



December 1, 2020

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## We Have Hope

*“Hope in things, and you can lose Hope. Hope in plans, in expectations, in dreams, in outcomes, in jobs, in bank accounts, in medicine, in people, in timelines, and you can lose Hope. Any of those things can wander off, fall through, disappear, taking your Hope with it. We’re not meant to find hope in anything in this world, we are meant to lose hope in all the things here. We don’t hope in anything of this world — we hope in God.”*

-Ann Voskamp

Hope is more than a feeling or a mirage; hope is reality! Hope in Christ is fuel!

Hope is that stirring in your gut that there is something more going on in our stories, something worth waiting for, something that would be a shame to miss. Think about all of the hopes and dreams of those who held you when you wouldn’t fall asleep as a baby. Someone held you and rocked you back to a peaceful space praying prayers filled with hope for your life. Think about all of the hopes that you had as a child that were left unrealized but drove you to make choices that led you to critical moments of connection, discernment, or growth. Think of all those hopes fulfilled in God’s timing.

If you hope in tangible things; controllable outcomes; finite people; you will likely find yourself disappointed or lost when the bottom drops out or when people let you down, or when systems remind you of the brokenness in this world. As people of faith, it's hope in God's promised future of wholeness, restoration, justice, and peace that calls us into mission together.

Like the current of a river, God's purpose and calling will constantly pull you forward if you let it. It will release you from the chains of worn out expectations and habitual sins and push you out of comfort zones into a new way of being in the world. Sometimes that might leave you with questions about what God has in mind. Sometimes it may even make others question you.

But God's ways are not our ways. God's thoughts are not our thoughts. And thanks be to God for hope, the Great Interrupter, reminding us always that there is something more, that things will be okay, and that one day, we will see the other side. While we wade difficult waters, we have hope. In Christ, we can lay back, put our heads back, raise our chins up, release the weight of our body into the river of Life. We are held in the current with thousands of other Christ followers who before us; hoped in Christ – who carried them through the struggles of their times, too.

Pr. Jenn

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## Worship Watch Party

Do you know anyone who hasn't be able to watch our Facebook livestreams? You can invite them to watch at church. Faith Formation is holding Worship Watch Parties through Advent inviting members to church to watch a recording of the live stream service at 11:00 am or 1:00 pm on Sundays. There is space in the Fellowship Hall for 10 people at each viewing. If you are interested in attending please sign up here:

<https://bit.ly/39tFWS9>

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## Christmas Lights Needed!

We hope to make our little corner of Rib Mountain as bright as possible – to bring hope not just to our neighbors, but also to the skiers and the people passing by. Christ our Light is coming! Can you help? We are looking for donations of new Christmas lights in counts of any number by **Friday, December 4.**

Simply bring them or order online to be shipped to church: [150202 County Road NN, Wausau WI 54401.](#)



For the very tall pine tree on the corner of NN and Partridge: LED mini multicolor lights [like this](#).

For the trees along NN and throughout the parking lot: mini “warm white” lights [like this](#).

For lighting up portions of the building: blue or white floodlights or spot lights will do. Extension cords, timers, and other supplies would also be welcome.

**December 4 and 5** are currently the days set aside to do exterior decorating. If that is something you enjoy, call the office. We’ll be sure to let you know what times to come and help out!

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## A Virtual Christmas Pageant

This year’s Advent theme is inspired by the angels’ message in the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke. *Do Not Be Afraid* “explores what it looks like to hold hope when life feels really uncertain, to bring peace in the face of fear, to practice joy when everything seems burdensome, and to choose love, when sometimes, it’s just really hard”.



We need your help to create our virtual Christmas program! *Do Not Be Afraid* uses the story of the birth of Jesus to remind us that even though we all feel afraid sometimes, we can find strength and safety in God. There are roles for everyone (yes, even adults)! This will be a collaborative effort, with participants recording their own parts at home and sending in their videos, which will then get edited together. To participate, e-mail [jenna@salc-wausau.org](mailto:jenna@salc-wausau.org) and let us know who/how many in your family would like to participate. You can also let us know how big or small of a part you would like. Scripts will then be sent along with instructions on how to record and send your videos. **Please reach out by Friday, December 4.** For more information, watch Jenna’s brief video: <https://youtu.be/h91HYyGOFiY>

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## Advent Resources

To help engage in and dive deeper into Advent this year, we have a variety of resources and programs available:

**Illustrated Devotion** - a self-guided devotion for individuals or small groups that includes readings and discussion questions. Download the full devotional [here](#).

**Advent for Families** - weekly devotional with readings, discussion questions, a craft or activity, and an advent calendar. Download the full resource [here](#).

**Adult Advent Study** - Join this virtual study group via Zoom which allows for deeper discussion of the Advent readings on ***Tuesday evenings from 8:00-9:00 pm starting December 1.***

**Join the Zoom Advent Study:**

<https://bit.ly/3lsePcm>

Meeting ID: 821 9324 7765

Passcode: 640272

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## Christmas Food Baskets

If you or someone you know would appreciate receiving a Christmas Food Basket (in the form of a Lamb's Fresh Market gift card), please call the church office by ***Monday, December 14*** at 715-842-3333. Gift cards can be picked up in the church office on ***Friday, December 18 between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm.***

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## SALC Military Families

Are you or a family member currently serving in the military? SALC would like to be in touch with you for Christmas. Please send in the name and contact information of your loved one to [info@salc-wausau.org](mailto:info@salc-wausau.org) to receive something special this Christmas season.

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## Confirmation Update

Through much discernment and under the advisement of the Saint Andrew Plan to Gather Task Force, we will be suspending all confirmation classes until ***January 13, 2021***. For consistency, both in-person and virtual meetings are suspended to help ensure students are all on the same page when we resume.

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## Christmas Statement

In keeping with our current criteria, the task force recommended the following statement that was then approved and adopted by council on November 19:

*In the spirit of Love, born to us in the Christ child, the pastors and staff, the Plan to Gather Task Force, and the Church Council at Saint Andrew Lutheran Church are committed to sharing the gospel safely and abundantly in these difficult times. As a large congregation with over 3000 members, we are partners in public health and have set the goal that Saint Andrew will not be a source of community spread. We recognize we cannot fulfill our mission to be "open to all" if the vulnerable and the visitor is not fully welcome in worship among us. We are equipped to support members in their life-long faith journeys through virtual and innovative means. Therefore this Christmas, we will worship together in our homes as a sign of love for the community we have been called to serve.*

"I'll be home for Christmas - online worship" will take place at [www.facebook.com/salcwausau](https://www.facebook.com/salcwausau) on Christmas Eve at 6:30 and 10:30 pm (note that this is a corrected time which was previously printed as 9:30 pm) and on Christmas Day at 9:00 am.

## Plan to Gather Weekly Update: 11/24/2020

For now, Saint Andrew remains in Phase One of the Plan to Gather.

### SALC COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 11/24/20

Date	Burden #	Trajectory	Burden Status
11/4	1657.3	Increasing	Very High
11/11	1925.9	Increasing	Very High
11/18	1903.7	Decreasing	Critically High
11/24	1445.3	Decreasing	Critically High

**Current SALC Status: Phase One**

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## Saint Andrew Lutheran Church

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