



**JANUARY 2021**

## **“Pastor’s Letter ~ January 2021”**

**Happy New Year! Welcome to the year 2021!**

Let us, together, look to the year ahead with new hope and optimism! It will not be an easy transition into our future, we know this. No magic happened at the stroke of midnight December 31st, 2020. We still face an uncertain future and we face it together. We must look to the future with excitement and expectation of the mighty works of God. We must place our hope in God as we look to our future.

The tragedy of the human loss due to the pandemic and the heartache caused by economic upheaval, has changed our lives and how we gather to worship our God! The divisiveness within our society has threatened to erode our way of life, and yet we stand strong!

Let us, members and friends of Isle of Faith United Methodist Church, return to our basic rudiments of faith, growing closer to God through **Worship, Study, Serving, Giving and Sharing**. Let’s set our goal toward renewing our commitment as Disciples of Jesus Christ Our Lord!

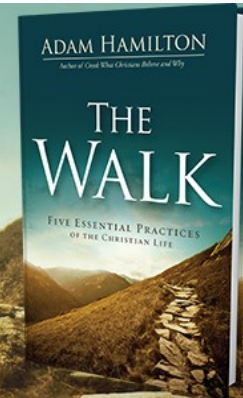
We have an opportunity to journey through Lent together utilizing the Book and Study called, “The Walk” by Adam Hamilton. Please take a few moments and read the description on the next page and commit yourself and your family to participating in the **Church-Wide Study**.

May God’s grace and mercy be upon us as we seek to be the living body of Christ in the community we serve!

**Blessings Abound,**

**Pastor Will Clark**

# Discover five spiritual practices to help you **WALK CLOSER** with **GOD**



## **Examine five essential spiritual practices rooted in Jesus' own walk with God.**

How do we walk with Christ—daily follow him, grow in him, and faithfully serve him?

In the Gospels, Jesus modeled for us the Christian spiritual life. The apostles taught it in their writings. And the Church has, through the last 2,000 years, sought to pursue this Christian spiritual life.

In *The Walk*, Adam Hamilton focuses on five essential spiritual practices that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God and taught throughout the New Testament. Each of these practices is intended as part of our daily walk with Christ while also being an essential part of growing together in the church.

In each chapter, Hamilton explores one of these practices, its New Testament foundation, and what it looks like to pursue this practice daily in our personal life and together in the life of the church. Deepen your walk with Christ as we explore the five essential practices of worship, study, serving, giving, and bearing witness to our faith.

### **ISLE OF FAITH UMC FAMILY**

You are encouraged to gather your Small Group, or **start a New one**, and walk through the book together. Information on where to order your book and how to join a class will be below.

### **Our schedule and opportunities to experience “*The Walk*”, so far...**

Thursday Evenings, 7PM-8:15PM, Virtual Class, begins February 18th.

[\(CLICK HERE to Join Virtual Room\)](#)

Sunday Mornings, Worship 9:30AM-10:30AM followed by Sunday School 11:00AM-Noon

[\(CLICK HERE to JOIN Sunday School\)](#)

Order your book through the Cokesbury link ([CLICK HERE to Order](#)) or from your favorite book source.

OR call the church office and we will make a group order (NLT February 8th). Book cost: \$9.99

**Again, all are highly encouraged to participate in the CHURCH\_WIDE Study!**

**Thank you and Let's Walk through LENT Together.**

## Child Development Center ~ 2021

As we look back at 2020, we give God praise for enabling the Preschool to stay in business. Many preschools around the country were not so fortunate. We continue to be able to partner with families as we care for and educate their most precious family members. We ended the year in transition. We bid a fond goodbye to Betsy Porter who faithfully led the ministry for the past few years. I thank YOU for welcoming me back into the church family so warmly.



As we look to this year, health remains at the forefront of our prayers. Health for our parents, children, and teachers. We are also focused on implementing a new state-required curriculum for all our classes. Did you know that what children learn before age five sets them up for success well into their adult years? This includes their spiritual foundation. This is what we're all about; grounding children spiritually and teaching for success now and in the future. We're striving to be very intentional about this mission.

How can you help the ministry?

**Commit to pray** – Pray for good health, opportunities to share Jesus with parents, staffing, provision of materials, and properly functioning facilities.

**Help us recruit** – We need people passionate about early childhood education for our year-round programs as well as summer camp counselors.

**Summer Camp Bible Club** – I am looking for a few people to work with me to go into the camp once per week for about an hour. Let me know if you'd like to be a part of this.

**Summer Camp Hobby / Interest Sharing** – Do you have a skill or hobby that you could share with elementary age children? This could be a one-time visit or more often.

**Encourage** – Send cards of encouragement to the Center. I'll post them by the timeclock so teachers can visually see the church's support. Let's form bridges so that the mission during the week and the mission on Sunday are united.

This is the day (and year) the Lord has made. Let us be glad and rejoice in it! Blessings to you,

Pastor Debbie

Child Development Center Director

# Women Of Grace (WOG) News

I have been so encouraged by how I have seen the women of this church continue to reach out, love, and serve in this time. What does it look like for us to connect more? This is a vital question that I am praying about the direction we are supposed to go.

I do not want to wait until we can gather in person for us to plan something together. I'm working on planning a virtual conference soon just so we can connect together and hear an inspirational word together. If you are not a part of the Women of Grace Community, please go to Facebook and join IOF Women's Group and also e-mail me your information so I can add you to our contact list.

Do you feel isolated and alone? Closed in and frustrated with those closest to you? Do you need someone to listen and pray with you? Please reach out. I am here. And there are many other godly women in the church who will listen without judgement and just receive you.

Our Theme this year is "Eyes Up Rise UP". It is a constant reminder to look above your circumstances and look to God who will lift you up into heavenly places so you can have a godly perspective on what's going on around you. When your perspective is from a high place, all of your problems will take their rightful place underneath your feet. They will not overwhelm you or overtake you as you rest in the Father. How do we eyes up rise up? Spend time with the one our eyes will lock our gaze onto. Pray to know His presence more; Read His Word to hear His heartbeat for us and others; Study His precepts so we can be transformed by the renewing of our minds; worship Him in song, dance, or any other artistic form to fall in love with Him over and over again. How will you Eyes Up Rise Up today and every day? Can't wait to learn how to walk that out together with you in 2021.

Also, please join in our Lenten journey together by participating in "The Walk" study. We can start this study within the group virtually or you can join Pastor Will's virtual Sunday School Class at 11am. Anyone interested on another day, please contact me at [jude@iofumc.org](mailto:jude@iofumc.org).

Much Love and Grace,

Jude Allen

# Worship Ministry

Church Family,

While this year doesn't look like we thought it would look, we serve a God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Now that is something to worship about! There is no circumstance that God is not moving and drawing us to Himself. That is not dependent on external circumstances but by our inward transformation by the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. So here's a question to ponder... do you still recognize Him? One of the beautiful ways we recognize Him is when we come together in worship. You may be thinking but we can't even gather together? I wonder what it looks like for us to carry that same community spirit even now? Here are some ideas

Engage in the service fully. Make it a priority to join us at the same time. Remove distractions from around you and set that time and a sacred space to truly participate with the service. Prepare your bread and juice beforehand so it is ready for communion.

Sing with all your might! Shout! Clap! Dance! Pray! Kneel! Stand! However you connect with the worship, don't hold back. Whether you know the songs or not, the words are there so let the music fill you and move you and speak to you!

Join in with all the liturgies and prayers! Your friends and family are joining in the Call to Worship and prayers at the exact time you are. Find comfort and hope in this. Listen intently as Pastor Will shares the Word. Open your Bible or phone to follow along with the scripture.

Community thrives as long as we continue to reach out to each other. Join the virtual Sunday School or Thursday night Class. Call those the Lord puts on your heart that you would normally see on Sundays.

We are the church and our experience of God is not dependent on the building, the music, the preaching... the Spirit of God is within you! This is a time for us to rise up and say as For Me and My House, we will serve the Lord. What a beautiful opportunity to make that more real in this season. Be encouraged! Sing, Pray, Feed yourself with the word of God, reach out and connect with others for this is our reasonable act of worship. Hallelujah!

Jude Allen, Director of Worship Ministries

[jude@iofumc.org](mailto:jude@iofumc.org)

## Worship Ministry News

Our team is growing! Please welcome to the team:

Mikey Giroux ( bass)

Aaron Warren (drums)

Anthony Granato (guitar)

When I think of Easter and the resurrection, it is natural to think of a choir of angels... yes I'm talking about you!

Although it is not safe at this time to have a choir, I am working on a project that would include individuals to join our voices together. If this is something you'd be interested in, please e-mail me.

## Music Ministry Needs

We need support for our tech ministry as it has grown exponentially with the addition of going livestream. We now have 2 cameras to operate and still require a weekly projectionist. We do follow strict COVID safety guidelines. If you are available, please contact me asap. The time requirement would be training then joining us weekly on Sundays at 8:30am.