

THE JOURNAL JOURNEY OF HOPE

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“He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making all things new.’ Then he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’” Revelation 21:5, NIV

FOOD PANTRY DEMAND SOARS IN 2022

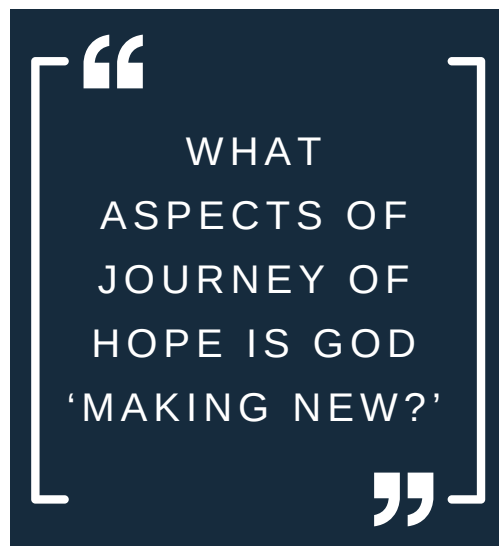
Food for Greater Elgin provides food to people in need through five shopping distributions of food, home deliveries to people confined to home for medical reasons and people living in low income neighborhoods. 2022 has been a difficult year; the special programs providing emergency assistance of food for us to distribute had ended, but the economic disruptions cause by COVID and the large numbers of refugees fleeing to our area from nations like Venezuela and now Ukraine have caused the numbers of people coming to us to soar. In 2021 a total of 81,439 people received food from us, so far in 2022 we have provided food to has soared to 125,189, a 54% increase. And this year is not over yet!

Who are the people turning to us? 79% are from Elgin, 25% are over 60, 73% come to us for food under six times a year. We are a source of emergency food, a way to reduce expenses when it is urgent to cut costs and because you are hungry and don't have food. Few (but more than in the past) come to us weekly.

This mirrors long term studies, (cont on page 2)

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR PASTOR

Happy New Year! I hope and pray that this past year has held with it some celebrations, even if there have been difficulties found throughout. I pray that you have been able to find some peace in the seasons of Lent and Advent while growing in your faith and knowledge of God, our Creator. I know that as I reflect on this past year, I can recognize both times in my life.



Some of the challenges this past year have come through a difficult second year of my doctorate program. I was able to get everything turned in on time and you will be happy to know, as I was, that I received an 'A' for this second year of studies. This was a big relief as this year seemed a bit more challenging than the first, and we

had so much going on here at Journey of Hope.

Then the somewhat unexpected passing of Sherry's mom during this Advent season. While we knew that things were not going very well, anytime you experience a loss like this, it will have an effect on you. We are doing alright, although continued prayers for us and the whole family are certainly appreciated.

But we also had celebrations, for our second anniversary party for the merger, to spaghetti dinners, exciting worship services, and the introduction of a new church app, (cont on page 5)

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WALKING BIBLE STUDY

Start the new year with a new routine. Monday mornings, at a **new time (7:30am)** come take a stroll around our wonderful main level as we walk, talk share in scripture and conversation to grow in our faith. This just may be what is missing in your life and how better to get exercise. Bible study and develop new friendships. The Sonrise room door is open and ready for you. January 2nd, 20223 can be a new beginning for you.

FOOD PANTRY DEMANDS ... (cont from page 1)

that found that over a person's life time, 60% of us will need some form of assistance due to illness, divorce, loss of a job or personal catastrophe. People who need food are not 'them', they are 'us'.

We need your help! Send money either through Journey of Hope or directly to us by going to <https://ffge.givecloud.co/product/GTKG2022/gifts-that-keep-giving-2022>. Volunteer to work with us by going to <https://www.foodforgreaterelgin.org/volunteer/> or calling Cesar Valdez at 224-242-3371.

Pray for us, that we may be a source of hope for people in desperate times! Thank you for all that you have done.

Michael Montgomery
Executive Director, Food for Greater Elgin

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

This is the last chance for you adventurers who would like to form a faith-based Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) group. If you like solving problems / puzzles, working as a team and enjoy shared storytelling you might like a D&D group. This is not a game were the player who gets the most treasure and slays the biggest dragon wins; its learning about each other, working together, trusting each other and becoming a team all while solving problems, avoiding traps, defeating the baddies and having fun. If you are willing to give this a try, then see Steve Meyer or email: moonwatcher2001@hotmail.com.

CAROLING

Thank you to all our carolers who spent an afternoon sharing the joy of season to several of our family and friends at Journey of Hope!



MINISTRY TEAMS

CHURCH COUNCIL

Carole Burris, Chair
carolejb0677@gmail.com

CARE TEAM

Mary Summers, Chair
mrfrank1942@gmail.com

ENDOWMENT

Gary Newton, Chair
captainchemistry33@yahoo.com

FINANCE

Steve Mink, Chair
startmink@hotmail.com
Dave Kellenberger, Treasurer
kellenbrgr@aol.com
Randy Riotto, Secretary
rrac56@aol.com

MISSIONS

Andy Lindstrom, Chair
andrewlindstrom@yahoo.com

SPRC

Dan Gardner, Chair
nandan42@att.net

TRUSTEES

Roy Chapman, Chair
roy_chapman@yahoo.com
Chuck Keysor, Vice-Chair
chuck.keysor@sbcglobal.net

UWF

Nancy Gardner, Co-Chair
nandan42@att.net
Robin Luzin, Co-Chair
rluzin@sbcglobal.net

WORSHIP

Mary Becker, Chair
marybecker50@yahoo.com



INTERESTED IN SERVING
ON A TEAM?

Contact Pastor Jarrod or
Team Chair.

JANUARY

SUNDAY

Worship

S & FB Live @ 9:15am

Fellowship Time

CR @ 10:15am

Group Studies

M3, M5, U1, U5 @ 10:30am

Confirmation

10:30am

Explorer Kids

L3 @ 10:30am

MONDAY

Walking Bible Study

SR @ 7:30am

(NEW TIME!!)

WEDNESDAY

Panera Bible Study

SE Panera @ 6am

Pathways Worship

S & FB Live @ 6pm

Choir Practice

S @ 7pm

THURSDAY

Prayer Service

SR & FB Live @ 7am

Coffee w/ the Pastor

SR @ 7:30am

Stitches of Hope

M5 @ 1pm

Disciple Bible Study

U1 @ 7-9pm

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1 MANNA Orders PADS, 5pm	2	3 Care Team, 1pm Trustees, 7pm	4 Community of Hope, 12:30pm	5	6	7 Unhanging of the Greens, 9am
8	9	10	11	12 Soup Kettle, 5pm	13 Game Night, 7pm	14
15 Manna Orders Mission Team Mtg, 8am	16 Food for Greater Elgin, 5pm	17 Soup Kettle, 4:30pm	18	19 UWF, 1pm	20	21
22 Crisis Center Meal @ 5pm	23	24 Church Council, 7pm	25	26	27	28
29 Townhall Mtg @ 10:30am	30	31	1	2	3	4

SMALL GROUPS / BIBLE STUDIES

If you are looking for a way to get connected and grow in your faith in the new year, consider joining one of our small group opportunities through out the week.

SUNDAY

"We'll Accept You", M3 @ 10:30am

"Current Events", M5 @ 10:30am

MONDAY

Walking Bible Study, Sonrise Room @ 7:30am

WEDNESDAY

Morning Bible Study, S. Elgin Panera Bread @ 6am

THURSDAY

Stitches of Hope, M5 @ 1pm

Disciple Bible Study, U1 @ 7pm



FROM THE DESK ... (cont from page 1)

we have been able to participate in man new things here at Journey of Hope.

This brings me to this new year, 2023. What will our next year bring to us? How will God guide and encourage us in this liminal space? What aspects of Journey of Hope is God 'making new?'

I truly believe that God is guiding us through these three major goals of reaching new families, incorporating guests and member within the ministries of the church, and helping those broken by life's circumstances. We have already begun a couple of projects and ministries, but there is much more work to be done. Where is God calling you to participate? Where is God calling you to lead?

This will be a discernment process for all of us, especially as we begin the new year. We start on January 1st with a Wesley Covenant Renewal Service. This is an opportunity to commit or recommit to the covenant between you and your Creator. Don't worry if you feel like you are going to miss this special service because, as with the rest of them, it will be available online through the app, Facebook, and YouTube. There will be bulletins available digitally as well as the certificates for you to sign and remember. This is an opportunity to you to make the decision to learn and grow in your faith, all the while participating in the ministries of Journey of Hope, maybe even starting some new ones.

Most importantly, I want to ask all of you to continue with our 531 Initiative, as we pray for Journey of Hope and the path God is guiding us on. We don't know what lies ahead, but we do know that God will be with us. And I don't know about you, but there is a feeling of excitement, of anxious anticipation, and of sacred searching that is welling up within me. This is what I was hoping for during Advent. This is what I was preparing for, and this was definitely what I was expecting every time I asked you those same questions.

God is certainly doing something new here at Journey of Hope. Can you sense it? Are you ready to make the journey this year? I hope so. Let's get started, shall we?

Happy New Year!

Pastor Jarrod

TOWNHALL MEETINGS

There is so much going on here at Journey of Hope, how are you to keep up with everything? How do you know what some of the decision we, as the church, are facing? Do you just trust that the leadership of Journey of Hope will do the right thing, or do you want to be a part of the conversation? Do you want your voice heard within those decision-making processes? Maybe you have questions or even better, new ideas that you would like to introduce to your family at Journey of Hope. Well, here's your opportunity.

On the fifth Sunday throughout the year, we will be holding "Townhall" meetings after worship. These will be a time for your leadership to present some of the ministries, opportunities, and problems we might be facing. However, it is also a time for you to share your thoughts with the leadership. Your Church Council will listen to your concerns and ideas so that they might include those in future conversations and decisions.

These townhall meetings will take place on the following dates: January 29, April 30, July 30, and October 29. All meetings will take place in the Community Room following worship and will follow a basic structure of spending the first third of our time sharing where we are and what we are facing. We will then spend two-thirds in an open forum, listening to ideas and concerns, as well as answering questions.

Join us on January 29th for this first of this year's meetings. This truly is an exciting time to be part of Journey of Hope!

UNHANGING OF THE GREENS

What goes up must come down! It's that time to take down and pack away all of our decorations until next Advent. We'll meet on Saturday, January 7th @ 9am. Many hands make light work!



United Women in Faith will hold its first monthly meeting of 2023 on Thursday, January 19th at 1pm in M5. Please join us for fellowship, treats and TBD programming.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Altar flowers are a beautiful way to commemorate a special occasion or remember a loved one. Flowers are \$10; you can sign up online and pay for them using our online giving portal or drop a check in the offering basket on Sunday mornings.

SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

PADS MEAL

Sunday, January 1 @ 5pm
Contact Janina Hoffman at 847.894.8651

SOUP KETTLE

Thursday, January 12 @ 5pm
Trinity Lutheran Church

Tuesday, January 17 @ 4:30pm
Zion Lutheran Church

FOOD FOR GREATER ELGIN

Monday, January 16 @ 5:30pm

CRISIS CENTER MEAL

Sunday, January 22 @ 5pm
Contact Janina Hoffman at 847.894.8651



SHOE BOXES FOR SPIRIT LAKE

It's time to think about Operation Christmas Shoebox for 2023. We are shooting again to send 1000 shoe boxes to our Native American children in Spirit Lake. In January we will be collecting wrapping paper.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE! JOIN US FOR OUR 2023 MISSION TRIP

Come join us on our annual mission trip to Spirit Lake. We are leaving Sunday, June 11th and returning on Friday, June 17th. We have 20 spots reserved and these typically fill up quickly so do not delay. Contact Andy Lindstrom today to reserve your spot.

THANK YOU!

Wow! Thank you to all who donated items throughout Advent for our various collections. We will continue to collect winterwear through February. Please consider donating new or gently used items you no longer use.

UMCOR (UNDESIGNATED FUNDS)



Our January Mission Links will support United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). UMCOR is the not-for-profit humanitarian agency for the United Methodist Church and works globally to diminish human suffering, whether caused by war or natural, and advance hope and healing.

To contribute to Mission Links, simply drop your donation into the offering basket on Sunday during worship or mail your check to the office. Please designate checks "Mission Links". You may also use our online giving platform; please select "Mission Links" fund.



JOURNEY OF HOPE
A UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY
37W040 Highland Avenue; Elgin, IL 60124
847.931.5400 | johumc.org