

THE PARISH CONNECTION

February 2021

A Community of Faith, Inspired by Christ, Gathered to Grow, Empowered to Serve.



Lectionary Readings for February

Feb 7th – **5th Sunday after Epiphany**
(green)

Isa 40:21-31, Ps 147:1-11, 20c (UMH 859),
1 Cor 9:16-23, Mk 1:29-39

Feb 14th – **Transfiguration Sunday**
(white)

Kings 2:1-12, Ps 50:1-6 (UMH 783),
2 Cor 4:3-6, Mk 9:2-9

Feb 21st – **1st Sunday in Lent**
(purple)

Gen 9:8-17, Ps 25: 1-10 (UMH 756),
1 Pet 3:18-22, Mk 1:9-15

Feb 28th – **2nd Sunday in Lent**
(purple)

Gen 17:1-7, 15-16, Ps 22:23-31 (UMH 752),
Rom 4:13-25, Mk 8:31-38



Lent Schedule

Ash Wednesday is February 17th this year. Placing of the ashes will be by appointment and will be drive-by.

We will have a Lenten service every Wednesday evening at 7pm via zoom during the season of Lent.

Love for our Troops

This year we are sending treats to our troops. We will be purchasing an assortment of non-perishable treats and personal items. We will be purchasing all items going into these boxes and your monetary donations would be appreciated to cover the cost of the items and postage. If you know someone who is in the service call Linda Jurisch, [715-263-2288](tel:715-263-2288). These personnel should be from the Clear Lake, Clayton, Reeve, Forest and Deer Park area. Please send donations during January & February to: Luann Hansen, 471 7th Avenue, Clear Lake, WI 54005. Checks can be made out to VFW Auxiliary.

UMW

UMW will not be meeting until in-person worship resumes.

Prayer Concerns

Joys— celebrations with families and friends, sunshine, all those who plow snow, opportunities to enjoy winter, loved ones

Concerns— Tony Martin, Norman Reed, nursing home residents and staff, Krista, Dave Reindahl, Steve and Jennie Keller, Chuck Kuhl, Roland (Pete) Thompson

Remembering—Family and friends of Ray Smith, Kelly Hilton, Dorothy Buhr, *Sharon Fouks*



**...Because
you eat**
Ruby's Pantry food

distribution will take place February 13th in the AmTec parking lot at 241 Venture Drive Amery. There is a \$20 cash donation per share. You will receive an abundance of grocery items. There is no income or residency requirements – everyone that eats is welcome! This is a drive-thru distribution. We have set our hours from 8am to 10am. We will start sending cars through as soon as we are set up which is much quicker with our drive through set up. Please do not be late because it goes fast. Also we will load your vehicle from the passenger side and prefer to just put the items into the back of your vehicle. For everyone's safety, please have your vehicle empty to receive food in the back so volunteers do not need to walk around to the other side of the vehicle. We look forward to seeing you. Volunteers are greatly appreciated and should arrive at 7:15am. If you would like to volunteer or if you would like more information, please contact 715-268-7390 or email office.ameryucc@gmail.com.

Offering

Please consider continuing your giving; offerings can be sent to: Arlene Althoff (CL); Terri Wilson (FF), and Janice Thompson (DP). Thank you!

Bible Study

On Thursday, February 18th at 7pm, we will be starting a new bible study called "Walking in the Wilderness." Please let Diane B, Heather G or Jan T know if you would like to participate and if you want the book that goes with the study. We will continue study via zoom weekly on Thursdays at 7pm.

WRP Secretary Email

To be sure that Anita doesn't miss any of your important emails (newsletter info, meeting minutes, requests for flyers or copies, etc), please use wrpsecretary@gmail.com to reach her. Thank you!

Noisy Cans

Clear Lake January-March noisy can money will be going to Lifeline Food Pantry. CL members can collect coins in a container at home and we'll have a collection at the end of March, thanks all!"

Faith Family January-March noisy can money will be going to MS Crawl for the Cure.

Deer Park January-March noisy can money will be going to Grace Place

Clear Lake UMC

Thank You Breakfast

In the past we've done a free breakfast for community volunteers. At our January ad council we discussed doing it for volunteers and essential workers of our community. With opening the church still undecided we decided that we could do it curbside in March or April as a great outreach to many that have kept our community open and moving forward during these challenging months. Please watch for more details as spring approaches and consider how you could support this endeavor--prayers, cooking, orders/delivery, donating, advertising and getting the word out!



I would like to Thank You All for the many prayers, cards and well wishes during my recent heart attack. God Bless You, *Dave Reindahl*

From Bishop Jung

My beloved Wisconsin siblings in Christ,

I greet you in this New Year. 2020 has been a wilderness challenge for us, but we are a people of the Good News – we are not through the wilderness yet, but we are striving toward the Promised Land.

I am reminded of God's promise through Moses to Joshua from Deuteronomy 31:7-8, "Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: 'Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the Lord has sworn to their ancestors to give them; and you will put them in possession of it. It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.'"

I want us all to hear the promise of Moses – God is with us. God will not fail or forsake us. We should leave behind fear and dismay and trust in the Lord. It is easy for us in Wisconsin to think we are through the wilderness that the COVID pandemic caused because the numbers of new cases are falling. But as we look at the rest of our country, we see that there is still a long way to go.

But we have good news of vaccines, and a deeper commitment to wearing masks, and healthy social distancing. Our churches have been praised and affirmed for not holding in-person services and meetings, for taking every possible precaution to protect each other and to use creative means of staying connected.

We may need to continue this way for months to come, but with the brightening light of the Promise Land, growing ever brighter. I am so proud of all the precautions and safety measures our laity and clergy members have taken. Well done, good and faithful stewards. Now let us stay the course for the necessary months ahead so that when we return fully to our sanctuaries and churches, we do so with the assurance that all will be well, healthy, and thriving.

We understand the deep desire for gathering and being together, but we also need to be aware of, and understand, the risks that gathering poses.

Like John Wesley's Three Simple Rules, we have adapted Three Simple Rules for Re-Entry:

- **Be Cautious:** To determine your best next steps as a local congregation, we recommend that you follow your local County Health Department Guidelines for gathering. Information pertaining to your county's guidelines and county/public health numbers can be found here: [Wisconsin County Information](#)

We encourage your leadership team to access the vaccine information on the [Wisconsin Health Department](#) website and share it with your congregation. We also encourage everyone to get a flu shot if they have not done so already.

We ask that you remember John Wesley's rule of "Do No Harm" when making your decisions for re-entry. Please remember the vulnerable in your congregations and communities when developing your re-entry plan.

- **Be Gracious:** We ask that you show grace to those who may have differing opinions of what the re-entry process may be for your church and congregation. Be gracious to those who may choose to remain in a virtual setting, or choose to safely worship in person, whether that be laity or clergy.

We ask that you encourage one another while making these hard decisions. Work collaboratively and creatively with one another. Remain respectful of the decisions that your laity and clergy leadership are making regarding whether to open the building or not.

- **Be Flexible:** Be mindful that cases, vaccines, and information are changing daily. Remain flexible with your re-entry plan knowing that you may have to pivot back to virtual. Make a plan that has tiered phases to it so that you can quickly adjust without having to have an "all or nothing" plan.

Finally, please remember to follow the CDC guidelines of social distancing, mask-wearing, and proper hygiene. [CDC Guidelines](#)

Experts are recommending proper ventilation and air purification systems.

Matching grants, through the Conference Board of Trustees from the Groat Bequest for Rural Ministries Foundation account, are available to support technology projects that improve virtual accessibility for rural churches. For more information or to apply, please [click here](#).

Know my beautiful Wisconsin people, I am praying for you all. I think of all of you daily, and I rejoice in your faithfulness through these difficult days. Let us put 2020 behind us – taking with us all that it taught us – to enter 2021 stronger, smarter, healthier, and more faithful than ever before. Bless you. Thanks be to our God.

Clear Lake Ad C Highlights

*Debi gave a report on Christmas for Children. There were 30 families and 84 children. There was some money, clothes and toys that will be used for next year. Our community was very generous. Thank you from coordinators Debi and Diane.

*Ruth reported that the directories are scheduled to be shipped to the church in January.

*Job descriptions for leadership staff: Pastor Hakki will ask DS for a list of job descriptions. We will make a book of job descriptions so anyone accepting a position will know what the job responsibilities will be.

*All church members and friends of the church are invited and encouraged to attend Ad Council meetings.

*Pastor Hakki gave handouts on Covid after reading that Ad Council decided that we will not reopen the church at this time. Opening the church will be addressed again at the next meeting.

*ZOOM Services: Approximately 15 - 18 church families cannot get the Zoom service, or don't have internet.

Clear Lake Church Update:

Dear Clear Lake Church family,

On January 6th, the Clear Lake Ad board met and one of the topics discussed was whether it was a good idea to reopen church for weekly services. Dawn Cress had asked at the Circuit 10 meeting what the other churches were presently doing. River Falls, Hammond, New Richmond and Osceola were all closed to in person services. Hudson predominantly does Zoom but they have the space and the proper ventilation to allow up to 30 people who do not do Zoom. We were reminded that the CDC guidelines for churches is that they need to have adequate ventilation and filtration for our air flow in churches to be safe, Clear Lake does not have a filtration system, we have hot water heat registers Plus we would have to do a more intense sanitation after each service, no shaking hands or hugging, no food or drink, continued mask wearing and distancing. The virus is mutating into a more rapid spreading virus right now and the vaccines are not getting out very quickly. We need to continue being patient, careful and safe.

Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Let us all keep praying for our church families, an end to Covid and more peace in the world.

Peace & Love,
Willow River Parish

Coffee/Greeter & Counters

No assignments will be made for coffee/greeter and counter 2021 until church resumes in-person worship.

Confirmation

Confirmation will be held via zoom starting Sunday, February 7th. Time to be determined.

Deadline for the March Newsletter is February 23rd

Recovery Ministry

The Recovery Ministry program is specifically designed for individuals struggling with addiction of all kinds. The goal of this ministry is to provide a safe space, free of judgment, for individuals with trauma and/or addiction problems to worship, learn, and grow closer to God. We would like the Recovery Ministry to touch the hearts of individuals that may not attend church services on Sunday mornings but find the Lord working on their soul. This recovery ministry will consist of discussions, devotionals, worship, and the creation of a safe community to work through earthly struggles. Due to COVID-19, the Recovery Ministry will be conducted online until it is safe to proceed with in-person meetings. An email address, Facebook page, and website are currently being created for this ministry. The Recovery Ministry program is in its beginning stages and worship services won't be starting until the end of February or the beginning of March. As we begin this ministry, your prayers and sharing of experiences or recommendations is greatly appreciated. I can be contacted at umc.em.rec.ministry@gmail.com.

Alicia Peterson has been hired to begin this Recovery Ministry. Alicia Peterson has lived in the Deer Park area for her entire life. She attended Winona State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 2019. She is a current student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison working on her Master of Social Work degree in the focus area of mental health. She finds herself drawn to the population she would be serving with the Recovery Ministry program and is very excited for the meetings to begin. In Alicia's free time she enjoys reading, crocheting, and spending time with her family and 3 dogs, 5 cats, 3 lizards, 2 guinea pigs, and 1 rabbit.



Lifeline Food Pantry Thank You

Dear Church Supporters:

We would like to sincerely THANK YOU for the support you have given Lifeline Food Pantry this past year. At this time, we do not have an organization that is giving us matching funds, but if this changes we will make you aware of it as this has helped considerably in years past with keeping our funds available for purchasing food and other items for distribution to our clients. Please pass the word on if you know of someone in need of food or other assistance and have them contact the Lifeline Food Pantry.

Volunteers are needed to help during the hours our pantry is open to our clients: Wednesday (1-5pm) and Thursday (10am-2pm). Help is especially needed during the winter months. If anyone is interested, please have them call the Lifeline Food Pantry at 715-263-3846 and leave their name and telephone number. Gordon Weber, the pantry coordinator will contact them. They are also welcome to stop at the Food Pantry during the above hours and talk with someone in person.

We again sincerely thank you for the support you have given the Lifeline Food Pantry. Your prayers and donations have helped make our mission possible. Please pass this message on to your parishioners.

Sincerely, LFP Board of Directors



Please use the following information to join us for worship and bible study.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88613652777?pwd=UlpaSVhGN0g1Qnc3VDV5T0Jhci83UT09>

Meeting ID: 886 1365 2777
Passcode: 421072

Pastor's Pen

¹² a land that the LORD your God looks after. The eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. (Deuteronomy 11:12, NRSV)



Beloved: I hope you are safe and well in this difficult time. Since last year, we have undergone many changes personally, socially, and globally. Vaccines are being made and supplied through the efforts of many pharmaceutical companies. Even as we are having vaccines being given to people, we see the hospitals overwhelmed and our medical personnel needing to continue their heroic battle against Covid-19. Many people have been tired and exhausted due to the prolonged pandemic period, but we must remember that God is always with us and doesn't want us to lose hope. As written in Deuteronomy 11:12, the eyes of our God always protect us from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

Due to our Bishop's strong suggestion for not holding in-person services and meetings, and not positive current pandemic situations, most of the United Methodist Churches in Wisconsin have been closed to in-person services, so I think we should also maintain Zoom worship services until we can feel safe. But I know there are those who cannot attend Sunday worship because of the internet issue. I have sent my manuscript to them through mail and email and made phone calls. If you need these services, but you haven't received one, feel free to let me know.

I have been taking the United Methodist Evangelism class at Boston School of Theology, one of thirteen United Methodist seminaries via Zoom since January 26th as a continuing education, non-degree program.

I hope to share more good things I learned through the class with you.

Lent will begin soon. This season begins on Ash Wednesday (Feb 17) and lasts until the Wednesday before Easter Sunday (April 4). When I was in California, the churches I served didn't have Lenten Services on weekdays, but I just learned that WRP has held services on Wednesday evenings during Lent. I have discussed and been planning it with lay leaders and speakers. We're going to have a book for Lent. I hope you also prepare and pray for how you will spend this coming special forty days. I have said that Lent is the season of the tithe of our faith as it accounts for one-tenth of the year (1/10). I believe that this coming forty days will be the foundation of our healthy faith.

When we read the Bible, we can find the number forty days several times.

1. The period of urging for the destruction and repentance of the city Nineveh was forty days (Jonah3:4) → Repentance
2. Strengthened by food and water, Elijah traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God (1Kings19:8) → Recovery
3. Moses wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant for forty days (Exod34:28) → Preparation
4. The Twelve leaders sent by Moses traveled for forty days (Num13:25) → Vision
5. Jesus was tested by the devil in the wilderness after forty days of fasting (Matthew4:2) → Training
6. Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God after His resurrection (Acts1:3) → Joy

I hope you choose one of these six forty-day themes to build your own Lent theme apart from the theme the church decided. It will be helpful to your spiritual growth. So, what is the theme of your Lent?

With the love of Christ; Pastor Hakki





THE WILLOW RIVER PARISH
CLEAR LAKE, DEER PARK, FAITH FAMILY
PO BOX 269 – 420 FOURTH STREET
CLEAR LAKE, WI. 54005-0269

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Willow River Parish United Methodist Churches

Hakki Min, Pastor

Parish Secretary: Anitra Kaczmarski

Parish Secretary Email: wrpsecretary@gmail.com

Parish Office Phone: 715-263-2700

Parish Office Hours: Tues-Friday 10am-12pm

E-Mail: willowriverparish@gmail.com

Website: www.willowriverparish.org

Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m. virtual service via ZOOM

Upon in-person worship resuming, times are as follows:

8:30 a.m. – Deer Park 9:45 a.m. – Clear Lake

11:00 a.m. – Faith Family