



MARCH 2025

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Waiting in the TOMB

Psalm 30:1-5

*I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.*

*O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.*

*O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.*

It is a quiet marvel to me every year that Christians around the world deliberately take time to lay themselves low in the season of Lent. Fasting, setting aside some favored item or activity, and the simple willingness to look inwardly and honestly at their sins. Martin Luther famously suggested in his 95 Theses, "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ``Repent" (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance." Still, as true as Luther's observation is, repentance is hardly attractive or winsome to us at the best of times. It is real, difficult, and painful work to hear the Law of God as it winnows through the dross in our souls. It often takes a consistent commitment to humility to make that internal change.

Nevertheless, each year people open their ears, hold out their hands, and accept how empty they really are. They accept the ashes, the rebukes, the bright light of the Lord as it shines a spotlight on their hearts and minds. They go down to Sheol, to that place of death, humility, and repentance, and they accept as true God's judgment that they are deserving of death, that God's assessment of their life can only be given the yes and the amen; they lay down in that dark place of the tomb and simply wait.

It is there, in the pit, in the recesses of a tomb that is a fitting end for sinners, that every Lenten season something amazing happens. Light dawns, life floods in, the downcast chin is lifted up and the souls of the dying are brought back and filled with the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. In the lowest place, even a place from which nothing can be redeemed and out of which no one ever returns, Jesus descends to meet us, thereby transforming the signpost of the dead to a birthplace for new, abundant, and brilliant life.

Come, lie down in the ashes, let go of the sins you have clung so tightly to, let the light of the Gospel expose the dark corners of your heart and forgive what is wrong and evil in your words, thoughts, and deeds. The pit may be frightening, Sheol a gaping maw, the tomb a place for endings, but Jesus will descend to meet us there, that he might raise our souls in a new beginning.

Waiting patiently with you in the tomb this Lenten season,

Pastor Devin Murphy

News & Events

PINE STRAW SALES

Support Hope's youth by purchasing pine straw during our annual fundraiser!

Sales begin 3/1 and run through 3/16, with table sales in the Narthex on weekends. Each bale is \$6, and all proceeds support upcoming youth trips and events. This is a great way to get your yard ready for spring while also making a difference for our students.

Please register on Hope's Website. Questions? Contact Wesley Spottiswood at wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org.

LANDSCAPE & MULCH DAY

Help keep Hope's grounds looking beautiful by joining us for Landscape & Mulch Day on 4/5 from 9 AM - 1 PM.

Volunteers of all ages are welcome as we work together to spread mulch, trim bushes, and refresh our outdoor spaces. If you can, bring wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, pruning shears, loppers, or hedge trimmers. Come ready to work, enjoy fellowship, and make a visible impact on our church grounds. Flexibility: Can't make it for the entire time? No worries —any time you can join us is greatly appreciated! Please register on Hope's Website. Questions? Contact Phil Phillips at pPhillips@hopelutheranwf.org.

CALLING ALL TRUCKS AND TRAILERS!

We need your help on 4/5 from 8 AM - Noon to deliver pine straw to our supporters. If you have a truck or trailer and can lend a hand, we'd love for you to join us in the back parking lot to help with deliveries. This is a great opportunity to serve while supporting Hope's youth ministry. Many hands (and vehicles) make for light work! Questions? Contact Wesley Spottiswood at wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org.

YARN DONATIONS FOR STITCHES OF HOPE

Stitches of Hope is accepting donations of washable yarn to support our prayer shawl ministry. If you would like to contribute, please place any yarn donations in the Stitches of Hope box located in the Narthex. Your generosity helps bring warmth and comfort to those in need. Many thanks for your support! Questions? Contact Lynda Watson at watson.lynda@gmail.com.



MLT MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Hope's Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) serves to support the ministries of the church by providing leadership, guidance, and oversight. The current MLT officers are:

- Izabel Sorensen (Chair)
- Josh Hoopingarner (Vice Chair)
- and Mike Owens (Secretary)
- Jim Buddo
- Steve Edwards
- Rodger Fulbright
- Rita Kaess
- Ben Meilke
- Pam Montgomery
- Kathy Pickens
- Ron Tanciar
- Jerry Garlington (Treasurer)

If you have any questions or need to connect with the MLT, please email mlt@hopelutheranwf.org. Updates on MLT members and their roles will be added to Hope's website soon.

SENIOR PASTOR CALL PROCESS UPDATE

Hope Lutheran Church has officially completed Step 1: Congregational Input & Prayer and is now moving forward to Step 2: Candidate List & Review. We are grateful for the congregation's participation through prayer and nominations. The Call Team has submitted the names of nominated pastors to the LCMS for review, and the Southeastern District President will now provide a list of LCMS-certified pastoral candidates. The Call Team will begin reviewing biographies, sermons, and theological perspectives to prayerfully discern the next steps. We continue to invite the congregation to engage in this process with prayer and trust in God's guidance. For updates, key steps, and ways to be involved, visit the Call Process page on Hope's Website at hopelutheranewf.org/ct2025.

Missions

STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING CANCELED

Due to scheduling conflicts and low interest, Stephen Ministry training is canceled for this spring. We will offer a new training session beginning in September, with several information sessions scheduled beforehand. If you are interested in learning more about Stephen Ministry or participating in the next class, please contact one of our Stephen Leaders: Andy Barrett (lizcitypirate@hotmail.com), Rob Bailey (robkat1297@mac.com), or Jerry Garlington (garlingj@hotmail.com).



DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING: LERT

Are you ready to be the hands and feet of Jesus in times of crisis? Hope is hosting a Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) Disaster Relief Training on 3/22 from 9 AM - 3 PM in Room 301-302. This course will introduce participants to LCMS Disaster Response and provide guidance on responding to disasters in a safe and effective way. You'll learn about deployment protocols, the ministry of presence, and essential safety practices. The training is open to adults, and Hope is covering the \$15 registration fee. Please register on Hope's Website by 3/15 so we can have materials ready for everyone.

Participants will receive their LERT certificate. Lunch will be provided, and check-in begins at 8:30 AM. Questions?

Contact Wesley Spottiswood at wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org.

HABITAT TOWN HOMES IN WAKE FOREST

Hope Lutheran is making a difference in the community by helping 28 families gain access to quality, affordable housing at 2608 Forestville Road. Our involvement began with hosting a neighborhood engagement meeting on 6/13/24, followed by planning board and council meetings. On 1/7/25, the rezoning for this project was officially approved. The next step is property development, which includes putting in new roads and extending utilities—a process that will take several months.

Stay tuned for updates and opportunities to get involved.

Questions about Habitat?
Contact Roger Madariaga at
RogerMadariaga@aol.com.

HABITAT PRESERVATION WAKE FOREST

An existing Wake Forest homeowner needs our help to preserve their affordable home. We need six volunteers on 3/1, 3/8, 3/22, and 3/29 to demolish and rebuild two decks and paint the exterior of the home. Volunteers must be 16 years or older—no construction expertise needed! Habitat Wake will have a construction supervisor on-site to guide volunteers. If you can help, please sign up at the link provided. Stay tuned for more opportunities to build and repair homes with Habitat Wake, including the upcoming Forestville Road project, where Hope plans to be a lead partner. The lack of affordable housing is a crisis in our community, with a shortage of 28,000 affordable housing units in Wake County alone. As followers of Jesus, we are called to open our doors and build homes for families in need.

MOBILE FOOD MINISTRY VOLUNTEER DINNER

Hope's Mobile Food Ministry has served over 2,500 people by providing hot meals to those in need, and we want to celebrate our volunteers and those interested in serving!

Join us for a free dinner on 3/21 at 6 PM in the Children's Center. Come learn more about how this ministry makes an impact, the different volunteer roles available, and how you can be a part of this growing outreach. Please register on Hope's Website.

Questions? Contact Melanie Barker at mrbarke84@gmail.com.

Season of Lent

AT HOPE

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE DINNER

Join us on 3/4 from 5:30 - 7 PM in the Children's Center for our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, hosted by the Men of Hope. Enjoy a delicious meal of pancakes, sausage, and fellowship as we prepare our hearts for the Lenten season. This annual tradition is a wonderful time for the whole church family to gather before Ash Wednesday. A free-will offering will be collected to support Hope's ministries.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Join us on 3/5 from 6:30 - 7:30 PM in the Sanctuary for our traditional Ash Wednesday Service as we begin the season of Lent. This meaningful time of worship includes the imposition of ashes, prayer, and reflection. The service will also be live-streamed for those unable to attend in person.

LENTEN MEALS

Join us for a warm meal before each midweek Lenten service, hosted by the Men of Hope. Meals will be served from 5:30 - 6:15 PM in the Children's Center and will feature a variety of delicious soups and sandwiches each week. A free-will offering will be collected to help support the ministry. Grilled cheese and tomato soup will be available every week in addition to the weekly special. This is a great opportunity to gather in fellowship before worship.

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICES

Join us each Wednesday during Lent for a time of worship, reflection, and preparation for Easter. Services will be held in the Sanctuary from 6:30 - 7:30 PM on 3/12, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9. These midweek services are an opportunity to step away from the busyness of life and focus on Christ's journey to the cross. If you are unable to attend in person, the services will be live-streamed for your convenience. Questions? Contact the church office at office@hopelutheranwf.org.

EASTER LILIES 2025

Easter lilies grace the chancel and windows at Hope on Easter Sunday, symbolizing renewal and hope. They may be purchased in memory or in honor of loved ones, and each lily is available for \$14. All purchases must be made by 4/7, and payment must be made online. Please register on Hope's Website.

Sunday SCHOOL

During Sunday
school there is
something for
all ages.

Kid's Classes

PRESCHOOL JAM

NOAHS BIG BOAT

K1 CREW:

NOAH'S BIG BOAT

LEVEL 23:

**LOVING GOD FROM THE INSIDE
OUT**

CLUB 45:

WALKING WITH JESUS



Adult Classes

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

New Member Class

Join us in March as we look at the Ten Commandments given through Moses in the Book of Exodus. Learn more about their place in history, their significance after Christ, and how we find in these Ten Commandments broad applications for our daily lives.

New Member Class

Curious about Hope Lutheran Church? Join us for our New Member Class from 3/2 - 4/6, meeting each Sunday from 9:45 - 10:45 AM. This class is an opportunity to learn more about Hope's faith, history, group ministries, small groups, and outreach opportunities. There's no pressure to join—we simply want to share our love of Jesus and get to know you better! Whether you're new to the area, looking for a church home, or just interested in learning more, we'd love for you to attend. Please register on Hope's Website.

Youth Classes

THE BOOK OF MARK

Join us in March as we dive into the Gospel of Mark, exploring the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus. Through engaging discussions and meaningful applications, middle and high school students will discover how Mark's message of Christ's power and sacrifice shapes our faith today.

WOMEN'S RETREAT @ HOPE

Step away from the busyness of life and join us for Journey to the Cross, a Women's Retreat at Hope from 4/11-4/12 in the Adult Education wing. This special time together will focus on Holy Week, offering reflection, fellowship, and renewal. The cost is \$75, which includes all retreat materials and meals. Set your heart on Christ as we journey through His final days leading to Easter. Please register on Hope's Website.

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**Questions? Contact Beth Agner at
bagner@hopelutheranwf.org.**



BREW HOUSE PARTY

Join us for a night of fun, fellowship, and faith at the BREW House Party on 3/28 from 6:30 PM to midnight at Makayla's house. This is a great opportunity to relax, connect with others, and enjoy a welcoming atmosphere. Don't miss out on the chance to build relationships and have a great time together. Please register on Hope's Website.

BREW BIBLE STUDY AT BUDS TAVERN

Join us for an evening of fellowship and discussion at BREW Bible Study on 3/13 at 6:30 PM at Buds Tavern. This is a great opportunity to connect, reflect, and engage in meaningful conversations in a relaxed setting. Bring a friend and enjoy a casual atmosphere while diving into God's Word. Questions? Contact Makayla Meyer at mmeyer@hopelutheranwf.org.

**Questions? Contact Makayla Meyer at
mmeyer@hopelutheranwf.org.**



Small Groups **AT HOPE**

CONNECTIONS: BOARD GAME NIGHT

Calling all young adults ages 25-35! Connections is hosting a Board Game Night on 3/7 at 7 PM in the Youth Center. Bring your favorite board game and a snack to share as we enjoy a fun night of games, laughter, and great company. This is a perfect opportunity to meet new people and get plugged into the group.

Questions? Contact Michele Repak at 919-279-3800.

CONNECTIONS: BIBLE STUDY

Looking for a place to connect and grow in faith with others ages 25-35? Join Connections for Bible Study on 3/20 from 7-9 PM in the Conference Room. This is a great opportunity to dive deeper into Scripture, build friendships, and strengthen your faith in a welcoming and relaxed environment. Whether you're new or a returning participant, all are welcome! Questions? Contact Michele Repak at 919-279-3800.

MONTHLY BRIDGE GROUP

Hope's Join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship at the Monthly Bridge Group on 3/10 from 1:00-3:30 PM in Room 300. Whether you're a seasoned player or new to the game, all are welcome to participate. A \$1 donation is collected each month, with funds going toward a ministry to be determined at the end of the year. Questions? Contact Pam Jay at pjay0826@gmail.com.

SMALL GROUPS AT HOPE

Are you looking for a place to belong? Seeking Christian friends to share life's journey? Wanting to grow deeper in faith? Hope's Small Group Ministry may be the answer! With over 25 small groups meeting in different ways—both in-person and online—there's a place for everyone, no matter your age or stage of life. You don't have to be a member to join; all are welcome! Get connected and find a group that fits you. Questions? Contact DCE Wesley Spottiswood at wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org.

Youth *Ministry*



Youth ministry at Hope Lutheran focuses on friendships, faith, and service for youth in grades 5-12.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER TRIP

Save the date for this summer's Middle School Trip from 7/10-7/13 as we travel to Washington, DC! Open to all middle schoolers, including rising 6th graders, this exciting trip will include a visit to the Bible Museum, a day at Kings Dominion, and plenty of opportunities for faith, fellowship, and fun. The cost is \$425, and more details will be shared soon. Please register on Hope's Website. Questions? Contact Makayla Meyer at mmeyer@hopelutheranwf.org.



HIGH SCHOOL TIME TRAVEL LOCK-IN

Get ready for an unforgettable Time Travel Lock-In on 3/8 from 8 PM - 8 AM in the Youth Center! Travel through different eras of history with themed games, challenges, and late-night fun. This overnight event is open to all high school youth and will be packed with exciting activities, fellowship, and time to grow in faith together. Cost: \$5. Please register on Hope's Website. Questions? Contact Wesley Spottiswood at wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org.





Kid's *Ministry*

There are many ways for you and your family to connect to Hope's Kids Ministry. From Christian Education to Worship to serving our community.

MOTHER SON EVENT

Moms and sons, get ready for a fun-filled night of bonding and adventure at our Mother Son Event on 3/7 from 6:00-8:00 PM in the Children's Center! Enjoy exciting activities, great food, and a memorable experience designed to bring you closer together. Whether you're racing through challenges or sharing a laugh, this is a night you won't want to miss! Cost: \$15 per person, with a family max of \$45. Please register on Hope's Website. Questions? Contact Beth Agner at bagner@hopelutheranwf.org.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025



June 23-27

Registration opens
April 1 at 8 AM

QUESTIONS?

BAGNER@HOPELUTHERANWF.ORG

Realm UPDATE



Need help navigating Realm? We're offering free How-To Classes to walk you through the basics.

What You'll Learn:

- How to sign in and update your profile
- How to register for events
- How to check in for worship

No registration required—just attend the session that works for you!

Registered Members of Hope will receive their invitation to Realm Connect between March 3-7. Along with the invitation, an email will be sent containing some basic information to help you get started.

UPCOMING CLASSES

Date	Time	Location
March 9	1:00-2:00 PM	Room 301-302
March 15	4:30-5:30 PM	Room 301-302
March 19	5:30-6:30 PM	Room 301-302
March 21	8:30-9:30 AM	Conference Room
March 23	9:45-10:45 AM	Children's Center
March 25	11:00 AM-12:00 PM	Room 300

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT BRIANA EVANS AT
BEVANS@HOPELUTHERANWF.ORG**

Giving AT HOPE

*Supporting Our Ministries,
Growing in Faith*

Hope Lutheran Church is transitioning to Realm with Vanco Integration as our primary online giving platform. We encourage all members to begin by creating a Realm account. If you currently have recurring donations with Vanco, please cancel those by logging into your Vanco account, select edit and choose cancel transaction. We encourage all members to use Realm Giving while visitors may continue to give online.

Ways to Give

Realm Giving- *The Best Option for Members (Starting March 7)*

- Give through the Realm Connect App or website (Realm account required)
- Securely donate using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account
- Monitor your giving history and manage recurring donations

Online Giving - *A Simple & Secure Way to Give for Visitors*

- Convenient for guests and one-time givers
- Easily donate through our new giving link
 - onrealm.org/hopelutheranwf/-/form/give/now

Envelope Giving- *A Traditional Option (Limited Use Encouraged)*

- Primarily for those who traditionally give via the offering plate
- Envelopes are available for members who prefer this method
- Please consider transitioning to Realm Giving for easier record-keeping and engagement

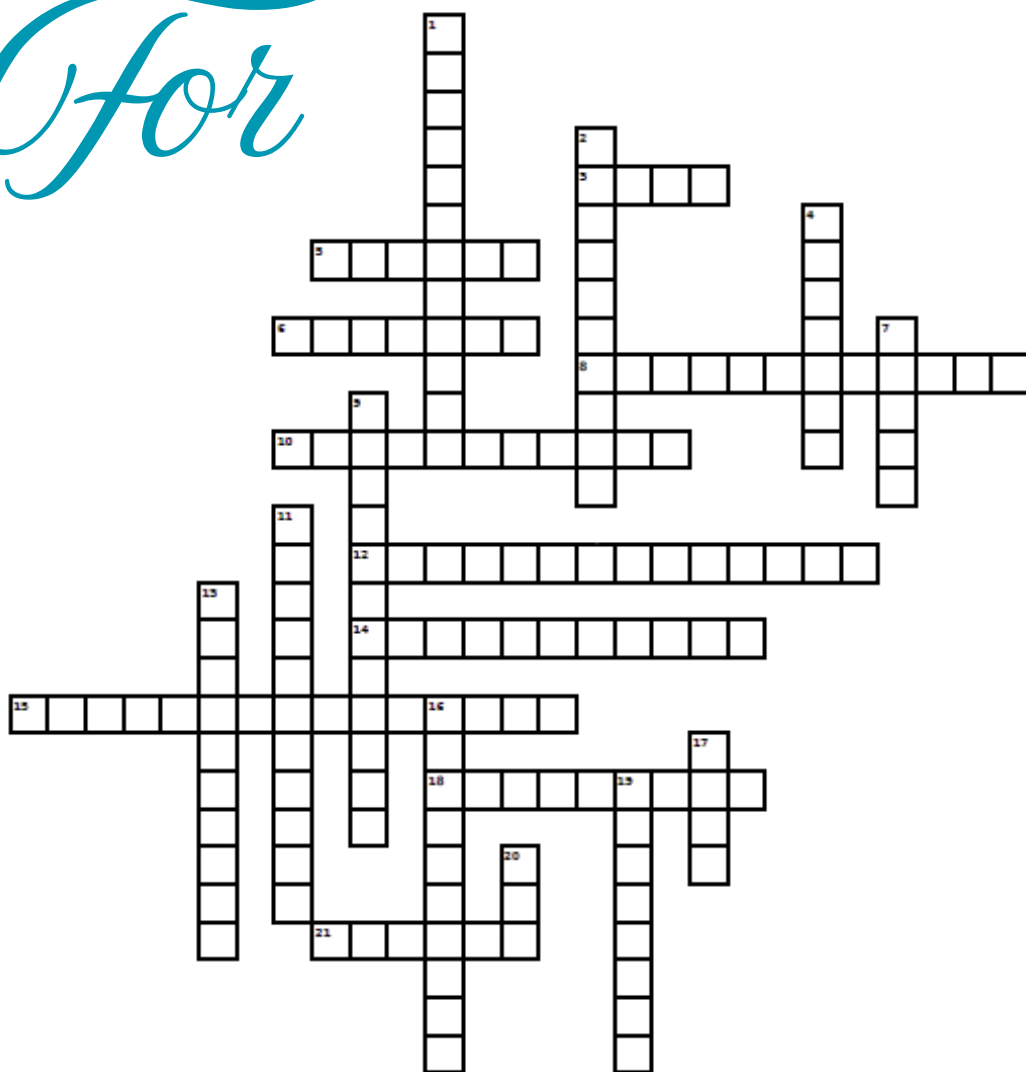
Additional Giving Options- *Unique Ways to Support Hope*

- IRA Charitable Giving: If you're over 72 and taking required minimum distributions, you may be able to donate directly to Hope through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)
- Thrivent Choice Dollars: Thrivent members can designate "Choice" dollars to Hope
- Stock Donations: Members can donate stocks or securities to support our ministries

Please note: Neither Hope's pastors or staff will ever ask you to give outside of these official methods.

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT KELLY FARIS AT
KFARIS@HOPELUTHERANWF.ORG**

Just For Fun



Down:

1. The annual prom event for individuals with special needs, hosted at Hope.
2. The group that arranges flowers for worship services.
4. The order of worship followed in Lutheran services.
7. The Apostles' or Nicene statement of belief recited during worship.
9. The most important Christian holiday celebrating Jesus' resurrection.
11. The event Martin Luther began in 1517 that shaped Lutheran beliefs.
13. The town where Hope Lutheran Church is located.
16. Baptism and Holy Communion are considered these.
17. The name of our Lutheran Church in Wake Forest.
19. A live reenactment of Jesus' birth at Christmas.
20. The summer program for children filled with Bible lessons and activities (abbr.).

Across:

3. The church is a member of this Lutheran denomination (abbr.).
5. The name of Hope Lutheran Church's Track Out Camp.
6. The entrance area of the church where members gather before services.
8. A popular fall festival held in the church parking lot.
10. A dedicated group that prays for those in need.
12. Hope's giant Easter celebration full of egg hunts and fun!
14. Weekly gatherings where members study the Bible together.
15. A program where trained church members provide support and care.
18. The sacrament where bread and wine are shared.
21. Volunteers who welcome attendees and assist during services.