

Words of Hope

DECEMBER 2018

Hope United Methodist Church

From Sarah, with love...

I'm having a harder time than I normally do, writing this newsletter article. I know I should/could just whip out a hopeful reminder of the advent of Advent (I use that one every year). I could remind you of the deep symbolism embedded in our Christian traditions, that as we, in the Northern Hemisphere at least, move to the longest, darkest time of the year, the light of Christ is born among us.

But, I'm getting a little jumpy-or maybe I'm getting a little older. So, I can't help but think, even in the midst of the deep symbolism and the even more profound connection to our religious dreams and the environment, even so, I can't help but say every now and then, "aren't you here, yet?" We've been waiting, like, thousands of years and still, "Come O Come Emmanuel and ransom us. And bring it right here!" See my problem? I can get a little crabby in my prayers to Jesus. It's just that I've been doing this awhile—writing Advent newsletter articles. And sometimes, I'd like Jesus to do his part, too.

And, he is. For the truth of the matter is that Jesus is as present today as he ever has been. We don't entice Jesus to spring forth at this time of year any more than we can convince Jesus to withdraw his presence at any other time. God loves to be Jesus—Emmanuel. God is always present with us, among us. God is.

Our Christian calendar—the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and so on are part of our spiritual practices. We use the Christian calendar to remind ourselves, over and over again of our journey of faith. We use our calendar to help us practice our faith—

over and over again. At Advent, we practice waiting and all it entails (joyful expectation, impatience, restlessness, peace and all other emotions involved in it) so that when real waiting happens in our lives, we know how to deal with it, faithfully.

You can see what a good wait-er I am, right? Well, I take comfort in the fact that this is part of the practice. I am, if nothing else, a very good practicer. I keep trying. And I feel the love of God in and through all the way. I also take great comfort in the fact that I don't have practice any part of my life alone. We are not alone. God is with us. And so are you, o beloved community of faith. We are together and we don't have live our lives, good and bad, completely alone. I also take comfort in the fact that a deep part of celebrating this season is eating. I love that our Christian tradition eats and celebrates a lot during this time of year. I really really love that! I really really love Christmas goodies; it's never hard for me to accept a bunch of those (especially the Christmas wreaths with the little red hots!)

**“Waiting is a period of learning.
The longer we wait,
the more we hear about him
for whom we are waiting.”**
Henri Nouwen

Join us this Sunday as we “Advent-ure” into Advent. We will celebrate the start of this holy season with a day of Love at Hope!

Following our worship service, we will gather for a potluck lunch and as an extension of our worship we will be assembling Blessing Bags* as well as creating our own Advent Calendars. Beth Kaiser, will lead us in a couple of creative ways to create our own Advent calendars. We will be doing some coloring, so, please feel free to bring your own colored pencils and magic markers! We will have coloring supplies available for use that morning, too.

*If you are unfamiliar with the concept of a blessing bag, this is just a simple way to be a blessing to those you come across who might be in need (we mostly give them out to the homeless standing on the side of the road with signs). A blessing bag is a small assortment of basic toiletries and snacks in a ziplock bag



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

4:00pm

Family-Friendly
Worship Service with Choir

10:00pm

Candlelight Service
with Special Music

All Are Welcome!



Check out our website at:
HopeMethodistChurch.com

Like us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com
[hopeumcduluth](https://www.facebook.com/hopeumcduluth)

Office Hours
Monday~ Friday
9:00 am ~ 2:00 pm

Events and Small Groups

Men's Breakfast: Wednesdays, 8:00 am, Mt. Royal Caribou Coffee.

Worship at Pines III—Tuesday, December 4 at 2:00pm

Church Decorating: Saturday, December 1st at 9:30am we will be decorating the church for Christmas. Any help would be appreciated!

Hope's prayer group now meets on the *first Wednesday of the month at 5:45pm* and we are always delighted to have more "prayer power!" (The more the prayerier!) In addition to praying through the Upper Room prayer requests, we pray for those in our circles of influence, our church family, and beyond.

Tuesday, December 11th is the deadline for Poinsettia plant orders. Please have order forms to Barb Bergman or in the Office by then.

Page Turners will meet on December 12 at 10:00 a.m. in the Mathison Room. The book is "Tending Roses" by Lisa Wingate.

New members welcome. Page Turners will not meet in January. Contact Anna Allison at 343-5643.

Hope Quilters will meet on Thursday, December 13th at 9:30am

North Country Quilters will not meet in December. Next meeting: January 18th

January Newsletter Deadline: Wednesday, December 19th

The Enews is a weekly email sent with updated calendar, opportunities, and prayer list. A printed copy goes out to those who do not use email. Just let the office know if you want it sent to you!

Thought for the month from the Hope Prayer Group

Prayer is the beginning and the end, the source and the fruit, the core and the content, the basis and the goal of all peacemaking.

Henri Nouwen

Hospitality

We are still looking for men to help with the dishes one Sunday a month. Talk to Bev if you can help.

Art and Deb Hoff have given up their time on Hospitality and have moved on to counting money. Therefore, we are in need of two people to fill their place. If you can come on the fourth Sunday of the month to make coffee and set the table, please talk to Bev. You do not have to make the goodies; you will not be alone! Just make the coffee, serve, and help clean up. We will teach you how to do everything and, Bev is usually there, too!

We want to thank all the regulars who have helped for so long. **You are greatly appreciated.** Those people are: Rosemary Tripp, Barb Bergman, Helen Stellmaker, Janet Basil, Linda Rolland, Patty Lundgren, Margaret Rogers ... and, of course Art and Deb for helping so much this last year. I would also like to thank those men who do help with the dishes: Doug Tripp, Brad Mackinaw, Doug Kuehl, and Bob Swanfeld..... **THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

Once again, we are in need of two new volunteers for fellowship.



Finance

DIDJA KNOW that there are times when I feel like a broken record?...Well, not really broken....maybe scratched or something... I find that there are times of the year when a message needs to be sent about something, but....

It isn't that folks may not really know what is to be said or written. I think most of us do know, deep down, but we are busy doing so many things that keep us from focusing on our routine tasks. And so, we need reminders.

And that is what this is... a reminder that the year is coming to its end and there are some things left to do. I urge all of us to attend to the business of supporting our church financially.

We are blessed to have a congregation that has consistently met its goals. We have paid our Annual Conference commitments for over fifteen straight years. We have ended each of those years with a positive Operating Fund balance. We continue to have reserve funds set aside in case of unexpected needs.

The reminder, then, is that the year end is a good time to refocus on our successes. I don't want to sound like a broken record but....

It seems to have worked in the past. Who can knock success? Thank for all you do and who you are!

*For your Finance Team
Pete Bergman, Chair*

Dear friends of Hope,

The Staff Parish Relations committee has the great fortune of managing a superb staff. Each one of our staff possess unique talents that our congregation benefits from all year long. Our worship services, fellowship and special events, and planned programming provide so many opportunities to grow in our faith.

In recognition of our staff and their dedication, the Staff Parish Relations Committee would like to ask your participation in remembering our staff this Christmas. We invite you to make a contribution to a special fund that we are collecting and will give to our staff just prior to Christmas. Please make your check payable to Hope United Methodist Church and be sure and note in the memo section of your check that your contribution is for the **Staff Christmas Fund**. For ease in bookkeeping, if possible please write a check separate from your other pledging. You may either mail your check to the Church or simply put in the offering plate by December 9th. If you decide to give cash, please place your contribution in an envelope, mark it for the **Staff Christmas Fund** and place it in the offering plate. SPRC will then take the money and distribute it among the entire staff.

Thank you for your consideration and have a blessed holiday season.
--Staff Pastor Relations Committee

Mission/Outreach News for December



Blessing Bags for the homeless are a new project, near and dear to our hearts which will stretch our missional activities into a new area. On Sunday, December 2, we will have a potluck lunch following our worship service and fill our Blessing Bags with basic items to sustain someone on the street. We are currently in the purchasing stage, asking each member to select items from the Blessing Bag Board in the Narthex so that we are prepared to fill those bags. Then parishioners can take bags to carry in their car and distribute to homeless folks they encounter around Duluth - downtown, around the grocery stores, and parking ramps.

The Lydia project is going well, with several folks having completed multiple scarves. Yarn has recently been resupplied. Let's keep knitting and crocheting! If anyone is interested in knitting together on a weekday morning, let the office know, and we will set something up. Buckets for completed scarves are in the Narthex under the tables.

CHUM recently held their fall meeting at St. Paul's. Their kitchen is again open and starting in January we will be serving meals on a monthly schedule. Watch for the schedule.

Holiday trees will soon appear in the Narthex, decked out with cards. Each card will list an item for purchase which will be collected, then distributed to Life House, and other locations.

In addition, our special Christmas offering will be taken at the Christmas services and routed directly to a special community of need.

Our Fall collection of warm clothing (coats hats and mittens) was delivered to the Damiano Center in time for their big fall distribution. They were much appreciated!

Our new members coming from Lester Park have brought a new mission project, clothing repair. New clothing items needing minor repairs are supplied by clothing retailers, our members repair them, and forward them to CASDA and a Wisconsin food shelf for distribution.



CHUM Church's "O Come All Ye Faithful"

Join us in worship at CHUM Church's Annual Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 9, 4:30pm ~ Peace UCC, 1111 N.11th Ave. E., Duluth

This service is open to the community and guarantees to fill you with joys of the Christmas season. A light supper follows the service.



CHUM Christmas Eve Vigil

Monday, December 24, 12 Noon to 12:30 PM

The CHUM Christmas Eve Vigil provides an opportunity to remember those who have died in the past year who have also spent much of their lives homeless or advocating for those who are homeless. This is a sacred moment in time when we pray and remember. Join us on the Duluth City Hall steps at Noon.

HOPE STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Sarah Lawton

Church Office: Jennifer Amy-Dressler, office@hopeumcmn.org

Church Office: Beth Kaiser office@hopeumcmn.org

Music Director: Elizabeth Raihala, liz@raihala.net

Custodian: Matt Johnson

Accompanist: Diane Nast

Kid's Quest: Anita Rixe

Nursery Attendants: Ella Karki, Cassidy Kelley

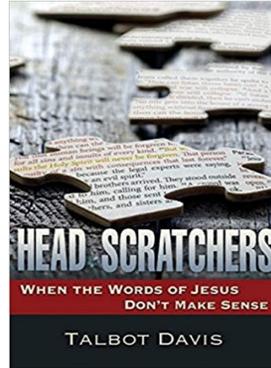
Calling All Musicians...

Since the choir will be singing for the 4:00pm service on Christmas Eve, we are looking for instrumentalists and singers who would be willing to share their musical gifts with our congregation by helping to provide special music for our 10:00pm Christmas Eve Service as well as for the December 30th worship service which is going to be very musical in nature. If you are interested, please contact Liz Raihala at 218.428.5818 or liz@raihala.net Thank you!



Headscratchers Book Study Group

is pondering Christmas!
Join us as we compare and contrast the 4 (or more?!)
Nativity Stories!



Thursday, December 13th 6pm
at Meredith Kuehl's house
1401 Minneapolis Ave. Duluth,
MN 55803

We'll share a meal and celebrate as we ponder and party
Please join us!
For more information, call
Pastor Sarah or Mary West.

Blue Christmas: A Service of Hope and Healing for the Holiday Season Friday ~ December 21st 4:00pm

When most of us think about Christmas, we think about decorated trees, brightly wrapped presents, holiday parties, carols, food, and the joy of welcoming a tiny infant into our world and hearts.

However, for many, the poignancy of sad memories, grief, hurts, lost relationships, lost jobs, loss of direction, loss of health, or pain can be overwhelming, sometimes leaving little heart for the cheer, bustle, anticipation and excitement.

All are welcome and invited to bring friends or family members that may be going through difficult times as we gather on the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. Following the service, there will be a simple soup & bread meal to share. Please join us.



Page Flippers Book Club

Page flippers is a book club for children and youth. We will be meet on Wednesday, December 12th from 6—7 pm. Our book for this month is

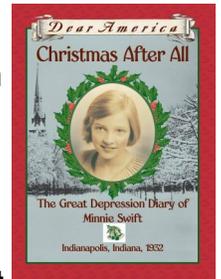
"Christmas After All: The Great Depression Diary of Minnie Swift" by Kathryn Lasky. Everyone is welcome!

We hope to see you there.

Check out our FB page for all current book listings .

<https://www.facebook.com/duluthpageflippers/>

If you have any questions please contact Lori Amundson at lamundson@hotmail.com or call at 612-756-3077.



Evening Book Club

The Evening Book Club usually meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Hope, 6:30pm. If the venue changes, we will notify the office, so if you plan to join us for the first time, please check with the office by 2:00 on Tuesday. New Members always welcome!

December 18: *The Christmas Train*, David Baldacci

January 15: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, Sherman Alexie

February 19: *Small Great Things*, Jodi Picoult

Kid's Korner

November was another great month in Kids'Quest. We are enjoying our larger group and are excited to share God's Word with more children. We learned about different kinds of families, namely, Naomi and Ruth, Hannah, Eli and Samuel, The Widow and her Sons, and Esther and Mordecai. Very good lessons and life applications. In December we will be sharing lesson leading up to Christmas. What wonderful words from our God.

In case you have not heard,, our October UNICEF offering brought in \$384.00. That is so amazing!! We are so thankful for the support of our dear faith family and for caring enough to contribute to our project. May God richly bless you all. THANK YOU!!

Just a reminder of a special Kids' Quest sponsored event. Our famous bake sale will be held after the worship service in the fellowship hall on Sunday, December 9. We hope to get lots of bakers and buyers. Just bring some yummy delicacy to church that Sunday morning and we will price it for you. The proceeds from this sale will be given to the Heifer Project. We are hoping to be able to buy a couple of animals and possibly a hive of bees. That day there will also be the rehearsal for the Christmas program which will be held the following Sunday, December 16, during the morning worship service.

Trunk or Treat was again a big success with lots of treats handed out to lots of kids. Many thanks to all who helped. THANKS, ROBYN, for getting things going on this project.

Dates to remember:

- December 9 - BAKE SALE**
- December 9 - CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICE**
- December 16 - CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**
- February 3 - CHILDREN/YOUTH SERVICE**

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

~Anita



YOUTH NEWS

Planet 3 Extreme and Sammy's Pizza - Need to get a little extra energy burned off? Join us at the Planet 3 Extreme trampoline park on Sunday, December 2nd. We will carpool from the church parking lot at 11:30 am to Plant 3 Extreme in West Duluth. Our time slot on the trampolines will be one hour, from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm. Cost is \$17.00 each. You are welcome to bring a friend. Waivers are required to be signed in advance online.

Following the trampoline park, we will ride over to Sammy's to have pizza for lunch. That will be compliments of Hope United Methodist Church. This will be a super fun event so please plan to join us. RSVP by Friday, November 30th to Sandy Johnson by calling or texting @ 218-260-7109.

Usher and/or Read Scripture - It would be wonderful to have youth involved in our worship service by ushering or reading scripture— Sign-up in the narthex!

I wish you all a wonderful month of December as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Merry Christmas!

Blessings!
Sandy Johnson
218-260-7109



Holiday Bake Sale Sunday, December 9th



Get ready for the Holidays by buying some scrumptious baked goods and treats. Kids' Quest is putting on their annual Bake Sale in the Fellowship Hall after the service on the 9th. All proceeds will go to Heifer International, who helps families in need receive livestock. The livestock enables the families to put food on their tables and earn income for clean water, medicine, school and safer homes. Our goal is to raise the funds to provide a goat, a sheep and honey bees, totaling \$270.

Contributions to the sale by the congregation would be greatly appreciated. Bring your items plated by the dozen to the Fellowship Hall before the service on the 9th. Please call Sandy Johnson @ 260-7109 with any questions.

Thank you in advance for helping Kids Quest reach our goal!



MORE OPPORTUNITIES

Age Well Memory Café

Tuesday, December 11th from 1:30 - 3:00 pm.

A Memory Café is a group where those suffering from memory loss, as well as their care providers and family members, can find relaxation, fun, and the support of other people who are having similar experiences.

For more info or to RSVP please contact Kim Hileman, the Program Director of Age Well Arrowhead. 218-623-7805.



Men's Retreat

Mark your calendars now for the upcoming Men's Retreat and time

spent in the great outdoors at Camp Amnicon!

What: Men's Retreat

Who: Men of United Methodist Churches of the Twin Ports

When: Friday, Feb. 22 – Sat., Feb. 23

Times: Friday at 7 p.m. – Sat. at 3:30 p.m.

Cost to You: \$35 [additional fees are paid for by T.P.U.M.M.s (Twin Ports' United Methodist Ministries)]

Camp Amnicon is a Lutheran campground with comfortable accommodations, good meals, and is just 45 minutes away from Superior.

Interested? Email to pastor@superiorfaithumc.org



THANK YOU to all who helped decorate the sanctuary and other areas of our church. It is lovely! Nancy DeArmond, Meredith Kuehl and Deb Hoff led the efforts of a group of volunteers who made it all happen. We all will enjoy the Christmas Season more because of their help.

Thanks again
Barb Bergman



Grief Group

A Healing Group for Those dealing with Grief

First Meeting - Monday, January 7th

(Remaining 3 dates will be determined by the group)

5:30pm—7:00pm

Mathison Room

Cost: \$25.00 for 4 sessions

There are many kinds of loss and many forms of grieving: Loss of loved ones, illness, life transitions, and dashed hopes. To be an adult is to be grieving. Grief work leads to acceptance and new life. Come share with others in a caring, loving community.

Your facilitator is Catharine Larsen, Licensed Psychologist, who has led grief groups and spoken about loss and grief. RSVP to Hope UMC: 724-2266 Catharine: 733-9903



Prayer: God's Timing

O God of all seasons and senses,
grant us the sense of your timing
to submit gracefully and rejoice quietly in the turn of the seasons.

In this season of short days and long nights,
of grey and white and cold,
teach us the lessons of endings;
children growing, friends leaving, loved ones dying,
grieving over,
grudges over,
blaming over,
excuses over.

O God, grant us a sense of your timing.
In this season of short days and long nights,
of grey and white and cold,
teach us the lessons of beginnings;
that such waitings and endings may be the starting place,
a planting of seeds which bring to birth what is ready to be born—
something right and just and different,
a new song, a deeper relationship, a fuller love—
in the fullness of your time.
O God, grant us the sense of your timing.

~ written by Ted Loder, in *Guerrillas of Grace*

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Victory Chorus

The Victory Chorus, a new program of Dementia Friendly Duluth, is a structured chorus comprised of persons with dementia, their caregivers or loved ones, and volunteer helper singers. The Chorus is led by a professional music director and other professional staff.

Seeking Volunteers: We are seeking volunteers from the community to sing in the Chorus and be paired with a person who has dementia.

Building Community: Residents of Duluth who have been affected by dementia have a unique opportunity to build connections, seek joy and meaningfully engage in their community through song.

Session Info: There will be 3 sessions offered in the spring, summer, and fall of 2019.

Each session is 9-12 weeks from 1:30—3:30pm on Sundays and will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Duluth—835 W. College Street, Duluth, MN.

Schedule for Session One:

Education for Volunteers: January 2019

Chorus Rehearsal Startup: February 3, 2019

Total Weekly Rehearsals: 12 (no rehearsal on Easter April 21st)

Chorus Performance Date: May 5th, 2019

For more information contact VictoryChorus@thevictoryfund. OR talk with Beth Kaiser, our Administrative Assistant, who is also the Program Coordinator for this fun, exciting, and rewarding new venture!

In Search of Our Kneeling Places

by Ann Weems

In each heart lies a Bethlehem, an inn where we must ultimately answer whether there is room or not.

When we are Bethlehem-bound we experience our own advent in his.

When we are Bethlehem-bound we can no longer look the other way conveniently not seeing stars, not hearing angel voices.

We can no longer excuse ourselves by busily tending our sheep or our kingdoms.

This Advent let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that the Lord has made known to us.

In the midst of shopping sprees let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of Gifts.

Through the tinsel let's look for the gold of the Christmas Star.

In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos let's listen for the brush of angels' wings.

This Advent, let's go to Bethlehem and find our kneeling places.

From Kneeling in Bethlehem. © 1993 Ann Barr Weems.
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O Holy Night Holiday Concert

Featuring the Choirs of the
College of St. Scholastica
December 14 & 15

7:30PM

Cathedral of Our Lady of the
Rosary
2801 East 4th Street.

Tickets, \$10, available at spotlight.css.edu or at the door.
CHUM will be requesting a contribution during the concert to benefit programming at the Steve O'Neil Permanent Supportive Housing facility. Donate online at chumduluth.org



CHURCH CALENDAR

December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<i>1</i> 8:00am Jazzercise 9:30am Church Decorating
<i>2</i> 10:00 am Worship "Advent-ure!" 11:15am Worship & Music 3:00 pm Grace Korean	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i> 10:00am—noon Parents & Pals 2:00pm Pines Worship	<i>5</i> 8:00 am Men's Breakfast (Caribou Coffee) 10:00am—noon Parents & Pals 3:00pm CSA 5:00pm Ad Council 5:45pm Prayer Group 6:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Alanon	<i>6</i> 9-2pm Painters 10:30am Yoga for Parkinson's 12:00 pm Gentle Yoga 1:00pm Music @ 1 1:30pm Exercise	<i>7</i> 8:00am Jazzercise	<i>8</i> 8:00am Jazzercise
<i>9</i> 10:00 am Worship <i>Bake Sale</i> 11:15am SPRC w/ D.S. 3:00 pm Grace Korean	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i> 10:00am—noon Parents & Pals 1:30pm Memory Café (<i>Age Well</i>) 4:30pm Missions &	<i>12</i> 8:00 am Men's Breakfast (Caribou Coffee) 10:00am—noon Parents & Pals 10:00am Page Turners 6:00pm Page Flippers 6:30 pm Choir	<i>13</i> 9-2pm Painters 9:30am Hope Quilters 10:30am Yoga for Parkinson's 12:00 pm Gentle Yoga 1:00pm Music @ 1	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>16</i> 10:00 am Worship <i>Christmas Program</i> 11:15am Trustees 11:15am Finance 3:00 pm Grace Korean	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i> 10:00am—noon Parents & Pals 6:30pm Evening Book Club	<i>19</i> 8:00 am Men's Breakfast (Caribou Coffee) 10:00am—noon Parents & Pals 6:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Alanon	<i>20</i> 9-2pm Painters 10:30am Yoga for Parkinson's 12:00 pm Gentle Yoga 1:00pm Music @ 1 1:30pm Exercise	<i>21</i> 4:00pm Blue Christmas Service followed by soup & bread supper	<i>22</i>
<i>23</i> 10:00 am Worship 3:00 pm Grace Korean	<i>24</i> 4:00pm Family Worship Service with Choir 10:00pm Candlelight Service	<i>25</i> <i>Office Closed</i> <i>Merry Christmas!</i>	<i>26</i> 8:00 am Men's Breakfast (Caribou Coffee) 7:00 pm Alanon	<i>27</i> 9-2pm Painters 10:30am Yoga for Parkinson's 12:00 pm Gentle Yoga 1:00pm Music @ 1 1:30pm Exercise	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>30</i> 10:00 am Worship 3:00 pm Grace Korean	<i>31</i>	<i>Office Closed</i> <i>Happy New Year!</i>				

Hope Unite Methodist Church

301 W. St. Marie Street
Duluth, MN 55803

Phone: 218-724-2266
Email: office@hopeumcmn.org
Office Hours:
Mon - Fri ~ 9:00am - 2:00pm

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

With God's grace, we care for the soul for a lifetime and beyond.

Members and Friends in our Hearts...

Benedictine: Margaret Kline

Key Stone Bluffs: Ralph & Marge Anderson, Bette Nord, Shirley Swapinski,
Pat Eng

Hold in Prayer...

Robyn Christianson
Bette Nord
Shirley Swapinski
Catharine Larsen

Margaret Kline
Dorothy Bergman
Rebecka George
Fred Moen

Pat Eng
Jenny Pattison-Lundeen
Lois Newell
Merl Bowker