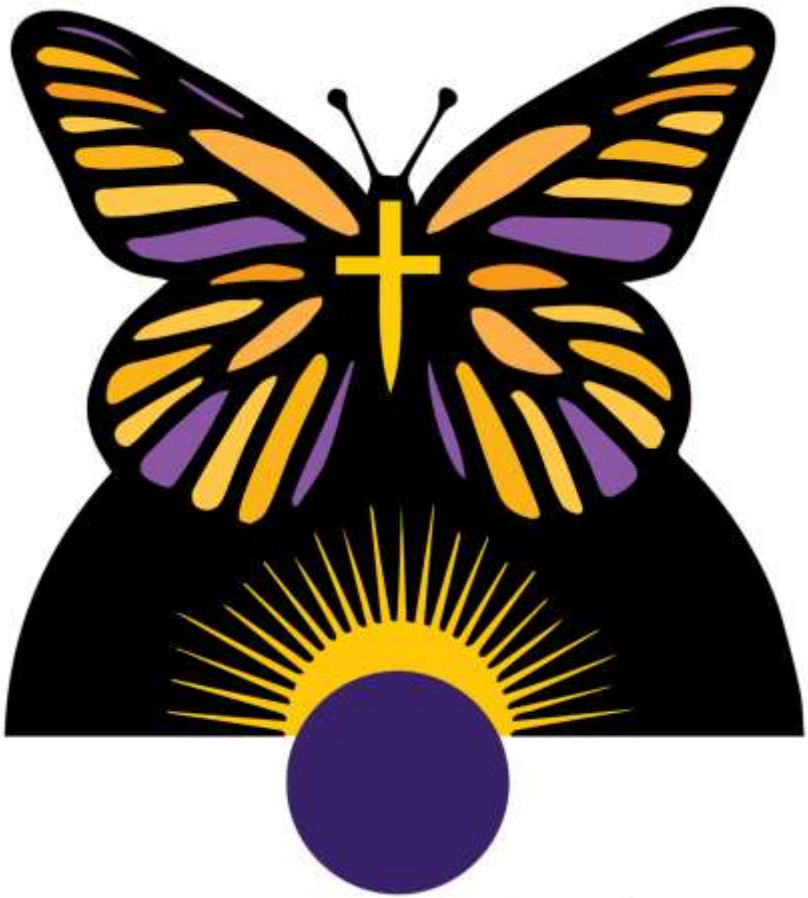


# Tidings of Hope

April 2024



Hope Lutheran Church  
Ladysmith, Wisconsin

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# Tidings of Hope

Information & Inspiration  
April 2024

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## The Difference Easter Makes

By Pastor Christopher Martin

“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” (John 20:15)

While I love all of the Easter accounts in each Gospel, I have to admit I really love John’s Easter account, in particular, the moments leading up to Mary Magdalene’s realization that Jesus had truly risen from the dead. Mary has seen with her own eyes that the tomb was empty. She’s heard the word from the angel that Jesus isn’t there, that He had risen. Jesus Himself had predicted multiple times before the events of the previous week happened that it would end with Him rising from the dead. All the evidence is right there in front of her. And yet, where is she? Outside the tomb, weeping. Because she just cannot allow herself to believe the good news of Easter: Christ is Risen! Alleluia! But, when Jesus asks her why she is crying, who she is looking for, and she realizes that she’s speaking with Jesus, and that He has indeed risen from the dead, her weeping turns to joy, which then compels her to go and share the good news with others—Jesus is Risen!

Easter is our biggest festival in the Christian year, isn’t it? The day we celebrate the truth that Jesus rose from the dead. That’s why historically, Christians have chosen Sunday as their day of worship, so that we would never forget that Jesus rose from the dead, and that every Sunday would be for us a “little Easter” if you will.

And yet, for many of us, perhaps we identify with Mary Magdalene, standing there, outside the empty tomb, weeping, because to us, the idea that Jesus has risen from the dead and conquered sin, death, and Satan once and for all is too hard for us to believe.

Perhaps, we look at things going on in our own lives that try to tell us that the Resurrection of Our Lord means nothing for our daily life. The aches and pains you experience as you grow older. The challenges with your health that you or someone you love face that leave you anxious and afraid for the future. There's the political polarization we live within our nation that seems to only drive people further and further apart. There are all the changes we have witnessed in our community, and in our church life, that leave us concerned about what the future holds. There are a lot of churches asking the hard question: Does our church have a future at all, and where does that leave me?

Friends, as we enter the season of Easter, it's so easy to be so consumed by what's going on in the world in which we live or all the change that is being introduced into our lives that we're much like Mary Magdalane—standing outside of the empty tomb that declares to us Christ is Risen, and yet, standing right outside weeping, because we're so caught up in ourselves and our world, we're not paying attention to the joyful news that the Word of God declares: Christ is Risen! Your sins are forgiven! Life has been restored to God's creation!

Now, did Mary's weeping and unbelief there outside of the tomb have the power to put Jesus back in the grave? No. Likewise, did Jesus see Mary weeping there by the side of the tomb, and say "I'll just leave her where she is?" and let her continue to weep? No. Jesus speaks His Word into her life, and Mary's life is changed.

That is exactly what God's Word does for us as well. Nothing in this world has the power to put Jesus back into the grave. Nothing will ever change the reality of the resurrection. The world around you wants to distract you from that reality. But as you immerse yourself in God's Word each and every day, and allow your faith in the crucified and risen Jesus to guide you in everything you say and do, your gloom will turn to Easter joy. That doesn't mean that you won't experience hardship and sorrow, but you'll face it with a joy that the world cannot give or understand. Because you know that Jesus has already defeated sin and death, and that you will one day rise from life in this sinful, fallen, world to live forever with Him in paradise.

During our midweek Lenten services this year, we closed each week with singing the hymn "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus". As we

move into Easter, the refrain at the end of each verse is a perfect reminder for us as we always look to the cross and the empty tomb of Jesus to guide our thoughts, our actions, and our words: “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face, And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, In the light of His glory and grace.” Indeed, turn your eyes away from yourself, and all the stuff in this world that leaves you anxious, and instead, turn your eyes on Jesus, this Easter and always!



GriefShare is a 13-week non-denominational, faith-based, grief support groups designed to help people deal with all of the complex feelings after the death of a loved one. This current cycle is underway and will meet in April on Wednesdays, April 3, 10, 24 and Thursday, April 18 from 6:00-7:30pm.

If you, or someone you know, would like to register for the program, please call the Hope Lutheran Church office at 715-532-7739. Bonnie will take down your contact information and a GriefShare leader will call you back. You can also register online at [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org), just click on “Find a group” and enter the 54848 zip code.

## **Education & Fellowship Opportunities**

**Book Discussion:** The book discussion group will meet on Sunday, April at 10:30am in the Fireside Room. The book for April is [Cold Light of Day](#) by Elizabeth Goddard.

**Sunday Morning Study:** The Sunday morning “Fruit of the Spirit” Bible study will meet on Sundays, March 7, 14, 28 at 10:30am in the Fireside Room.

**Meal of the Month:** The April Meal of the Month will be Thursday, April 11 at 9:00am at Jay-Dee’s in Glen Flora. This monthly gathering is an opportunity for members of the congregation to enjoy a meal and time of fellowship while supporting one of our local businesses.



## Hope Lutheran Church Women

**April Meeting:** The HLCW does NOT meet in April.

**Quilting:** The quilting group will meet on Tuesday, April 30 beginning at 9:00am. There are jobs for all skill levels. If you can stay for the whole day, please bring a sack lunch. Quilt squares are also available to be sewn at home. Questions? Contact Karen Skeels (715-452-5444).

**Scandinavian Dinner:** The Scandinavian Dinner will be held on Wednesday, April 17. Members of the church are asked to consider giving a donation of \$10.00 or more to help defray expenses. Your donation can be placed in an envelope clearly marked "Scandinavian Dinner" and placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. If you have already been asked to contribute food, please disregard this request. If you would like to work during preparation or at the dinner and have not been called, please call Josi Hamilton (715-532-6052).

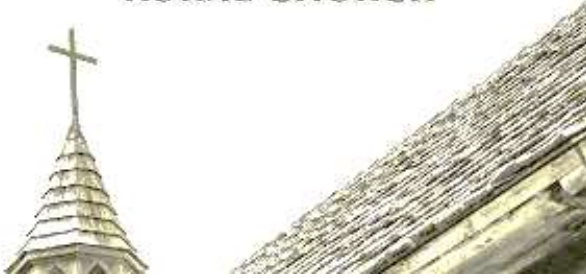
### Sleep in Heavenly Peace Bed Build

"Sleep in Heavenly Peace" is an organization of volunteers dedicated to building, assembling and delivering beds to children and families in need. Hope's Youth Ministry will be sponsoring a bed build here in Ladysmith on Saturday, April 20 from 2:00-5:00pm at the Rusk County Fairgrounds. We are in need of 30-50 volunteers on this day. Volunteers need to sign up and complete a waiver at <https://x.gldn.io/e/KVyclsf75Hb>.

Youth Ministry is collecting twin size bed linens (new and in the original packaging) and quilts to go along with the beds. Donations can be placed in the bin in the narthex. Monetary donations to fund this project are also being accepted. Donations should be made payable to Hope Lutheran Church clearly designated for the bed build.

If you have questions about this project, please contact Julie Kammerud ([juliekammerud@gmail.com](mailto:juliekammerud@gmail.com) or 612-481-9484).

## SMALL AND RURAL CHURCH



Pastor Martin will be leading a workshop entitled "The Small & Rural Church: Hope for the Future" as a leadership development opportunity for our Council members on Saturday, April 20 from 8:00am-2:00pm at the church. The workshop discusses the challenges, opportunities, and strategies for Mission and Ministry in the context of a small or rural church, based on resources developed by the NALC Renewal Team.

## Thank You!

*Dear Hope Lutheran Family,*

*Since I've been home from the hospital and starting to feel better, I've read through the many birthday and get well cards and I'd like to thank you all for them. I especially thank you for the many prayers you offered for me. We also thank you all for supporting Karen during this very difficult time.*

*A special thank you to Pastor Martin for his comforting visit and communion while I was hospitalized.*

*Your messages and prayers gave me strength and it means a lot to know that you all cared.*

*Bob Langland*

*Thank you for your support and encouragement in the passing of Becky's husband, Douglas, who was reunited with his Lord and Savior on December 14. Your prayers have meant a lot. Please keep Becky, Beniaiah, and Douglas' family in Kenya in your prayers.*

*George Lawrence*

## Youth Ministry

**Donuts & Devotions:** Youth in grades 6-12 are invited for donuts and devotions on Sunday, April 14 at 10:15am. Friends are always welcome at all Youth Ministry events!



## FOOD PANTRY

The Hope Lutheran Food Pantry serves those in need throughout Rusk County. The Pantry is open Mondays 1:00-3:00pm, and Fridays 9:30-11:30am.

Volunteers are needed on the first and third Mondays of each month (April 1 & 15) at 9:15am to help unload the Feed My People delivery and to stock shelves.

Donations of non-perishable food items can be dropped off at the church on Sunday mornings or during the week during office hours. Monetary donations can be placed in the offering plate or dropped off at the church office (clearly mark donation for the food pantry).

## MANNA Meal

(Meals Available for the Nutritional Needs of All)

This month's MANNA Meal will be held on Thursday, April 25 with serving from 5:00-6:00pm. This is a free meal providing food and fellowship to those in need of either.

## Scrip

Scrip cards are sold following the worship service most Sundays. These are essentially gift cards. You receive the face value of the card and a percentage is returned to the church by the vendors as a charitable donation. Scrip cards are available for immediate sale for several area businesses and can be ordered from a long list of other vendors. Proceeds from the scrip program are used for building and maintenance needs. Please stop by the table in the multi-purpose room to purchase scrip or for more information.

## Summary of Council & Committee Action

**Joint Council Meeting:** A joint meeting of the Hope & Glen Flora Lutheran Church Councils was held on February 28 at Glen Flora Lutheran Church. The Council highlighted areas that are going well in each congregation and discussed joint ministry opportunities. The next joint Council meeting is tentatively planned for August with a specific date to be determined.

**Treasurer's Report:** Expenses for January & February exceeded offering.

**Path Forward Update:** The Path Forward Committee has been discussing the difference between a vision and a mission statement and the possibility of changing the mission statement.

**Congregational Care & Outreach:** Committee did not meet in March. Next meeting: April 9 at 3:30pm..

**Parish Education:** Beginning work on Vacation Bible School. Next meeting: TBA.

**Property:** Received the final bill for the soffit repair project. The bill from Verdegan Construction totaled \$9,149 plus approximately \$1,500 in addition materials. Project was under budget. Looking into repairing cracks in the plaster in the sanctuary. Next meeting: April 9 at 6:00pm.

**Service & Fellowship:** No minutes submitted. Next meeting: TBA.

**Social Ministries:** Local benevolence designated for the Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed build. Missions funds designated for Faith Comes by Hearing and Lutheran Bible Translators. Next meeting: April 9 at 4:00pm.

**Stewardship & Finance:** Second semester scholarship for Rachel Sovacool was distributed. Next meeting: April 9 at 5:30pm.

**Worship & Music:** Discussed committee responsibilities and the feasibility of moving some of the equipment in the balcony. Next meeting: April 9 at 6:00pm.

**Youth Ministry:** More than half the funding needed for the bed build has been raised. Volunteers need to sign up and sign a waiver. Committee is also collecting twin sized bed linens and quilts. Next meeting: TBA.

**Next Council Meeting:** April 16 at 6:30pm.





7	Ushers	Gordie & Bev Dukerschein
	Lector	Linda Campbell
	Comm. Asst.	Linda Campbell
	Acolyte	Tanner Davis
14	Ushers	Don & Judy Soyring
	Lector	Irene Titera
	Comm. Asst.	Irene Titera
	Acolyte	Blake Nyhagen
21	Ushers	Gordie & Bev Dukerschein
	Lector	Jana Nyhagen
	Comm. Asst.	Dukerschein
	Acolyte	
28	Ushers	Kathy Peterson, Irene Titera
	Lector	Aileen Tauchen
	Comm. Asst.	Irene Titera
	Acolyte	Addison Hulle

## **Livestreaming**

Our Sunday morning worship services are livestreamed on the Hope Lutheran Church YouTube channel each Sunday and posted to the church's Facebook page. If you would like to sponsor a worship service in honor or memory of a loved one, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. The suggested donation is \$50/service. Proceeds from the livestream sponsorships are used to keep the technology needed for this ministry up-to-date.

### *Mission Statement*

*Hope Lutheran Church is commissioned to make disciples, commanded to love God and others, and committed to serve.*



## **Deadlines...**

Items for the weekly bulletin are due in the church office no later than noon on Wednesday. Items for the May newsletter are due in the church office by Tuesday, April 16.

The preferred method of submission is via email (hlcladysmith@gmail.com) or electronic file. Items may also be left in the office mailbox or dropped off at the office during office hours.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS and/or PHONE NUMBER?**

If you have had a change in your mailing address, email or phone number, please notify the church office of these changes. Also, in an effort to improve communication we are seeking email addresses for members of the congregation. If you would like to have your email address added to the list, please send it to the church office at hlcladysmith@gmail.com.

### **CHURCH STAFF**

Pastor	Christopher Martin
Church Secretary	Bonnie Billings
Custodian	Rosemary Warwick
Organists	Lisa Borman Karen Tappon Terry Wedwick

Hope Lutheran Church  
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Church Phone: 715-532-7739

E-Mail Address: [hlcladysmith@gmail.com](mailto:hlcladysmith@gmail.com)

Website: [hlcladysmith.org](http://hlcladysmith.org)



The Hope Lutheran Church  
**Scandinavian Dinner**

will take place on  
Wednesday, April 17  
from

4:30-6:30pm

Cost

\$13.00/adult

\$14.00/carry-outs

\$7.00/students (12 & under)

Preschoolers & younger eat free.

The menu will include baked ham, meatballs & gravy, mashed potatoes, baked beans, glazed carrots, salads, homemade rolls, lefse, rice pudding, and Scandinavian baked goods.

