**OPENING PRAYER:**

*God who works wonders, we invite you into this place.*

*Jesus we light this candle as a sign of your presence.*

*Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten us.*

*We pray that we keep our hearts and minds open to new ideas and that we may grow in our understanding of your ways. Amen.*

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Helen Keller

**BREAKING THE ICE:**

* Have you ever been on a roof? What were you doing?
* Share a memory of a situation or event that happened with some friends.
* Name one person who has your back.

**WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:**

*Read Luke 5:17-26.*

* What strikes you about this passage?
* Do you identify more with the friends or the paralyzed man? Why?
* What is blocking the doors of our churches to people in our communities that need God?
* The friends were persistent and bold in faith. When they couldn’t get through the front door, they found another way. How does this experience change them?
* Has there been someone who has carried you?

**NEXT STEPS:**

* How will your life be different based upon what you have learned in this week’s scripture, lesson and/or sermon?
* After the healing, the man goes home glorifying God. How will you celebrate the miracles in your midst?
* In Greater New Jersey, a Future With Hope raised over $17 million dollars and repaired more than 250 homes. This was only possible because communities came together. Where is hope alive in your community? How can you be a part of what God is already doing?
* This is the [Morristown Hope Center Video](https://www.gnjumc.org/resource/miracles-everywhere-letter-one-video-link-morristown-umc-hope-center/). Morristown UMC uses soccer and identification cards to carry their neighbors to Christ. What will you use?

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**

Dear Lord, We thank you for the friends who have carried us when we were unable to do so for ourselves. We ask for your help us to see the ways that people are being blocked from your presence today. Help us to be ones who are ready to carry others to you. When give us things seem impossible, holy persistence – so that we too can be a witness to your miracles. In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen