

Tidings of Hope

Information & Inspiration



FEBRUARY

2022

Hope Lutheran Church
Ladysmith, Wisconsin

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February 2022

Be Ready!

Pastor Christopher Martin

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”
(1 Peter 3:15)

Back in the mid-late 20th century, the primary church planting strategy that was used by many Lutherans was that the district office would call a Pastor to serve as a “Missionary at Large”, have that Pastor move to a community where district officials believed there was potential to start a new Lutheran church, rent a school gymnasium, an empty store front, or a hotel conference room, and put up a sign and take out an ad in the local newspaper saying that Lutheran worship services were being held at this place and at that time, and the expectation was, that people would just show up. Once the worshipping community then reached a critical mass, they would formally organize as a new congregation, call their own Pastor (sometimes being the Missionary at Large, sometimes calling someone else), and build a church building. For established churches, when it came to outreach, the expectation was that, when new people moved to the community that had a Lutheran background, they’d view your church sign as they drove by your building, or looked in the yellow pages of the phone book (remember those?), and then visit the church. The idea behind both strategies was that there was a cultural expectation, spoken or unspoken, that everyone in the community had a desire to have some sort of tie with a local church. And it was assumed that even people in our communities who had no ties to a church, at least had some basic knowledge about who Jesus is, and what the basics of Christianity are about.

(Pastor's column, cont.)

Today, that is no longer the case. Gone are the days when we simply open our doors, and expect that visitors will somehow find us, show up on our doorstep, ready to be actively engaged in the life of our church. Studies tell us that when it comes to religious matters in our nation, the fastest growing segment are those who claim "no religious affiliation." Church involvement and attendance are no longer seen by our culture as an unspoken expectation as it once was. Many people have been deeply hurt by some sort of conflict that occurred in the life of the church, and instead of finding somewhere else to worship, have given up on the church and on Christianity entirely.

Today, the Mission Field doesn't begin in some far off, remote village in the bush on the other side of the world. The Mission Field begins as soon as we walk out of the doors of our church building!

With that in mind, knowing that we are called to fulfill the Great Commission to be disciples of Jesus, who make disciples of Jesus, the words of the verse from 1 Peter 3 I opened with become extremely important for all of us. As we actively engage the Mission Field that is our community, and we build relationships with those who are not here, we have to be ready to share the hope that is within us, to be able to explain why our faith in Jesus Christ, His gifts of forgiveness, peace, hope, and everlasting matter to us in a real, everyday way. We have to be ready to share why it's important for the Christian to be a part of and actively engaged in the work of a local congregation that is faithful to Jesus and His Word. How will this happen?

First, it begins by making a commitment to being a regular attender in our worship services. We mark that time each week as one of our top priorities, because the reality is, we need the support, encouragement, fellowship, and accountability that is offered by our being physically present in worship. But it goes beyond that. It also involves being immersed in Scripture, the life-giving Word of the Lord that warns us of our sin and the dangers of our world in which we live, and points us to the source of our hope, life, and salvation, which is Jesus Christ. The more we are actively engaged in study of God's Word, the more we are prepared to give a defense, or an explanation, of our Christ-Centered faith, and to share with those who do not know Jesus why they need Him!

A study was conducted that asked the question of people who joined a local church who or what prompted them to visit that particular church for the first time? 2% said that it was through an advertisement they saw somewhere. 6% said that it was from a personal invitation from the Pastor of that particular church. Another 6% said their point of entry into the church was through an organized evangelism program or emphasis the church was going through. The remaining 86% of people who responded said their point of entry into the church was through an invitation by a family member or a friend who was already a part of that congregation's life. You see, you are the most effective evangelists we have! As you build relationships with people who are not here, and as you share the hope you have in Jesus Christ, and what the Holy Spirit is up to in the life of our church, people will be drawn to that, and over time, will be ready to see Jesus with you here in this place.

I continue to pray that each and every one of you will continue to share the good things going on at Hope Lutheran Church, be ready to share about your faith in Jesus Christ each day, and that this emphasis on personal evangelism and relationship building will result in being an effective witness of the Gospel to our community and the world. See you in Church!

First Communion Instruction

First Communion Instruction for children 2nd grade and older will take place March 23, 30, and April 6 with children receiving their First Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 14. Please contact the church office if your child will be participating so that we can order materials.



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 (February 7 & 21) at 9:15am to help unload the Feed My People delivery and to stock shelves.



Hope Lutheran Church Women



Monthly Meeting: The HLCW will hold their monthly meeting on Thursday, February 17 at 9:30am. All Women of Hope are welcome to attend.

Quilting: The quilting group will meet on Tuesday, February 22 beginning at 9:00am. There are jobs for all skill levels. If you can stay 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).

Valentine's Luncheon: The Glen Flora Lutheran Church Women invite the women of Hope to a Valentine's luncheon on Thursday, February 10 at 12:00noon at Glen Flora Lutheran Church.

Adult Education & Fellowship Opportunities

Book Discussion: The book discussion group will meet on Sunday, February 20 at 10:20am in the Fireside Room. Please read a book from the church library and bring your thoughts to the meeting.

Men's Breakfast: Men of Hope are invited to the Ladysmith Family Restaurant each Thursday at 7:00am for breakfast, fellowship, and a study of the lessons for the coming Sunday.

The Spiritual Realms Study: This study is led by Pastor Martin and will meet on Fridays, February 11 & 25 at 1:00pm.

Sunday Morning Study: The Sunday morning Bible study will meet on Sundays, February 6, 13 & 27 at 10:20am.

Healing Study: The Healing study will meet on Saturdays in February from 9:00am-1:00pm. Please contact Twyla Lund for more information.

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL & COMMITTEE ACTION

January 2022

Endowment Committee Nomination: As per the Endowment Fund Plan of Operation, the Council is responsible for nominating members. This year there was one seat open and the Council voted to nominate Jackie Buchholz.

Maintenance Position: Council discussed the maintenance position. Council voted to convert the maintenance position back to an hourly position with a pay rate of \$20/hour for heating, plumbing and electrical duties. Gordie Dukerschein proposed revamping the maintenance job description and have the remaining duties covered by volunteers.

Adult Education & Fellowship: Healing study started January 15. There were 11 in attendance. Study is 16 sessions long. Next meeting: February 11 at 12:00noon.

Congregational Care & Outreach: Looking at starting a grief support group and doing another round of phone calls to members. Next meeting: February 8 at 4:00pm.

Property: Committee did not meet. Next meeting: February 8 at 6:00pm.

Social Ministries: Local benevolences funds were designated for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund and CareNet; Missions funds were designated for NALC Seminary, NALC Great Commission Fund, and NALC Ethiopian Mission. Next meeting: February 8 at 3:0pm.

Stewardship & Finance: Looked at investment returns and budget. Next meeting: February 8 at 5:30pm.

Worship & Music: Finished updating the worship assistant handbook. Approved purchasing another gooseneck microphone. Next meeting: February 8 at 6:00pm.

Youth Education: Committee did not meet in January. Next meeting: TBD.

Youth Ministry: The youth went bowling and will be going skiing. Next meeting: February 2 at 6:00pm.

Next Council Meeting: February 22 at 6:30pm.



Deadlines...

Items for the weekly bulletin are due in the church office no later than noon on Wednesday. Items for the March newsletter are due in the church office by February 15.

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
Maintenance	
Custodian	Rosemary Warwick
Organists	Lisa Borman
	Karen Tappon
	Terry Wedwick

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February Worship Assistants

6	Ushers	Dave Borman, Nick Sovacool
	Lector	Bonnie Billings
	Comm. Assts.	Linda Campbell
13	Ushers	Nick & Nicholas Sovacool
	Lector	Nick Sovacool
	Comm. Assts.	Linda Campbell
20	Ushers	Don & Judy Soyring
	Lector	Irene Titera
	Comm. Assts.	Irene Titera
27	Ushers	Charlie Holtebeck
	Lector	Nick Sovacool
	Comm. Assts.	Chris Holtebeck

Thank You!

Thank you ALL for your PRAYERS, calls, cards, and get well wishes during my 100-day journey--53 days without a diagnosis or treatment, two ambulance rides to Weston, 42 consecutive days of infusions, lots of trips to the doctors and specialists. And now 12 weeks of cardiac rehabilitation and more trips to the doctors and specialists. So don't stop your prayers please. See you in Church soon. ~ Gary Purgett

Thank you so much for the prayers and cards during this time I've been dealing with cancer. God is upholding me, Dwight and the kids have been a wonderful support, and I feel very blessed in the midst of it all. I'm just pushing through the tunnel of treatments, as many of you have done before me. So many of your own past examples give me courage now, and remind me that I can do this hard thing! I haven't really been able to respond due to all that has been going on (some of it very good, like Ben's wedding and Lydia's engagement!), but I want you to know how much each and every message has meant. God bless and keep you all! ~ Kelly Hanson

FEBRUARY

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Emerson McGinnis
Lauren Nisbit | 20 Kristopher Dean
Sam Stewart
Chris Thompson
Cole Vollendorf |
| 2 Doug Dieckman
Kinsley Niznik | 22 Laura Johnson |
| 3 Michelle Jiskra | 23 Elaine Gabrovic |
| 4 Pam DeWolf
Sarah Helgeson
Marcus Isham
Alyssa Mataczynski
Olivia Titera | 25 Ron Reder
Nicholas Sovacool II
Jennifer Verdegan |
| 5 Maggie Jo Solberg | 26 Heidi Zielke |
| 7 Melissa Lacey
Bruce Nelson
Karen Phillips | 27 Kimberly vanDoorn |
| 8 Matt Barnett
Shelby Goerner |  |
| 9 Nicole Swanson | |
| 10 Brad Billings
Madison Nelson
Lisa Stock | |
| 11 Darek Dieckman | 1 Chad & Jill Nisbit |
| 13 Addison Kimber
Angelina Turner | 4 Craig & Carol Redwine |
| 16 Kathleen Holt
Sophia Kammerud
Ron Lee Moore
Kim Rogers
Zach Shineflew
Tony Swanson | 5 Dan & Julie Krisik |
| 17 Tarra Moore | 25 Erle & Melody Barber |
| 18 Donald Anderson
Carol Hon
Einar Pederson | |

