

# THE PARISH CONNECTION

February 2024

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

## February 2024 Lectionary Readings

**February 4, 2024**

**Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)**

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

**February 11, 2024**

**Transfiguration Sunday (White)**

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

**February 14, 2024**

**Ash Wednesday; (Purple)**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Ps 51:1-17 (UMH 785);  
2 Cor 5:20b-6:10; Matt 6:1-6, 16-21

**February 18, 2024**

**First Sunday in Lent (Purple)**

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

**February 25, 2024**

**Second Sunday in Lent (Purple)**

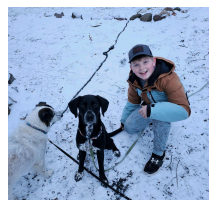
Gen 17:1-7, 15-16; Ps 22:23-31 (UMH 752);  
Rom 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

## IN OUR PRAYERS

*Joys*— Safe travels, seeing family, Season of Epiphany

*Concerns*— Mark T, Betty, LeRoy Winberg, Jennie K, Meghan and Steve, Mike K, Roger L, Mona, Liz's niece and sister, Jamie, Todd, Mike Kirk, Edison, Betty, Jim, Ivan, Mary, Bonnie, Libby, Ann, LeRoy & Barbara, Jude's daughter, Julie, Ron & Linda, Johanna, Diane, Israel, Palestine & Ukraine  
*Remembering*—families of Gail Clark, Sue Paulson, A. Anderson, Richard Hillstead and Dennis Bliese

**Lent Schedule:** Ash Wednesday service at Clear Lake on Feb 14th. We are planning to have a Lenten Bible Study every Wednesday evening at 7pm during the season of Lent. We'll be reading the Dynamite Prayer book. Further information will be announced through bulletins and worship announcements.



## PET OF THE MONTH:

Oliver G with two of his dogs, Dipper and Nube.

## Willow River Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Willow-River-Parish-103076225619623/>. Please send any information you would like posted to Heather Greene [mr.mrs.greene5@gmail.com](mailto:mr.mrs.greene5@gmail.com) or Gail Kuhl [kuhlg@cltcomm.net](mailto:kuhlg@cltcomm.net)

During winter, when harsh weather comes due to too low temperatures or heavy snow and each church decides to close, we will have a Zoom worship at 10 a.m.

**WRP Bible Study:** We will be joining in the parish study with Pastor Hakki for Lent.

**Zoom:** Please use the following information to join us Sundays for worship at 11:00 a.m.  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88613652777?pwd=Ulp\\_aSVhGN0g1Qnc3VDV5T0Jhcn83UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88613652777?pwd=Ulp_aSVhGN0g1Qnc3VDV5T0Jhcn83UT09)  
Meeting ID: 886 1365 2777  
Passcode: 421072

**UMC Special Sundays:** Listed below are the remaining special Sundays for 2024. Please watch for pew cards describing the upcoming special Sunday in the worship bulletin a week before each special Sunday. Donation envelopes will be at the back of the churches.

- UMCOR Sunday ~ March 10
- Native American Ministries Sunday ~ April 14
- Peace with Justice Sunday ~ May 26
- World Communion Sunday ~ October 6
- United Methodist Student ~ November 24

**WRP Youth:** Youth had their Christmas party Saturday, Jan. 6th at the Gorres home. We had a bonfire and a Walk to Bethlehem outdoor hike with stops with the angels, the manger, rode the camels with the Kings and met Simeon. We had supper and played some fun games. Thanks for hosting Gorres family!

**Regional Youth Event: Snow Tubing @ Trollhaugen**  
Watch for info in the bulletins or Youth Text



## February Birthdays

Nathan Thompson	2/05
Ron Boe	2/05
Laura Drinkman	2/09
Ruth Severson	2/16
Catherine Benoy	2/17
Debbie Stevens	2/21
John Koerper	2/24
Bernice Goodrich	2/25
Brandon Pederson	2/25
Justin Wood	2/26

**Ruby's Pantry** distributes food at Pop-Up Pantry locations across MN & WI. There is no income or residency requirement and for a \$25 bundle donation you will receive an abundance of groceries. One food distribution will take place **February 10th** in the **SMC LTD** parking lot at 9000 Griffin Street E in Amery. This is a drive-thru distribution from **7:30 am to 9:00 am**. Volunteers are greatly appreciated and should arrive at **6:45 am**. If you would like to volunteer or if you would like more information, please contact 715-268-7390 or email [office.ameryucc@gmail.com](mailto:office.ameryucc@gmail.com).

Another Ruby's Pantry location is: 1245 County Highway CC, New Richmond, Wisconsin 54017, which distributes on the 3rd Thursday of the Month. Registration begins at 5:00 PM. Food bundles available 5:00-7:00 PM. Hosted by: Faith Community Church. Check out their website [www.rubyspantry.org](http://www.rubyspantry.org) to find a location and time that works for you.

## FEBRUARY WORSHIP MINISTRIES

### Clear Lake

Feb 4th	Reader: John Koerper Acolyte/PwrPt: Ben Avery Brunch: Gail
Feb 11th	Reader: Dawn Cress Acolyte/PwrPt: Oliver Gorres Coffee: Dawn
Feb 18th	Reader: Ben Avery Acolyte/PwrPt: Jordan Blanchard Coffee: Roger & Carla
Feb 25th	Reader: Debi Ahrens Acolyte/PwrPt: Oliver Wood Coffee: Debi

*Counters for Feb: Dawn/Debi (Carla/Roger B-11th)*

### Faith Family

Feb 4th	Paul Webster
Feb 11th	Penny Warner
Feb 18th	Cindy Warner
Feb 25th	Debbie Stevens



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## **Deer Park UMC News:**

**Send Offering to:** Janice Thompson, 110 North Street E, Deer Park, WI 54007

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### **1st Quarter Noisy Can--Grace Place**

**Pastor's Pen:** Lent is coming soon! It starts with the Ash Wednesday Service on February 14th, 2024. Lent lasts for 40 days, from Ash Wednesday to the day before Easter Sunday. Remember, Sundays during Lent don't count in the 40 days! It's a time when we focus on confessing and seeking forgiveness from God. We'll be reading the Dynamite Prayer book recommended by the conference during Lent. Since it's a 28-day spiritual adventure, we'll divide it to fit wisely with Lent.

Last year, the Ash Wednesday Service was at Faith Family. This year, Clear Lake will host it. Also, our Lenten Gatherings will go from FF to DP to CL. We plan to take this Lenten season as a time to reflect on our spirituality.

I've suggested each year before Lent begins that you choose a theme for your Lenten journey. Have you decided on your Lenten theme? If you haven't chosen one yet, how about considering "Gratitude" as the theme for this Lent?

Sometimes we forget to appreciate what God has given us and start to think of them as normal. Once we start doing that, gratitude fades away, and we start complaining and comparing ourselves to others.

During our worship service, I'd love to hear more joys and gratitude from you all during the time of sharing joys and concerns. Just to clarify, I'm *NOT* saying that you shouldn't share your concerns, but I'm asking you to actively discover and share the joys and gratitude that God has given you.

Some folks might feel this way: "Pastor, I can't find anything to be thankful for." "There's no happiness in my life."

But remember, God loves you all. He's already given joy and happiness to each of you. We just need to actively look for it and recognize it in our lives.

I've often said that our journey of faith is a lifelong process of confession and absolution. This process is also known as self-emptying or *Kenosis*. Before we know God, we mistakenly think of ourselves as the masters of our own lives. But when God opens our spiritual eyes, we realize that God is the true master of our lives.

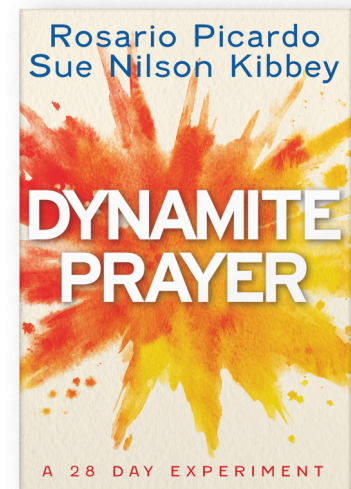
Our journey of faith is an ongoing process of emptying our egos and filling that space with Jesus Christ. Through this process, we come to realize that we don't own or create anything in this world by ourselves. We understand that everything we have comes from God. When we recognize that what we have belongs to God, not us, our lives overflow with gratitude and joy because our lives are an extra granted by God.

Remember, God has already blessed and given joy to your life. Our responsibility is to actively discover it.

During this Lenten season, I earnestly pray that you discover the joy and gratitude that God has given to your life.

In Christ,

Pastor Hakki



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## **Clear Lake UMC News**

- Coffee after church
  - Potluck-1st Sunday of each month after church.
  - Food shelf donations any Sunday
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**Send Offering to:** Josy Wood, 260 40th Avenue, Clear Lake, WI 540045

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**Clear Lake Church Cancellations:** In the event of bad weather, please contact Roger Blanchard 715-263-2690 to find out if worship services are canceled.

### CL Midweek Church School:



Midweek church school will meet on Wednesday, February 14th from 3:30-5pm. Come share the LOVE!

**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. These personnel should be from the Clear Lake, Clayton, Reeve, Forest and Deer Park areas. Please send donations during Jan & Feb to: LouAnn Hansen, 471 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Clear Lake, WI 54005. Checks can be made out to VFW Auxiliary.

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**Lepers and the sick and lame were so happy to see Jesus!**

**Clear Lake Feb. Ad. Co. meets on the 7th at 4pm. There was no January meeting**

**1st Quarter Noisy Can–TBD Feb. 7th**

**Shop with RaiseRight (formerly Scrip):** If you want to place a Raise Right order, please contact Andrea Jilek 263-2575. Nilssen's gift cards can be ordered at any time, too.

**UWF-**No meeting in January. We will be serving our Baked Potatoes on Saturday, Feb. 10th at the Clear Lake Community Center's last Makers Market. We will be meeting Wed. February 14th at Ridgeview at 2pm.

**Bell Choir: Practice at 7 pm on Wednesdays.** The bell choir will be playing at Redeemer Lutheran in Amery on Sunday, February 11th and a TBD date in Boyceville. We are practicing weekly for our spring concert also. Date TBD.  
**NO PRACTICE ASH WED.**

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**Dorcas Piecemakers :** Our Circle group will be meeting the first Tuesday of February at noon at Irma's Cafe and the third Monday of February from 1-3. Tuesday, Feb. 6th and Feb. 18th. We can use fabric matchers, ironers and visitors, we don't all sew! We'd like to send a special thanks to Becky for helping us and Val Boche for sewing great kids pillowcases and donating to our group to send to Grace Place. We will do another day of apron making for Golden Age.

**Lila Ward and Mardell Anderson modeling their new aprons sewed by Dorcas Piecemakers!**



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### New Christmas banners for 2024







Saturday, Feb. 10th, the CL church will be serving their hot, stuffed potatoes at the CL area Community Center from 10-1pm. Come check out the Makers Market and enjoy lunch out!

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**Soul Food by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung**  
*January 2024*

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed”  
Matthew 2:10

On Sunday, we celebrated the beginning of the church season of Epiphany. The word Epiphany comes from the Greek epiphaneia, meaning “appearance” or “manifestation,” and refers to the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the whole world – Jews and gentiles alike!

Epiphany is also the time in the church when we recognize the arrival of the wise ones, who followed a star, and brought luxurious gifts to a Child born in Bethlehem. One of the Scripture texts that we read during Epiphany is from the Gospel of Matthew 2:10, ‘When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.’

As I engaged with this Scripture, I was struck by the term, “overjoyed.” This is a word we rarely use. It is a challenging word, invoking in us perhaps many other emotions. The Scripture text is an invitation to reflect, dive deeper into how do we, as Christ followers, live in the joy of salvation, let alone be “overjoyed.”

What do you praise God for? What are the things in which you have expressed gratitude? What are your joys? In a world full of concerns, struggles and burdens – where and how do you see the joy of faith alive and active?

None of these questions are new. Each is an opportunity to explore how we understand that God is alive in this world. Indeed, this is the Good News of Jesus Christ, that in Emmanuel, God is with us! Our joy does not negate the sadness, injustice nor brokenness of this world, joy gives us a framework

in which to be the joy-bearing, justice-seeking, burden-sharing people of God in any circumstance.

On Monday, January 15 we celebrate the national holiday of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. A day set aside to honor the ministry of a courageous, faith-filled, and faithful man. His witness continues to challenge us to move our faith into action through a beloved community grounded in Christ’s love, grace, and joy - even when facing the direst circumstances.

The Wisconsin Conference invites you to join together on Sunday, January 21, for an evening of worship featuring an African Choir and the Harmony Choir, honoring The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Brown Deer United Methodist Church, 5736 Brown Deer Rd., Milwaukee. My prayer is that our speakers and music will fill our hearts with such joy that we can do nothing less than to live into being a beloved community of Christ Jesus.

In closing, may the words of Romans 15:13 be so, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Amen.

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**Deadline for March Newsletter is Feb. 23rd**

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**God's Valentine Gift**

God's Valentine gift of love to us  
Was not a bunch of flowers;  
It wasn't candy, or a book  
To while away the hours.

His gift was to become a man,  
So He could freely give  
His sacrificial love for us,  
So you and I could live.

He gave us sweet salvation, and  
Instruction, good and true--  
To love our friends and enemies  
And love our Savior, too.

So as we give our Valentines,  
Let's thank our Lord and King;  
The reason we have love to give  
Is that He gave everything.

*By Joanna Fuchs*

## Faith Family Church News:

***Thank you to everyone that helped personally and through the church for helping my family during this difficult time! -Amanda Millermon***

### Faith Family Ad. Board Highlights:

Faith Family Ad Council Minutes

Next meeting in February!

During coffee we need to discuss our Valentine's "boxes" or cards and finish collecting names of those in need of some extra love. Valentine's Day is coming up soon!

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### FUN DAY SCHOOL CORNER:

What a wonderful Christmas Program! Great Job kids!

\*\*\*\*Fun Day school time change to 5:00pm\*\*\*\*



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Noisy Cans--1st Quarter--Crawl 4 the Cure  
Send Offering to: Terri Wilson, 3127 200<sup>th</sup> Ave,  
Glenwood City, WI 54013

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CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK:

[Faith Family Church | Facebook](#)

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### ANCHOR OF HOPE:

Our website can be found at

<https://anchorofhopeemerald.wixsite.com/my-site>

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### WHO WE ARE:

At Anchor of Hope we believe we are all in recovery at some point in our lives may it be mental health, addiction, drugs, alcohol, food, grief, trauma, all around inclusion, our society, our church or so much more.

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### HOW TO CONNECT:

If you need to connect with someone from Anchor of Hope please reach out District Superintendent Peace [pkim@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:pkim@wisconsinumc.org) or 608-478-4527.

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### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

Anchor of Hope has been put on hold by the Wisconsin United Methodist Church Cabinet. Over the course of the next 1-3 years it will be reinvented and recreated into something new. Stay tuned.

If you are in need of a service/meeting we have been connecting with the Church of the Resurrection on Thursdays at 6:00pm  
<https://resurrection.church/recovery/>





THE WILLOW RIVER PARISH  
CLEAR LAKE, DEER PARK, FAITH FAMILY  
420 4<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE – PO BOX 269  
CLEAR LAKE, WI. 54005-0269

Address Service Requested

The Willow River Parish United Methodist Churches  
Parish Office Phone: 715-263-2700  
E-Mail: [willowriverparish@gmail.com](mailto:willowriverparish@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.willowriverparish.org](http://www.willowriverparish.org)

Willow River Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/Willow-River-Parish-103076225619623/>

Hakki Min, Pastor  
Office Hours: Tues-Friday 1-3 pm

Parish Secretary  
Email: [wrpsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:wrpsecretary@gmail.com)  
Office Hours: To Be Determined

Amanda Millermon, Parish Treasurer  
Email: [WRParishconnect@gmail.com](mailto:WRParishconnect@gmail.com)

Sunday Worship  
8:30 a.m. – Deer Park    9:45 a.m. – Clear Lake  
11:00 a.m. – Faith Family (also Zoom)

Children's Church School  
"Fun Day" School–5:00 pm on Wednesdays @ Faith Family  
Sunday School–9:55 am on Sundays @ Clear Lake