

# THE JOURNAL

## JOURNEY OF HOPE

December 2023 | Vol. 42

*And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will you rest." Exodus 33:14,ESV*

### THE COMFORT QUILT, PART 1

Here it is. My first newsletter article, written on my first official day as JOH-Bartlett campus leader, after my first Journey of Hope staff meeting. What a day. I am thrilled to be here. That said, I wasn't sure what I would write about. Then I found the 'Comfort Quilt.' I was back in what used to be, and perhaps will be again one day, the youth room. Like many disused rooms in many churches, it has become a sort of catch-all storage room for parts and pieces of ministry from years gone by. A small black journal caught my eye. I am, by nature, a curious (read nosy) fella. This journal was started by a woman named Ruth Schlitter. She made the quilt in 2014 and prayed over the quilt and shared it with others who were having difficult times as an object of hope and warmth, grace, and peace. There were a few entries from folks who had held the quilt for a few days or a few weeks, even a few months. People who were ill and people who were grieving. I looked around and there, under some other stuff, was the quilt. At the bottom of the first page of the journal was a website: [www.jamisonschmitzfuneralhome.com](http://www.jamisonschmitzfuneralhome.com). I was shocked.

I took the quilt to the office where Diane, Lynda, and Sherry were finishing putting a mailing together and asked them about it. They said it had been gifted to the church by Dale Schlitter, a long time member

of the church who had moved away a few years ago.

I've never been one to look for signs from God but I've also never been one to doubt too hard when I find something I believe to be one.

The inscription on the quilt said, "Sisters of Grace United Methodist Church 'Traveling Comfort Quilt' To offer peace, love, and serenity to those in need. Made with Christian love by Ruth Schlitter 2014 Oelwein,

*"I believe this is where I am supposed to be and I am glad to be in ministry with you."*

Iowa." Oelwein, Iowa is one of the larger towns in Fayette County, Iowa in Northeast Iowa. It is a rural area buffeted on its' west and south by a large Amish community. I served in small, rural United Methodist Churches in that area for 10 years. The journal is signed by one of the pastors I worked with when she pastored Grace UMC in Oelwein. I have been in that church many times and I have preached several funerals in the funeral home mentioned above. My wife and I think we may know two of the other ladies who signed the journal. One of the

scriptures on the quilt comes from Ecclesiastes 3. "There is a time for everything, a season for all things under heaven." This quilt and its' story, more than just the whole, 'wow, it's a small world,' factor gave me a sense of call and belonging in this place that only adds to the sense of welcome and invitation I have received from everyone I have met so far. I believe this is where I am supposed to be and I am glad to be in ministry with you.

Next month I'll tell you about the conversation I had with Dale when I called him up. Thank goodness churches keep old church directories...

Blessings,  
Jason

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# Advent & CHRISTMAS

## HEAVEN & EARTH BY WILL WILLIMON

This book study on Will Willimon's "Heaven and Earth" invites you to explore the profound connections between divine realities and earthly existence. Join us in unraveling the mysteries of faith and embracing the sacred significance of the Advent season. See page 5 for class schedule. Sign up at the Navigation Center or through the app.

## CAROLING

Come join us on Saturday, December 9th as we take the Christmas spirit to our homebound! We will meet at the Elgin campus at 1pm in the upper level parking lot then head out for a couple hours of sharing the Advent season. No musical talent required—just a love for bringing joy to others! It's a wonderful way to shine God's love as we bring the gift of the Baby Jesus to others. Song sheets are provided. Help us plan by signing up at the Navigation Center or contact Carole Burris at [carolejb0677@gmail.com](mailto:carolejb0677@gmail.com) or 847.436.3246.

## BLUE CHRISTMAS

Christmas is frequently a festive time, with many eagerly anticipating moments with beloved family and friends. However, for some, it becomes a somber season, filled with sorrow due to profound loss. Our Blue Christmas service on Wednesday, December 20th at 6pm, provides comfort, contemplation, and optimism in the face of challenges during the holiday season.

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

### SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

9am, Elgin  
10:30am, Bartlett

### CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

7pm, Family Service - Elgin  
7pm, Family Service - Bartlett  
11pm, Traditional - Elgin

Similar to previous years, the funds collected during our Christmas Eve evening services won't contribute to the general budget. Instead, the entire amount will be dedicated to supporting local and global missions. The Mission Team is currently deciding on this year's recipients, with announcements coming soon.

## MINISTRY TEAMS

### CHURCH COUNCIL

Carole Burris, Chair  
[carolejb0677@gmail.com](mailto:carolejb0677@gmail.com)

### CARE TEAM

Mary Summers, Chair  
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### ENDOWMENT

Gary Newton, Chair  
[captainchemistry33@yahoo.com](mailto:captainchemistry33@yahoo.com)

### EDUCATION

Jan Barry, Chair  
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### FINANCE

Steve Mink, Chair  
[startmink@hotmail.com](mailto:startmink@hotmail.com)  
Carie Dabdoub, Co-Treasurer  
[cudabdoub@yahoo.com](mailto:cudabdoub@yahoo.com)  
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Randy Riotto, Secretary  
[rrac56@aol.com](mailto:rrac56@aol.com)

### MISSIONS

Andy Lindstrom, Chair  
[andrewlindstrom@yahoo.com](mailto:andrewlindstrom@yahoo.com)

### SPRC

Roger Holmes  
[rlholmes04@gmail.com](mailto:rlholmes04@gmail.com)

### TRUSTEES

Chuck Keysor, Chair  
[chuck.keysor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chuck.keysor@sbcglobal.net)

### UWF

Nancy Gardner, Co-Chair  
[nandan42@att.net](mailto:nandan42@att.net)

Robin Luzin, Co-Chair  
[rluzin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rluzin@sbcglobal.net)

### WORSHIP

Mary Becker, Chair  
[marybecker50@yahoo.com](mailto:marybecker50@yahoo.com)

# PRAYER LIST

Names listed below that are in **bold** have been added for the first time or the description has been changed. An asterisk (\*) before a name denotes a Journey of Hope member. Prayers will stay on the list for one month unless otherwise requested.

## Prayers for health and healing:

- \*Ernie Chapman
- Donna (sister of Connie Schweitzer), surgery to remove hypothyroid cysts
- Angelo DiLiberti (father of Susan Collins), declining health
- \*Virginia Fink, strength and determination
- \*Chris Freund, eye surgery
- Neighbor of Margo Goodwin, battling breast cancer
- Friend of Marlon, battling stomach cancer
- \*Jeff Grajek, multiple myeloma
- Hunter (son of Mary Norris), migraines
- Lynn (friend of Carlene Kellenberger), health issues
- Emily and family (niece of Lisa Eby)
- Marlene Palm, health
- **\*Jan Paskiewicz, surgery**
- Emma Ramos, cancer remission and improved kidney function
- \*Connie Schweitzer, health
- \*Linda Seyller, health issues
- \*Annalise Smoot-Mollsen, cancer treatments
- Lincoln Zick (grandson of Donna Bach)
- Brett Zweig (son of Carol Zweig), ongoing health issues

## Prayers for strength, support and comfort:

- **\*Shirley Carter and family for the loss of Gene**
- **\*The Soderholm Family for the loss of John**

## Prayers for those in continuing care and shut-ins:

- \*Linda Seyller, The Sheridan at Tyler Creek

## Prayers for family and friends in Military:

- Noah Akemann
- Marcus Baker
- AJ Lewis
- Tay Lewis
- Jayden Meyer
- DJ Lewis
- All family & friends serving in the Law Enforcement



# DECEMBER

## SUNDAY

**Advent Book Study**  
Levans Hall, 9am

### Worship

Sanctuary/FB Live, 9:00am

### Fellowship Time

Community Rm, 10:00am

### Sunday School / Advent Study

U1, M5, L3, 10:15am

### Worship

Sanctuary/FB Live, 10:30am

### Fellowship Time

Levans Hall, 11:30am

## MONDAY

**Walking Bible Study**  
Sonrise Room, 7:30am

**Advent Book Study**  
U1, 1pm

**Line Dancing**  
Levans Hall, 6:30pm

## WEDNESDAY

**Advent Book Study**  
S. Elgin Panera, 6am

**Pathways Worship**  
Levans Hall, 6pm

**Advent Book Study**  
Levans Hall, 6:30pm

**Choir Practice**  
Wesley Chapel, 7pm

## THURSDAY

**Prayer Service**  
Sonrise Rm/FB Live, 7am

**Coffee w/ the Pastor**  
Sonrise Rm, 7:30am

**Advent Book Study**  
Zoom, 11am

**Stitches of Hope**  
M5, 1pm

**Soulful Walkers**  
Randall Oaks Rec Ctr., 6:00pm

**Advent Book Study**  
Zoom, 7pm

Elgin Campus - In Black  
Bartlett Campus - In Green

## SUNDAY

## MONDAY


## TUESDAY

## WEDNESDAY

## THURSDAY

## FRIDAY

## SATURDAY

26	27	28 Church Council, 7pm	29 Book Club, 4:30pm	30 Disciple II, 7pm	1	2 Cookie Walk & Craft Fair, 9am
3 Studio 10 NFP, 3pm PADS, 5pm	4	5 Care Team, 1pm Trustees, 7pm	6 Community of Hope, 12:30pm	7 Choir, 7:45pm	8 Missions, 12pm Game Night, 7pm	9 Caroling, 1pm
10 Bell Choir Practice, 11:45am	11	12	13	14 Soup Kettle, 5pm	15	16
17 SWEET TREAT SUNDAY	18	19 Soup Kettle, 4:30pm	20 UWF, 1pm Blue Christmas, 6pm	21	22	23
24 Crisis Center Meal, 5pm	25 	26	27 Book Club, 4:30pm	28	29	30
31						



# SUNDAY SCHOOL / BIBLE STUDIES

We have several Bible Studies and Small Groups that meet through out the week! Keep an eye out for new classes as more are added regularly. Interested in leading a class? See Pastor Jarrod.

## SUNDAY

- Advent Book Study, Levans Hall (Bartlett) @ 9am
- Advent Book Study, U1 (Elgin) @ 10:15am
- Current Events, M5 (Elgin) @ 10:15am
- Kid's Sunday School, L3 (Elgin) @ 10:15am

## MONDAY

- Walking Bible Study, Parsonage @ 7:30am
- Advent Book Study, U1 @ 1pm

## WEDNESDAY

- Advent Book Study, S. Elgin Panera Bread @ 6am
- Advent Book Study, Levans Hall @ 6:30pm

## THURSDAY

- Advent Book Study, Zoom @ 11am
- Journey with the Living Word, Evening, Zoom @ 7pm
- Soulful Walkers, Randall Oaks Rec Center @ 6:30pm

## DECEMBER MISSION LINKS



Grace International School, located in Chiang Mai, Thailand, provides quality Christian education for students from kindergarten to high school. Emphasizing academic excellence and character development, it prepares students for global citizenship.

If you would like to contribute to Mission Links, you may drop your donation into the offering basket during Sunday worship, mail a check to our office (designating it as "Mission Links"), or donate online through our giving platform (selecting the "Mission Links" fund).



All women are invited to UWF for our monthly meeting on Wednesday, December 20th at 1pm in M5 at the Elgin campus. Please bring a dish/dessert to pass as we celebrate the Advent season and share fellowship. We will be collecting women's toiletries for the Crisis Center.

## CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED

The offices will be closed from Monday, December 25th through Tuesday, January 1st. The Elgin campus office will reopen on Monday, January 2nd @ 9am and the Bartlett campus office on Wednesday, January 3rd at 9:30am.

## FROM THE DESK OF YOUR PASTOR

It's the most wonderful time of the year! True, but it can also be the most hectic, busy, upsetting, worrisome, and anxious time of the year as well. What kind of 'time' of the year is it for you? What adjective would you use to describe the season of Christmas and Advent?

A couple weeks ago, before Thanksgiving, I wrote in a field journal about slowing down in our lives. I wonder if any of you took that message to heart? Have you slowed down? Have you been able to enjoy some time with family, friends, and your Creator? If you have, has it made a difference so far in this season for you? If you haven't, it's not too late. You haven't missed the miracle and magic of this season. There is still time, even if it doesn't feel like it.

We don't have to wait until Christmas Eve or even Christmas Day to realize that we need to make a change. We can make a commitment to that change today. We can anticipate what this season has for us as we wait for the announcement of the birth of Jesus. And in that anticipation, we can slow the pace of our lives, even for just a moment or two, so that we can truly engage with God in this special time. After all, God offers us this incredibly special gift through Jesus Christ, the least we could do is offer ourselves back to God.

What would that look like for you? How can you offer your time and gifts back to the One who gave you everything? I am reminded of the Christmas carol about a little drummer boy who wanted to give the Christ child anything but felt like he had nothing to offer. He figured that he could at least play his best for the baby. Maybe we feel the same way. We feel like we have nothing to offer God in response to the wonderful gift, but maybe we do after all. Worship, scripture reading, loving your neighbor, praying, or offering your service are just a few ways you can love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

While Advent and Christmas are these seasons of anticipation and joy, they are also times for us to remember the greatest gift of all, a tiny baby in a manger, preparing to save the entire world. Such a humble beginning for the King of Kings. (cont. page 6)

**FROM THE DESK ...** (cont from page 5)

This Advent, as you prepare for Christmas feasts and gift exchanges, prepare also your hearts and souls for the entrance of our King. Prepare for a celebration like no other. Prepare for the world to be changed, even if that world that is changed is the one around your heart.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” (Luke 2:14)

In Christ’s Love, Pastor Jarrod

## MANNA ORDERS

Christmas is coming and as we are making our list then checking it twice, we find it better to purchase a gift card for a friend or loved one. Your shopping for gift cards just became easier! Print out an order form from the app or website or pick one up at the Navigation Center, choose which gift cards you'd like, include a check made out to "Journey of Hope" and give it to Carole Burris or drop it in the offering basket! Viola... your shopping will arrive the following Sunday! orders are being processed every Sunday until Sunday, December 17th.

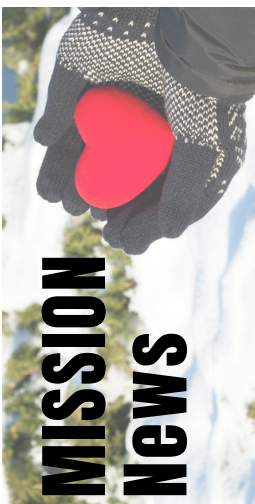
## sweet treat sunday

Get ready to mark your calendars because Sunday, December 17th is a day you won't want to miss! We invite you to join us for a special fellowship event at both campuses. Bring your favorite holiday treat to share with your friends and family. We will set up a special table before the festivities begin where you can place your plate or container. After worship, we'll gather around the table, swap stories, and enjoy our special treats together. Don't forget to add a label and share the story behind your dish. Come and join us for a jolly good time!



## LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

We are looking for people to contribute Lenten devotionals by selecting a topic of personal significance. Whether reflecting on faith, introspection, or spiritual growth, your unique perspective is valued. Submissions are requested by January 7th for consideration in our upcoming collection. Join us in this meaningful endeavor to inspire and connect through the upcoming season of Lent.



## ELGIN & BARTLETT CAMPUSES UNITE IN GENEROSITY

The Bartlett and Elgin campuses are joining forces to sponsor a family for Wayne Township's Christmas Adoption. Our goal is to gather funds for \$400 in gift cards and an additional \$200 or more for a wishlist item. Monetary contributions are preferred, and no physical gifts are needed. With your support, the Mission team will shop and personally wrap the gifts. Let's make this holiday season extra special for those in need. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

## SEASONAL DONATIONS STILL BEING TAKEN.

We are still collecting wintertime essentials like cozy PJs (all sizes, even adults), hats, gloves, mittens, children's boots, and warm coats. These donations will light up the faces of Parkwood School and bring warmth to Elgin's most vulnerable. Drop off your donations at our collection boxes through December 10th. Let's make this holiday season extra special for our community!

## SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

### PADS MEAL

Sunday, December 5 @ 5pm  
Contact Janina Hoffman at 847.894.8651

### SOUP KETTLE

Thursday, December 14 @ 5pm  
Trinity Lutheran Church

Tuesday, December 19 @ 4:30pm  
Zion Lutheran Church

### CRISIS CENTER MEAL

Sunday, December 24 @ 5pm  
Contact Janina Hoffman at 847.894.8651