

# THE PARISH CONNECTION

December 2024

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

## Lectionary Readings

### DECEMBER 01 | 1st Sunday of Advent; (Purple or Blue)

Jer 33:14-16; Ps 25:1-10 (UMH 756);  
1 Thess 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

### DECEMBER 08 | 2nd Sunday of Advent (Purple or Blue)

Mal 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79 (UMH 208);  
Phil 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

### DECEMBER 15 | 3rd Sunday of Advent (Purple or Blue)

Zeph 3:14-20; Isa 12:2-6;  
Phil 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

### DECEMBER 22 | 4th Sunday of Advent (Purple or Blue)

Mic 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55 (UMH 199);  
Heb 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

### DECEMBER 24 | Christmas Eve (White or Gold)

Isa 9:2-7; Ps 96 (UMH 815);  
Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20

### DECEMBER 25 | Christmas Day (White or Gold)

Isa 52:7-10; Ps 98 (UMH 818);  
Heb 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

### DECEMBER 29 | 1st Sunday after Christmas (White or Gold)

1 Sam 2:18-20, 26; Ps 148 (UMH 861);  
Col 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

**WRP Bible Study:** The WRP bible study is Planning on an Advent Study beginning Wed. Dec. 4th on Zoom at 6 pm. Books will be distributed, please let Diane Blanchard know if you would like to join us for this 4-week study. A wonderful way to stay grounded in the birth of Jesus in this busy season.

**Christmas Tradition Idea:** Beginning December 1<sup>st</sup>, read one chapter of the book of Luke in the Bible each evening. There are 24 chapters. On Christmas Eve you will have read an entire account of Jesus's life and wake up on Christmas morning knowing WHO and WHY we celebrate.

### IN OUR PRAYERS:

**Joys**—Wonderful Garage Sale, Thanksgiving, Beautiful Winter of Wisconsin, Snow, Methodist Bell Choir

**Concerns**— Pat Lillie, Lonn, Meghan, Mike K, Jennie's cousins, Linda's niece CariJo, all countries with wars, Gaza, especially the children, Jamie, Todd, Ardys, Edison, Betty, Mary, Libby, Ruth, Julie, Holly, Alison's friend, Steve, Barb's family, Lori, Camilla P, Ivan Ruble, Harry, Elaine Bannink, Terry, Debbie Stevens, Penny Warner, Bev's boys, Larry, Vicki, Mary K, Gary, Bourne, Paula, Carol, and Deb

**Remembering**—Family and friends of Andy Hornick, Dixie Croes, Allen Warner, Richard Paulson, Mark Tellijohn, Ann Stuntz, Lynn Dreier, and Daniel Petersen

### Schedule of Christmas Activities

Dec 13 Clear Lake Cookie/Rosette Sale  
& Baked Potato Supper, 3:30-6:30 p.m.  
Dec 14 Emerald Community Holiday 2pm  
Dec. 22 CL Sunday school program 11:00  
Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services  
Dec 27 FF Fun Day School Program @ 6:00  
Dec. 29 Comb. 5th Sunday Service FF 10 am  
Jan. 5 Bells Concert First Lutheran 10 am

**Charge Conference 2024  
Sunday, December 15th  
at Faith Family UMC @ 3:30 p.m.**

## December Birthdays

Benjamin Pietz	12/2
Julie Longfellow	12/5
Faness Johnson	12/6
Stan Larson	12/6
Graham Millermon	12/6
Beth Thompson	12/11
Oliver Wood	12/12
Andrea Jilek	12/14
Michael Stark	12/18
Noah Pederson	12/21
Patty Warner	12/21
Gail Kuhl	12/23
Liz Larson	12/29

## December Anniversaries

Neil & Joan Lillie 12/30



**Clear Lake Community Center (CLACC)** continues to hold a **Senior Lunch Program** for our community. The last luncheon for this year will be at noon on December 5th at CLACC. Free

will offering for all. Reservations are not necessary but appreciated. Please call 715-263-2233 and leave a message.

**Zoom:** Please use the following information to join us on Sundays for worship at **8:30 a.m.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88613652777?pwd=UlpASVhGN0g1Qnc3VDV5T0Jhci83UT09>

Meeting ID: 886 1365 2777 Passcode: 421072

## 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 [kuhlq@cltcomm.net](mailto:kuhlq@cltcomm.net)

**Hanging of the Greens** will be celebrated at all three churches on Sunday, Dec. 1st, Clear Lake will incorporate into the service.



## DECEMBER WORSHIP MINISTRIES

### Clear Lake

Dec 1st Reader: Andrea Jilek  
Acolyte/PwrPt: Lily Avery  
Brunch: Avery Family

Dec 8th Reader: John K  
Acolyte/PwrPt: Oliver Wood  
Coffee: John & Stacia

Dec 15th Reader: Debi Ahrens  
Acolyte/PwrPt: Oliver Gorres  
Coffee: Jennie K & Becky R

Dec 22nd Reader: Dawn Cress  
Acolyte/PwrPt: Jordan Blanchard  
Christmas Coffee: UWF

Dec 29th **Combined Service 10 am FF**  
Jan. 5th **Brunch: Gail Kuhl**

**Counters for December: Carla & Joan**  
**Counters for January: Carla & Diane**

### Faith Family

Dec 1st Paul Webster  
Dec 8th Penny Warner  
Dec 15th Terri Wilson  
Dec 22nd Paul Webster  
Dec 29th Penny Warner

**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 **December 14th** 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.

**January Newsletter Deadline is Dec. 26th**

## WRP Youth

### Willow River Parish College

**Boxes:** The youth will be ringing the Salvation Army bells and packing college boxes on Wednesday December 4, 3:30 at the CL Church basement. If you have a college student, be sure their address is turned in to Erin, Jan T or Heather before that date. Can each church please collect items for the boxes? All sorts of individually wrapped snacks, goodies and single hot drink packets are appreciated by the students during their finals. Single pack meals like ramen and mac and cheese, microwave popcorn, granola bars, cheese and crackers, candy, gum, Christmas candies—all are welcome and appreciated!



living a fuller life in Christ and with Christ.

Am I like Bartimaeus, blind and in need,  
Sidelined, and unseen indeed?

Yet I feel not. Should I then depart,  
Close the sacred text,  
Dismiss its impart,  
And chase what merely pleases the heart?

Perhaps I am blind, yet unaware,  
For I know not what visions I spare.  
Have mercy on me, Lord, let me not be,  
Blind to the truths in my life and community.

I'm in need, yet deny the plea,  
For to lack feels like failure to me.  
Have mercy on me, Lord, dispel this pride,  
Help me seek life where your grace abides.

I am sidelined, yet choose not to show,  
For silence can hide my location, as I crawl.  
Have mercy on me, grant courage so bold,  
To cry for justice, with the outcast and cold.

Shifted in gaze, from blind Bartimaeus to Jesus,  
Through synoptic gospels, each version guides us,  
Differing starts, yet the healer's same love,  
Calling the subdued, whom He stood above.

"What do you want me to do for you?" He inquired,  
A question to which James and John aspired  
For seats of glory, at His left and right,  
Yet the blind man sought to restore his sight.

"Your faith has healed you," declared the Lord,  
A faith unseen by passerby, to God, adored.  
Shown "the Way" as his vision was restored,  
Left his mat, on the way, followed the Lord.

Where do I see the Lord and openly shout?  
What would I say if asked where my faith stands out?  
How do I recognize Him, not as genie, but as Christ?  
What path do I walk, my sight opened in Christ's light?

This poem was originally drafted by me and later refined with the assistance of ChatGPT, an AI language model from OpenAI. It helped enhance the rhythm and clarity of the verses.



The CL youth decided to spend their mission funds from the September thrift sale by sending one goat and one sheep to Heifer International, \$80 to help ship books to the Mityana school in Uganda and purchase supplies

needed at the Amery Humane Shelter. A big thank you sent to all those who donated baked goods and purchased them.

### Soulful Reflection by PyungAhn "Peace" Kim

I reflected on my life through the story of Jesus' healing of blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:35-45, the gospel passage from the coming Sunday lectionary readings. This reflection soared on rhythm, leading me through deep contemplation and raising probing questions, all directed toward



One of the shows I've been enjoying on Netflix recently is Culinary Class Wars. If you haven't watched it yet, I highly recommend it! It's a cooking competition featuring 20 renowned and celebrated chefs facing off against 80 lesser-known, up-and-coming chefs. Among the renowned chefs was Edward

Lee, the winner of the 2010 American Iron Chef competition. The judges are two distinguished figures: one is a famous restaurateur and chef, while the other is a highly acclaimed Michelin 3-star chef. The first round focuses on selecting 20 chefs from the 80 unknown contestants to compete against the celebrated chefs. Each contestant prepares their signature dish, presenting it to the judges, who rigorously taste all 80 dishes and select 20 based on their own strict standards.

This is followed by one-on-one culinary duels between the renowned chefs and the selected contestants. In each duel, the participants must use a specific ingredient provided by the show. The winner is determined by who best showcases the ingredient. To ensure fairness, the judges wore blindfolds during the evaluation process so they wouldn't know who prepared each dish. They assessed the dishes solely using their sense of taste, smell, and touch. Even for expert chefs, each has their own area of specialty—some excel in Western cuisine, others in Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Korean, or fusion cooking. The show's charm lies in the diversity of cuisines featured.

As I watched the chefs in action, I was struck by how they harmonized flavors—sweet, salty, sour, spicy, and bitter—while also considering textures to create dishes that delighted the judges' palates. It reminded me of ministry. Just as chefs skillfully blend various ingredients to create a balanced dish, ministry, too, involves bringing diverse elements together to create something harmonious.

Recently, as I've been preparing my ordination papers, I've been reflecting deeply on my ministry and sermons through the lens of the diverse questions posed by the Board of Ordained Ministry. It's led me to ponder: What kind of "flavor" do my ministry and sermons have? Ultimately, it's you, the congregation, who have "tasted" them. I can only hope they haven't been too bland or overly salty. The Advent season is now upon us—a season of waiting. During Advent, we don't simply wait passively; we light the lamps of our hearts as we anticipate the coming of our Lord. In this dark and chilly season, may we not only light our own lamps but also warm the hearts of those around us who may be trembling in the cold. Together, let us create a ministry that is flavorful, harmonious, and life-giving—a ministry that nourishes souls during this sacred season.



Blessings to you this Advent, Pastor Hakki



John Wesley said there are two types of holiness. Personal holiness, where you grow your personal relationship with God, and social holiness, which is loving and supporting your neighbors. To be a complete Christian we need to focus on both. He wrote: "The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love, is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection."

# Deer Park UMC News

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

**Noisy Can--4th Quarter to Various Charities**

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## Clear Lake UMC News

- Coffee and pot luck **BEFORE** church at 10:15
  - Potluck-1st Sunday of each month BEFORE 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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**CL Noisy Cans:** 4th qtr.- Interfaith CareGivers

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**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.

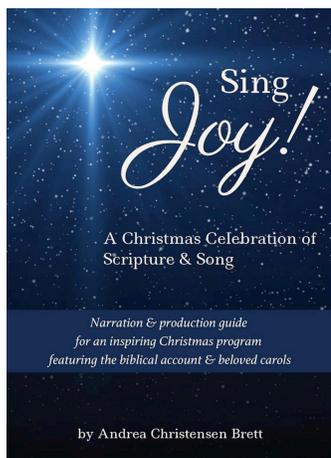
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**Clear Lake Church Cancellations:** Winter is fast approaching; in the event of bad weather, please contact Roger Blanchard 715-263-2690 or 715-607-4246 to find out if worship services are canceled.

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**Clear Lake Sunday School** is trying something new this year- "Bible in a Binder", Kids can come into church and grab a binder and work on it after the children's sermon. The scripture for the day will be reinforced with what they find in the binder.

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**Clear Lake Sunday School Christmas Program**

**Sing JOY!**

**Sunday, Dec. 22nd  
11:00 am during the Service.**

Please join us for Christmas Coffee before the service.

## **Clear Lake United Methodist Church Ad Council Meeting November 20, 2024**

### Old Business:

1. No action on sign.
2. No action on replacing the fan.
3. Joan will pick up the Poinsettias at Nilssen's November 30th.

### New Business:

1. Hanging of the greens, Sunday December 1st during the worship service.
2. Youth Christmas Program December 22 during the worship service.
3. Christmas Eve services will be Faith Family at 4:00 PM, Deer Park at 5:30 PM, and Clear Lake at 7:00 PM.
4. Will send an invitation to the Sanctuary with a Christmas worship schedule.
5. There will be no service on Christmas Day.
6. Set the 2025 budget. Motion to approve by Joan, 2nd Debi. Motion approved.
7. Cookie making for the Cookie Sale - December 2 and 9, 10:00 AM to ??? All are welcome!!!
8. Methodists in Action (MIA) - the youth and any adults that would like to help will be serving hot chocolate and handing out Christmas wrapping paper in December. Date, time and location to be determined.
9. Christmas Bell Choir Concert - January 5 at 10:00 AM at the First Lutheran church.

### Pastor's Notes:

- Charge Conference is December 15 at Faith Family Church at 3:00 PM.
- Pastor is asking for help to assemble the Charge Conference booklets December 8 after church. All are welcome to help.
- Pastor Hakki will deliver a Sunshine Basket and pray for the residents of Ridge View on November 26 at 9:00 AM in the tragic loss of one of the residents.
- Advent Candle lighting schedule:
  - Gorres family 1st Sunday
  - Wood family 2nd Sunday
  - Avery family 3rd Sunday
  - Jilek family 4th Sunday
  - Joan, Debi, and Jennie Christmas Eve
- December 29, 5th Sunday is hosted by Faith Family at 10:00 AM. Pastor Hakki is planning an Improv play for the service.

*Next meeting January 8, 2025 at 4:00 PM.*

**Bell Choir:** Meets at 7pm on Wed. at CL. Christmas concert will be on Sunday, January 5th at the First Lutheran church during the church service, more info to follow. We will also be adjusting some practice times in the near future to Sunday evening.



**Dorcas Piecemakers Work Days:** On Monday, December 2nd we will meet at Irma's for lunch at noon and then sew from 1-3 then Monday, December 9th we will meet at 1:00 to bake and frost cookies for the Cookie Sale on the 13th.

**Family House Shelter-Polk/Barron Big News** Patti stopped at the CL Church on Monday, Nov. 4th and picked up the frozen meals and desserts from the freezer. She was very grateful for the box full of goodies we had for her. They should have residents for Thanksgiving. Thanks to all who donated! We will gather meals again in January 2025.

**United Women in Faith** hosted an Election Day Meal on November 5th. Thank you to all who worked and made soup and baked goods for this event. We served around 45 guests and after expenses profited around \$300.00. Our Christmas party will be Dec 11th @ 1:00.

CLUMC rang Salvation Army Bells at Nilssens on Tuesday, Nov. 19th. Thanks to all who rang!!



**Clear Lake Christmas Cookie and Stuffed Baked Potato Sale:** Friday, December 13th from 3:30-6:30 pm-- All church family members please donate 6 dozen Christmas



Cookies. Workers needed, watch for sign up sheets at the back of the church or contact Debi Ahrens at 715-441-5477.

**CHRISTMAS FOR CHILDREN:** The Clear Lake United Methodist Church will be sponsoring the "Christmas for Children" drive again this year to provide gifts for area children who otherwise may not receive gifts at Christmas time. "Christmas for Children" is designed to reach more needs of our local community. We are coming up on our 31st year and are so grateful for all of the support that we have received from everyone.

Anyone wishing to donate items to "Christmas for Children" can do so by leaving them at True Value Hardware, or our church

November 4, 2024 through December 2, 2024.

All gifts will be given to children ages 0-18 in the Clear Lake School District Area.

If you are in need of gifts for your children or if you know of other families in the Clear Lake School District area who are in need of Christmas gifts for their children, we would like to hear from you. Call Debi Ahrens 715-441-5477 or Diane Blanchard 715-263-2690 (if no answer, please leave a message). All names will be kept strictly confidential.

As in the past, we thank you for your support.



# Faith Family Church News:

## Faith Family Ad Board HIGHLIGHTS:

Faith Family Ad Council minutes

Nov. 21, 2024 at 6:30 via zoom

Present: Pastor Hakki, Terri and Jeff, Debbie and Gary, Paul, Joyce and Dennis and Heather and Michael

Pastor opened in song and prayer

Discussion:

1. Membership is 27 members, we lost 4 this year. We discussed the openings for the leadership list. We need to check with a few people to see if they are interested.
2. Pastoral update: Pastor Hakki is working on his ordination, Feb. 2025. He also needs our help to get a green card. He has a petition to sign and send to Tammy Baldwin.
3. **Community Service projects:**
  - A. We are going to help wrap gifts for the Emerald Holiday Celebration on Dec. 14th. The gifts will be wrapped on Nov. 30 at our church. They could use donations of gifts or money.
  - B. Food pantry items will be dropped off in Boyceville by Joyce and Dennis this week.
  - C. We are having a garage sale on Nov. 22-23-24. (free will donation)
4. Pancake breakfast is on hold until Spring
5. Building the Christmas tree on Sunday, Nov. 24, Hanging of the Greens is Dec. 1
6. Charge Conference is Dec. 15, at 3:30 at Faith Family ( We need to get the forms completed by Dec. 1.)
7. Shared proposed budget for next year 2025 (passed)
8. Shared monthly treasurer's reports for August, September and October. Motion made and passed to accept them. Motion carried.
9. We will get a sympathy card for the neighbor, Greg Glass, who lost his son.
10. We want to help when the community dedicates the new Veterans Park area.

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Remember to work on your charge conference forms! It's that time of year again!

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## Fun Day School Kids:

The kids have decided to get together this month and start something new and something exciting. This month we will be working on our Christmas Program. Hosted by the kids for all of you.

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## Community Events:

We will be wrapping presents at Faith Family Church in Emerald, WI on December 3rd at 7:00pm. Bring gifts for kids before December 3rd. We need volunteers to help with the event when Santa comes to town on December 14th.

**Toy Drive**  
For  
**EMERALD HOLIDAZE**  
Event held December 14th, 2024  
2-4PM Emerald, WI

\*Donations Accepted Through November\*

SHOTGUN SUZIE'S SALOON  
EMERALD, WISCONSIN

The Greatest Of All Taverns

EMERALD TIRE & AUTO SERVICE  
(715) 265-4340

FAITH FAMILY CHURCH  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**DROP OFF LOCATIONS**

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**Noisy Can--4th Qtr:** Humane Society

**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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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 9-11 am

Anitra Kaczmarek, Parish Secretary  
Email: [wrpsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:wrpsecretary@gmail.com)  
Office Hours: will vary this month

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

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

Church School @ Faith Family & Clear Lake  
“Fun Day” School–Wednesdays 7 pm @ Faith Family  
Bible in a Binder Sundays @ Clear Lake