
- 9 – 1 Sam. 12; Ps. 58; Acts 26:1-18
- 10 – 1 Sam. 13; Ps. 59; Acts 26:19-32
- 11 – 1 Sam. 14; Ps. 60; Acts 27:1-12
- 12 – 1 Sam. 15; Ps. 61; Acts 27:13-44
- 13 – 1 Sam. 16; Ps. 62; Acts 28:1-16
- 14 – 1 Sam. 17:1-54; Ps. 63; Acts 28:17-31
- 15 – 1 Sam. 17:55-18:30; Ps. 64; Rom. 1:1-15
- 16 – 1 Sam. 19; Ps. 65; Rom. 1:16-32
- 17 – 1 Sam. 20; Ps. 66; Rom. 2-3:8
- 18 – 1 Sam. 21-22; Ps. 67; Rom. 3:9-31
- 19 – 1 Sam. 23-24; Ps. 68; Rom. 4
- 20 – 1 Sam. 25; Ps. 69; Rom. 5
- 21 – 1 Sam. 26; Ps. 70; Rom. 6
- 22 – 1 Sam. 27-28; Ps. 71; Rom. 7
- 23 – 1 Sam. 29-31; Ps. 72; Rom. 8
- 24 – 2 Sam. 1; Dan. 1; Rom. 9:1-29
- 25 – 2 Sam. 2-3:1; Dan. 2:1-23; Rom. 9:30-10:21
- 26 – 2 Sam. 3:2-39; Dan. 2:24-49; Rom. 11:1-24
- 27 – 2 Sam. 4-5; Dan. 3; Rom. 11:25-36
- 28 – 2 Sam. 6; Dan. 4; Rom. 12
- 29 – 2 Sam. 7-8; Dan. 5; Rom. 13
- 30 – 2 Sam. 9-10; Dan. 6; Rom. 14
- 31 – 2 Sam. 11-12; Dan. 7; Rom. 15:1-13



Find the full plan and more online at:
<https://driftlessministry.org/bibleplans/>

Blessing Others this Christmas!

On Monday, November 24th, several members of the Retreat church family gathered in their fellowship hall to create a special treat to bless others this Christmas season. A total of twenty-seven pans of apple crisp were assembled to be frozen and then distributed to clients of the New Hope Food Pantry. It was a fun morning with plenty of fellowship and laughter as the desserts were created.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped with this ministry! Your hard work and dedication are truly a blessing to our church and community!



Our apple crisp crew!

Pictured are (left to right): Cindy Noel, Robbin Hennen, Carol Gilman, Lynn Nelson, and Lynnell Nummerdor.

*Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed,
for he shares his bread with the poor.*

~ Proverbs 22:9 ~



Faithfulness and Love: A Study of Ruth



The book of Ruth may be one of the loveliest short stories ever written, telling an unforgettable tale of purity, faithfulness, innocence, loyalty, duty, and love. Yet it is set in dark times: the final verse of the book of Judges, which precedes Ruth in the Bible, tells us that “in those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Against this backdrop of strife and chaos, Ruth is a story of ordinary people in Bethlehem making the most of their bad situation—and finding God in the midst of it. We invite you to join us for a wonderful Bible study focused on the book of Ruth, beginning in January. Current plans are to meet either in the parsonage next to New Hope or Pastor Sandy’s townhouse in Viroqua (or both if we have enough for two groups!). Dates and times are still be determined, so reach out to Pastor Sandy for more information or check out the January newsletter!

We hope you can join us for this amazing study. Together, we will explore the book of Ruth and be reminded that no matter how dark or dramatic our days may seem, God still protects His people and accomplishes His purposes. Within life’s humdrum and routine events, we discover His loving hand at work.



Worship Committee Meeting



Worship Committee

A reminder to our worship committee that we will have our quarterly meeting on Monday, December 1st at 5:30 p.m. We will again do a combination of Zoom and in-person. If you wish to meet in person, please come to the New Hope church otherwise use the Zoom link to join us. If you need a fresh link to the Zoom meeting, please contact Jeff Nelson.



West Prairie Singers Christmas Concert

Surround yourself with the beautiful sounds of the season during an upcoming special concert! The West Prairie Singers (*featuring our own Pastor Sandy and Ron!*) will be hosting a Christmas concert on Sunday, December 14th at 2 p.m. at the North West Prairie Lutheran Church. Come and let the music fill your soul with Christmas spirit and enjoy the fellowship that is sure to follow!



Community Christmas Day Service

Our friends at the North West Prairie Lutheran Church are inviting everyone to a special community Christmas Day service. The service will be at 10 a.m. on Christmas Day at the North West Prairie Lutheran Church and all are welcome. Come and start your Christmas Day with worship and praise to our Lord and Savior!



Westby UMC Christmas Cookie Walk



Start your Christmas baking the easy way, without having to find recipes or dirty any dishes. Come to the Westby UMC Annual Christmas Cookie Walk on Saturday, December 6th, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.. There will be a wide variety of Christmas cookies, homemade candies, and other baked goods available. The cookie walk is like having a salad bar, but with cookies in place of the salad items. The cost is \$8 per pound, with some items priced separately. Coffee and hot chocolate will be available. Remember to come early for the best selection of cookies.



Thank You De Soto Lions!

A huge thank you goes out to the De Soto Area Lions Club for supporting the New Hope Food Pantry through their most recent Soup, Salad, and Sandwiches supper on November 20th. Community support like theirs makes this vital ministry possible. On behalf of our clients and volunteers, thank you for the continued support and we look forward to continuing to serve the community in the years to come!



A Birthday to Remember!

A special thank you to my Retreat church family! Thank you for surprising me with a special gathering after worship for my 40th birthday. While I had a feeling you were up to something, I never knew what was coming next as the morning progressed! From the special party, cards and gifts, and more importantly your presence, you all made my day truly special. I am grateful for each and every one of you and I am honored that I get to continue to grow in faith alongside you! You are the true definition of a loving family of faith! ~ Jeff Nelson



Shining Celebrations!

Birthdays

Jane Gianoli – Dec. 1st
 Rachel Gianoli – Dec. 1st
 Taylor Newsome – Dec. 1st
 Julie Stalsberg – Dec. 2nd
 Stephanie Taylor – Dec. 6th
 Madison Kumlin – Dec. 8th
 Arlene Lingren – Dec. 8th
 Dale Long – Dec. 8th

Debbie Groves – Dec. 9th
 Ron Slack – Dec. 12th
 Ann Adams – Dec. 14th
 Eldon Gardner – Dec. 14th
 Casey Johnson – Dec. 16th
 Lloyd Hardy – Dec. 19th
 Amanda Baker – Dec. 22nd
 Donna Inman – Dec. 22nd

Alan Matson – Dec. 23rd
 Bill Lepke – Dec. 26th
 Nancy Wakefield – Dec. 27th
 Carol Gilman – Dec. 28th
 Marlene Springborn – Dec. 29th
 Tom Zitzner – Dec. 29th

Anniversaries

Brian & Carole Funk – Dec. 5th
 Maynard & Nancy Cox – Dec. 6th
 Loren & Marlene Springborn – Dec. 29th

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



December Fellowship Sunday

Since the Retreat Fellowship Hall is being used for a private family Christmas gathering on the first Sunday in December, our normally scheduled Fellowship Sunday will be held the following Sunday, December 14th, in conjunction with our All-Church Christmas Gathering. Bring a dish to pass, enjoy the fellowship, and let's celebrate the Christmas season together as a faith family!



Church Contacts

Pastor – Rev. Sandy Conrad
 (608) 881-4276
pastor@driftlessministry.org

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 Hennen: (608) 804-0314



For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

~ Isaiah 9:6 ~

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
LP: Liberty Pole NH: New Hope R: Retreat	1 Liberty Pole Basement Quilters 9 a.m. Worship Committee Meeting 5:30 p.m.	2	3 Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ New Hope Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	4 Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.	5 <i>Pastors Sabbath</i>	6
7 Communion Sunday NH Board Meeting 11:30 a.m.	8 Liberty Pole Board Meeting 4:30 p.m.	9 Retreat Board Meeting 6 p.m.	10 Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ New Hope Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	11 Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.	12 <i>Pastors Sabbath</i>	13
14 All Church Christmas & Cookie Distribution 9 a.m. @ Retreat	15 Liberty Pole Basement Quilters 9 a.m.	16	17 Wednesday Warriors 3:30 p.m. @ New Hope Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.	18 Food Pantry Open 9 – 11 a.m.	19 <i>Pastors Sabbath</i>	20
21	22  Newsletter Submission Deadline	23	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Services 4 p.m. @ New Hope 6:30 p.m. @ Liberty Pole 	25 	26 <i>Pastors Sabbath</i>	27
28 Joint Worship 10 a.m. @ Liberty Pole	29	30	31 Food Pantry Open 5 – 6:30 p.m.		Did you miss Sunday worship? Catch up by watching it online at https://driftlessministry.org/sermons/ . New videos are uploaded every Sunday afternoon/evening!	

Shine

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

Return Service Requested

Address Label Here

Christmas
SCANDLELIGHT
SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER *24*

NEW HOPE METHODIST CHURCH 4:00 P.M.
LIBERTY POLE METHODIST CHURCH 6:30 P.M.

