



“A Time to Walk”

Greetings to you, Friends of Hope, in the name of the One who walks with us, talks with us, and abides with us! As we enter into this Lenten season, we prepare ourselves to follow the One who chose the path of the Cross, that we may be more deeply connected to Him through understanding and faith, and that we may grasp a greater appreciation for the true relief it is to be freed from our sins. Lent is a heavy season because sin is a heavy burden. Had Jesus not carried the cross up that hill, we’d still be carrying the weight of our own crosses (death sentences) with us now. In this season, it is good, as individuals and as a congregation, to take time to appreciate the path Jesus walked, the Way he has prepared for us, and the sacrifice he made. As followers of Christ, routes to be in closer connection to God have been made available to us through the means and practices of **worshiping passionately, praying often, serving others, giving generously, and sharing our stories.**

Over the course of this 6-week Lenten Season, we will be studying, discussing, and practicing these practices for the betterment of our spiritual selves and for the strengthening of our faith. Hope will be offering several ways for us to take this walk together!

Primarily, our Lenten season will be led by **“The Walk”, by Adam Hamilton**, a book dedicated to guiding us in growth within those several disciplines. Each week’s sermon topic and worship theme will cover one of the chapters of the book. We will also be offering a new Small Group on **Thursday evenings at 6:30pm** that will discuss the book, watch an accompanying video, apply its strategies, share our struggles and successes, and encourage one another in growth. The first group meeting will be held on **Thursday March 2nd**. If you plan to participate, please let me know as soon as possible, so I can get you a copy of the book.



And, since Lent is also so often focused on self-improvement, we are also inviting you to walk! I have mapped out an indoor walking path within the church. It goes between and through both buildings, and 8 laps makes a mile! If you are considering joining “The Walk” Small Group Study, I invite you to also dedicating yourself to taking a Prayerful Walk, before or after our time together. The Church will be open for a few hours before

and after our Group Sessions to accommodate walkers, but if there is a time that would better nurture your interest in walking, please let me know, and I’m sure we can make arrangements.

Looking Forward to Walking with You!

In Christ’s Path, *Pastor Nate Starkey*

FEBRUARY LT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



At the February meeting, the Leadership Team welcomed three (3) new members who have graciously volunteered to serve; Heidi Meadows, Shirley Andrews and Sharon Tafunai. Together, the LT reviewed and discussed team functions, available training, and expectations.

CARE NETWORK: Shirley Andrews volunteered to overview and explore the care network and to determine a direction toward the restructuring of a successful care team within the church.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: The bounce house activity is scheduled to return to Hope during the school spring break. Rene DeYoung, event coordinator, is looking for a couple of more volunteers to supervise the event. Hope UMC hosted Lighthouse Autism Center for an informative workshop/seminar which was well-attended.

FINANCE: Finances remain stable and it was noted that January, 2023 income was \$6,000 greater than that of January, 2022. As at every meeting, Dawn provided copies of a comprehensive view of Hope's Finances for the LT to review and discuss.

SPRC: Mike Morgan provided a description of expectations which will be provided to the District Superintendent to assist in determining a suitable fit in selecting a proposed pastoral candidate for Hope UMC.

TRUSTEE REPORT: Mike offered a reminder that task requests and project suggestions for Trustees may be written on provided note cards and placed on the corkboard in the hallway between the buildings. A suggestion was put forth that spring and fall interior church cleaning days should be scheduled. More information in that regard will follow.



BOUNCE HOUSE BASH VOLUNTEER MEETING

**SUNDAY, MARCH 5TH
11:45AM
IN REESE HALL**

CONTACT RENE DEYOUNG FOR DETAILS



Craft night

Friday March 3rd at 6pm

Bring a current project and a snack to share if you'd like





DEB LANG	3/01
STEVE LEIST	3/02
SHARON MORGAN	3/02
MIRANDA ANDERSON	3/02
SPENCER BEEHLER	3/02
ERIC FRIES	3/03
PEGGY JENSEN	3/03
NANCY BOWMAN	3/04
JACK GOULD	3/05
LILA BLOUGH	3/05
LORRAINE BYLSMA	3/07
DAVID GIRTON	3/06
CHANDLER SHEETS	3/07
AJ FROST	3/07
LANA OLEJNIK	3/08
RICHARD LAWSON	3/08
EVAN STRONG	3/09
DAVID MORTIMER	3/10
LAURYN CORP	3/10
DONNELDA LOHR	3/11
TIM PELMEAR	3/12
MACKENZIE FLICK	3/13
NANCY MEAD	3/14
BOB MORGAN	3/16
JENA BERLIN	3/16
JEFF MILLER	3/17
TOM BLUNIER	3/21
PAULA RALPH	3/24
RONDA FAHEY	3/24
DEVON TRUEX JR.	3/25
MILLIE GRISSINGER	3/25
MATT WEILER	3/26
SHAWNA LaPORTE	3/27
BRAD STRYCKER	3/28
SUSIE HENDRICKS	3/29
AARON DITSON	3/30
STEVE PURVIS	3/30



CHARLENA & BRETT MAPLES 3/09
HEIDI & RYAN BENTZER 3/21



Hope's online Prayer Chain has faithfully continued during the pandemic. To have a prayer concern added call **Melissa at Hope, 269-663-5321**, and leave your request on her answering machine. Or email your request to Marti Bartels, **mbbartels@aol.com**.

SHUT-IN PRAYERS

Those Hope members listed below are restricted to home or nursing facility. The term shut-in reflects that their condition warrants "shut inside" or not able to leave the home on a regular basis. Should you have additional people to add to the list please call the church at 269-663-5321 Ext. 2.

Please remember these people in prayer: Bob Fuller, Ardith & Carl Higley, Verlaine Hoffman, Sherry Leininger, Grace Werner and Ray White.



FINANCE QUESTIONS?????

If you have a question about the how the church finances work, please contact Dawn Weingart at extension 6 or Pastor Nate at extension 8 at 269-663-5321. We also have summaries of the information that has been published in prior newsletters in the office.

FINANCES

COME BE ENERGIZED

Current Hope Financial Information

Month of January Ministry Fund Summary

Ministry Fund Donations:	\$ 16,519
Ministry Fund Expenses:	<u>\$-20,952</u>
Shortfall for the Month:	\$ -4,434

All January bills have been paid. Monthly budget is 17,675. Our Ministry Fund balance is \$91,285. Thank you for your continued support!

January Mortgage & Mission Fund Allocation:

\$199.93 Missions
\$998.58 Parsonage Mortgage
<u>\$800.92 Capital Improvements</u>
\$1,999.45 Total Donations

Parsonage Mortgage Update:

\$998.58 Regular Mortgage Payment - Mortgage Fund

Current Parsonage Mortgage Balance = \$125,201 after the February 2023 Payment.

Our projected payoff date is August 2036, which is **45 months earlier** than the original payoff date!

After some time away from the church, author Donald E. Miller returned to the fold. He writes: "One thing that brought me back ... was asking simply: What are the alternatives to the church? Where are the communities that sanction the pursuit of meaning and truth as a legitimate enterprise? that have material and personal resources to assist in this search? that provide regular occasions for confession of failures? that renew and inspire? that provide a setting where children are nurtured? where family members can be buried? where births can be celebrated? where social issues can be debated?"

Miller concludes: "There are a number of institutions that deal with one or several of these questions, but historically the church has demonstrated its ability to energize **ALL** of these activities."



MARCH 12



Family Game Night

Friday March 10th, at 6pm
All are welcome!
Bring a game or a snack to share if you'd like!

Today

**HAVE YOU
TALKED
TO GOD
TODAY?**

Today my thoughts rumble through my mind aimlessly;
They struggle to take over my every feeling this day.
Sometimes I lose sight of the day's purpose I wanted.
My mind may wear out this body of mine with thoughts.

What happened in the yesterdays can erode today's.
My mind looks at setting goals and accomplishing them.
I question whether these are good for me and others.
My heart awaits these decisions I'll make on this day.

Have I lost sight of what "today's" meaning was to be?
Am I overlooking my purpose in this life for today
Is my heart confused by focusing on what needs doing today?
God has a plan for my Spirit that will encompass today.
Am I following that plan for today that is His will today?

Hebrews 3:13 But encourage each other daily while it is still called "today" 3:15 "today" if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts. Christ says "Be ready **today** to answer my call."

I pray I don't overlook what God's will is for me today.
May I answer His call with faith and show Jesus's love.
Offering salvation's message to any and all I meet today.
I'm thankful for the forgiveness given for missed calls.

So will today be consumed by the needs of today?
And may I find peace in knowing I lived for today's goal.
Hopefully they have planted seeds for growing tomorrow.
And may my heart be aligned with that of my Lord Jesus.

My prayer is that you are not to consumed with your past happenings or your future plans and can live for today and all the joy Jesus has for your life "today".

—Debi and Tony Lang

Keep our Service People in Prayer



Joshua Adams, Charles Berry, Andre Brower, Phil Bryden, Sam Chaput, Jon-

athan Ditson, James Galloway, Justin Gerou, Dakota Kizer, Andrea Long, Alyssa Malott, Josh Marner, Jay Moore, Brandon Morgan, Jessica Ramus, Jason Salter, Dylan Smallwood, Jeff Starr, and Tyler Wilson.

To keep the list of service people accurate, would you please notify **Melissa** in the Hope office or **Shirley Andrews** if your listed loved one is no longer serving. OR if a name should be added, let us know. Thanks.



SET YOUR CLOCKS
Ahead!

MARCH 12





A LENTEN HISTORY LESSON

Lent Though the date of Easter varies, the majority of the Lenten season occurs during March. In fact, the word *Lent* comes from the Anglo-Saxon words *lenctentid* (meaning "March") and *lencten* (meaning "spring").

The first reference to Lent dates back to 325 AD, in one of the 20 canons decreed at the council of Nicaea. By the eighth century, Christians started observing Lent, and a 10th-century monk named Aelfric connected the use of ashes and "the Lenten fast" to the pre-Easter period.

Lent lasts 40 days to represent Jesus' time in the wilderness, when he was tempted by the devil. The six Sundays that occur between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday aren't counted as part of Lent; instead, as the traditional day of worship, they're considered "mini-Easters."

Easter Egg Hunt Volunteer Meeting



MARCH 12TH AT
11:45AM
IN REESE HALL

Contact Rene DeYoung for more information

SETTING CAPTIVES FREE



Though St. Patrick's Day has become a secular "holiday," March 17 commemorates the life of a Christian missionary. St. Patrick grew up in a Christian home in Britain but wasn't very devout until he experienced crisis. As a teen, he was captured and sold into slavery in Ireland, escaping after six years. "The Lord opened my unbelieving eyes" in Ireland, Patrick later said. God led him back there, and he converted tribe after tribe to Christianity.

In *Confessio 61*, St. Patrick writes, "I testify in truth and in great joy of heart before God and his holy angels that I never had any other reason for returning to that nation ... except the Gospel and God's promises."



Saturday, March 25th

8:00 AM

Lunch provided at 12pm



MARCH 12



Messy church is open to all ages!

Join us March 26th at 6pm! We'll have dinner together, play together, then split into groups for discussions and fun!