

A SEASON OF GRATITUDE

THANKFUL

Give thanks to the
Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love
endures forever.

— Psalm 107:1

25

NOVEMBER

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Letter

The Call Returned

Psalm 4:1

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have given me relief when I was in distress.

Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

I write this now only a couple days removed from the notice we received from Pastor Tab Cosgrove that he has formally returned(declined) Hope's call to serve as its Senior Pastor. By the time you read this, we will likely have some better insight into next steps and plans moving forward. For the moment, though, I think it is important to acknowledge that after more than a year of waiting, prayer, interviews, town halls, and a call service, we are still left waiting. For many, this is a somber moment of disappointment, worry, concern, and perhaps even hurt. For many more, there is surely a feeling that a resolution was wanted so that we could move forward in hopeful expectation and joy for whatever God has for us.

In such moments congregations often wonder where we went wrong and whom, if anyone, can be blamed. Let's address both as clearly as possible: we did nothing wrong and there is no one to blame. How can I speak with such confidence that we did nothing wrong? Because our Ministry Leadership Team and Call Team have acted exactly in the manner proscribed by our synodical church body, our district president, by our district's call handbook, and in accordance with our doctrine and theological convictions. Every part of this process was done decently and in order. We formed a Call Team, asked for nominations, submitted names to the district president, received a qualified list, asked candidates to allow their names to stand, interviewed candidates twice, invited a final slate for town halls, voted in accordance with our constitution and by-laws, and extended a call according to the ordinary, time-honored manner present all throughout our church body. In every way possible, fairness, integrity, and dedication to a godly process were sought and preserved.

So, is there then someone to blame? Absolutely not. I have said it before, and I will say it again, our Call Team has put in extraordinary hours both in person and from home. They have sacrificed evenings, taken time away from their families,

prayed, discussed and debated, worked through numerous details of evaluation, and pushed tirelessly to move the process forward with as much expediency as possible while living in the practical constraints given them. If you are struggling, imagine how they might feel having worked so hard to bring us to this point. I call on every member of this church to speak with gentleness and love, especially at this time, towards our sisters and brothers who have worked for our welfare in this process. Anything less is out of step with who we are as members of Hope Lutheran Church.

What then of Pastor Cosgrove? Graciously, with sincere love and care for a church he holds dear in his heart, Pastor Cosgrove participated in a process he did not seek. He came honestly, spoke with integrity and humility, and offered his thoughtful consideration. He then did what every Pastor has to do when presented a call: he prayed, sought wisdom from trusted sources, wrestled with it, and pursued the Lord's guidance. In the end, Pastor Cosgrove received that guidance and declined. To do otherwise would be to ask him to go against his conscience and the leading of the Lord.

As difficult as it may be to accept, what has happened here is a normal part of the process to seek a Senior Pastor. I won't ask you not to hurt, not to wonder, not to feel disappointed or unsure. I will ask you to temper those feelings so that you do not say things you in time regret, so that you do not let your hurt spill into sinful talk, so that you do not divide against one another. Now, more than ever, it should be apparent that we need to hold on to one another. Now, more than ever, we need genuine grace for one another, kind words that build up, forgiveness and mercy manifest in action. Now, more than ever, we need the unity of the Spirit that comes from our Lord Jesus.

Whatever comes ahead, we will ford it because God is our helper. God will provide for our needs, he will help us as he has helped us countless times before, and he will send us the Pastor he is calling to serve. Until then, hold tight to my hand as I hold tight to yours. Remember Whose church this really is; remember that if Jesus has died for us, there is nothing needed he will keep back from us; remember that we are the very body and bride of our Lord.

Waiting for the good news with you,
Pastor Devin Murphy

News & Reminders

Digital Safety

Please stay alert and cautious when it comes to digital safety. Hope's pastors or staff will never ask you to give outside of our official giving platforms.

If you ever receive a message that seems suspicious or unfamiliar, pause and confirm before responding. Your care and vigilance help protect both you and our church family from scams. Questions? office@hopelutheranwf.org

2026 Sponsorship Opportunities

Altar Flower Sponsorships for 2026 are now open! Each adult may reserve one weekend per year to give more people the opportunity to participate. If you would like to recognize additional loved ones or moments beyond your altar flower weekend, consider a Coffee & Fellowship Sponsorship, another wonderful way to honor special occasions and bless the congregation. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions? bevans@hopelutheranwf.org

Let Us Pray for You

Need prayer? Whether you're facing illness, grief, celebration, or uncertainty, Hope is here to pray with you and for you. We believe in lifting every joy and burden to our loving God, trusting His care for each of us. To submit a prayer request or receive Hope's daily prayer email, contact the church office. Let's walk in faith together—one prayer at a time. Questions? office@hopelutheranwf.org

Nursery Workers Needed

Hope Lutheran Church is hiring caring and dependable nursery staff to help care for children ages birth to 4 years old during Sunday morning services and Sunday School. Applicants must be 16 or older, able to lift and play with children, and enjoy creating a safe and loving environment for our littlest members. Additional opportunities may be available during Saturday services, Bible studies, small groups, Wednesday Night Alive, and other special events. Questions? nursery@hopelutheranwf.org

Upcoming Events

Touch a Truck

Bring the whole family to Touch a Truck on Saturday, 11/15 from 10 AM-2 PM in Hope's back parking lot! Kids can climb in, explore, and experience a wide variety of vehicles—trucks, cars, emergency vehicles, specialty rigs, and more. Food trucks will also be on site (purchases made directly from vendors). Admission is \$5 for children and youth under 18, and free for ages 18 and older. All proceeds support Hope's Preschool as we raise funds for new furnishings that help create great spaces for our kids. Questions? awhitted@hopelutheranwf.org

Xplore Track Out

Looking for fun, faith-filled care for your child during the holidays? Xplore Track Out Camp is open through November and December and ready to celebrate the season! Each week features creative Christmas-themed activities, engaging games, outdoor fun, and Bible-based lessons designed just for elementary-aged kids. Whether your family needs full-time care or just a few days, Xplore provides a flexible, Christ-centered option for your child this Christmas season. Email xplore@hopelutheranwf.org for availability and weekly theme details.

BREW Winter Retreat - UNBREAKABLE

Kick off the new year in the mountains with your BREW family at the Winter Retreat, happening 1/3-1/6 in Boone, NC. Themed UNBREAKABLE, this retreat will remind us that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38-39). Enjoy four days of worship, Bible study, relaxation, and fellowship—all with meals, lodging, and retreat activities included. Optional add-ons include skiing or snowboarding for \$75 and an exclusive UNBREAKABLE sweatshirt for \$35. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions? mnicotera@hopelutheranwf.org

Friendsgiving

Celebrate the season of gratitude with your friends at Hope's annual High School Friendsgiving! Join us for an evening of food, laughter, and fellowship as we gather to share a meal and reflect on what we're thankful for. Bring a side dish to share or \$10 cash if you'd rather contribute that way. Questions? wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org

Helping Out This Thanksgiving

Brown Bag Ministry

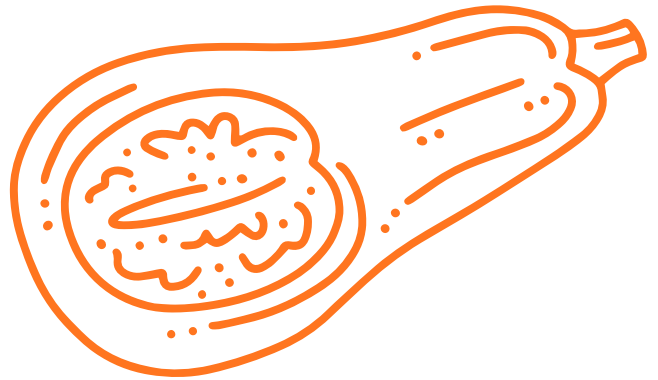
Celebrate Thanksgiving through service and fellowship with Brown Bag Ministry on 11/15 at 11 AM. Join us in the Children's Center Foyer and Kitchen to prepare lunches, then help distribute them to our neighbors in Wake Forest. This is a wonderful way to share the love of Christ and serve those in need during the Thanksgiving season. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website.

Questions? kapernan@gmail.com

Tri-Area Ministry Thanksgiving Collection

Newsletter Paragraph:

Help provide Thanksgiving meals for our neighbors by donating nonperishables at each service on 11/2, 11/9, and 11/16. Most-needed items include canned green beans, french-fried onions, mushroom soup, instant potatoes and gravy, canned pumpkin and dry pie crust mix, canned cranberry sauce, and stuffing mix. Drop donations in the Tri-Area Ministry bin in the Cafe area. Thank you for supporting Tri-Area Ministry this season. Questions? jmschaef@yahoo.com



Mobile Food Ministry: Feeding the Homeless

Newsletter Paragraph:

Serve with purpose through Hope's Mobile Food Ministry on 11/9 at 2 PM. Volunteers will gather in Hope's Kitchen to prepare and pack meals before heading downtown to serve those experiencing homelessness. There are many ways to get involved—whether cooking, packing, or serving meals. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions? david.w.critchley@gmail.com



Making Christmas Great for Others

Angel Tree Gift Donations

Angel Tree is right around the corner! Select your angels between 11/22–12/7 and return gifts by 12/8. Planning early helps us bring joy to more than 30 families this Christmas season. Each angel should have one wrapped or bagged gift; if you give more than one item, please place them together in a single wrapped bag or box. Thank you for your generosity and for sharing the love of Jesus with those in need.

Questions?

angeltree@hopelutheranwf.org

Live Nativity Volunteers Needed

Be part of Hope's Live Nativity this Christmas season! Volunteers are needed to help with acting, setup, and takedown as we bring the story of Jesus' birth to life for our community. Every helping hand makes a difference in sharing the message of Christ's love and light. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions? wpalloszi@gmail.com



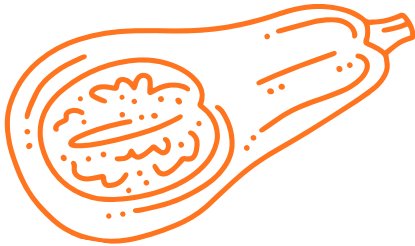
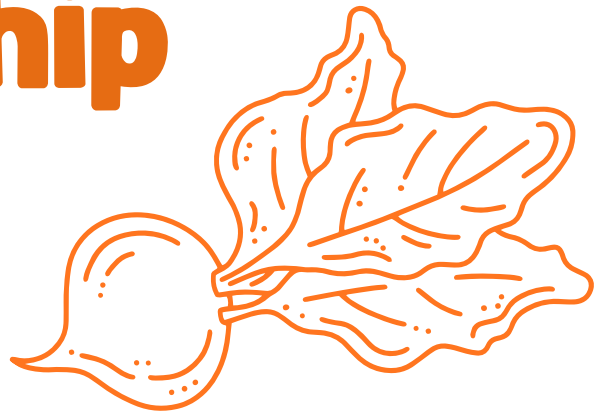
Support the Angel Tree Christmas Celebration

The holidays are a time for joy, laughter, and love—and you can help make that happen for families in our community! Hope's Angel Tree Ministry is hosting a special Christmas celebration for families receiving gifts this year, and we need your help to make it merry and bright. Volunteers ages 16+ are needed from 9:30 AM-12 PM to assist with setup, crafts, games, and cleanup. Food and party supply donations can also be dropped off by 12/11 before 5 PM. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions? angeltree@hopelutheranwf.org

Worship

Thanksgiving Service

Join us on Thanksgiving morning, 11/27 at 10 AM, for a special worship service of gratitude and praise. Together we'll give thanks for all the Lord has done and the blessings He has given to us as His people. Worship in person or online as we celebrate God's goodness and grace. Questions?
office@hopelutheranwf.org



2025 Christmas Pageant

Christmas is upon us! The lights are twinkling, the tree is glowing, and... oh no... the star is gone! Join us on 12/17 at 6:30 PM as our incredible Kids and Youth Ministries present this year's Christmas Pageant, Christmas Eve.

Follow Eve and her friends on a heartwarming and hilarious journey to save Christmas and rediscover the true reason we celebrate—the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This joyful performance is the perfect way to celebrate the season with faith, laughter, and love. Questions?
mnicotera@hopelutheranwf.org

Christmas Cantata 2025 - A Light Shines in Bethlehem

Join us for a morning of music, worship, and joy at Hope's 2025 Christmas Cantata, A Light Shines in Bethlehem, on Sunday, 12/14, during Sunday worship services. This special musical celebration features Hope's choirs and instrumentalists as they share the story of Christ's birth through inspiring arrangements and heartfelt praise. Come experience the beauty of the Christmas story as we rejoice in the light of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Invite your family and friends to join us and hear the Christmas story shared through God's gift of music. Questions?
rvarner@hopelutheranwf.org



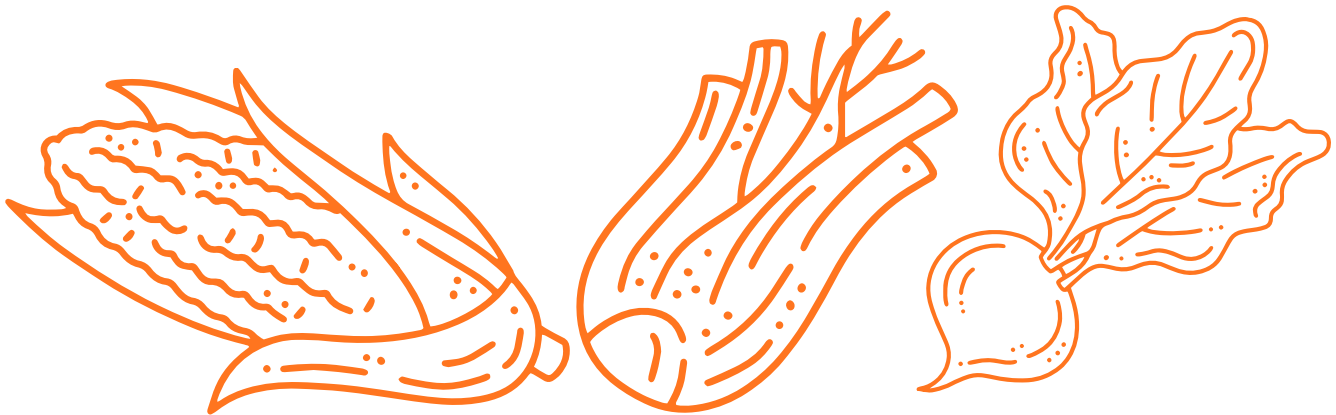
Services

Advent Season: Piece by Piece

This Advent season, Hope's worship series "Piece by Piece: Placed by God" invites us to see how God carefully arranges each part of His story—and ours—according to His perfect plan. Join us beginning the weekend of 11/29 for our Advent worship services and continue the journey on Wednesday evenings, 12/3 and 12/10, at 6:30 PM for special midweek reflections. Each service will include music, Scripture, and a message centered on God's peace and promise as we prepare our hearts for Christmas. Midweek services will also be livestreamed.

Christmas Eve Service

Celebrate the birth of Christ this Christmas Eve with Hope's worship series "Piece by Piece: Placed by God." Each service offers a unique way to experience the story of Jesus' birth through music, Scripture, and candlelight. The 3:30 PM and 5 PM Children's Services feature songs and stories for families with young children, the 6:30 PM and 8 PM Candlelight Services include traditional hymns and "Silent Night" by candlelight, and the 11 PM Candlelight Communion Service offers a beautiful late-night celebration with choir and brass. The 5 PM, 8 PM, and 11 PM services will be livestreamed.



More Information

Questions? office@hopelutheranwf.org

Getting Ready for Christmas

Christmas Wreath Sale

Support Hope's youth while decking your home for the holidays with beautiful fresh wreaths and garland! Orders will be accepted 11/1-11/12, with pricing as follows: \$17 for a 16-inch wreath, \$26 for a 24-inch wreath, \$45 for a 25-foot garland. Pick-up will be available at WNA on 12/3 or after services on 12/6-12/7. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions?
wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org

Christmas Poinsettias Sponsorship

Poinsettias will adorn the Sanctuary and Narthex during Advent and Christmas. These beautiful seasonal flowers may be purchased in memory or honor of loved ones for \$15 each. Flowers can be picked up after the 11 PM service on Christmas Eve or the following weekend. You can find registration on Realm or Hope's Website. Questions?
bevans@hopelutheranwf.org

Getting Ready for Christmas Card Season - Realm Privacy

Christmas card season is right around the corner! Make sure your Realm privacy settings are updated the way you want them before sending and receiving cards. If you don't yet have a Realm account and would like to appear in Hope's online directory, please contact the Church Office for assistance. Questions?
office@hopelutheranwf.org

Live Nativity

Experience the story of Jesus' birth come to life at Hope's Live Nativity on 12/6 and 12/7 at 6:45 PM behind the Preschool. Watch as the true meaning of Christmas unfolds through narration, music, and a living depiction of the Nativity scene. Bundle up, bring your family, and enjoy this joyful reminder of God's greatest gift. Admission is free, and all are welcome. Questions?
wpalloszi@gmail.com

Christmas Parties

Celebrate the joy of the season at Hope's Christmas Parties! There's something for everyone — from kids and youth to men, women, and young adults. Gather with your Hope family for laughter, food, and fellowship as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Save the Dates Now

Women's Christmas Tea – Christmas Around the World – 12/5, 6:30-9 PM, Adult Center. Enjoy coffee, tea, devotion, and an ornament exchange. Cost: Free (bring a wrapped ornament).

Kids Ministry Christmas Party – 12/6, 3:00-5:15 PM, Children's Center. Festive games, crafts, and dinner (free-will offering).

High School Christmas Party – 12/7, 6:30-8 PM, Youth Center. Games, food, and a White Elephant gift exchange.

Have Yourself a Merry Little Girls' Night – 12/19, 6:30-8:30 PM, Youth Center. For women ages 16-24. Dinner and Christmas fun. Cost: \$5.

BREW Christmas Party – Oh What Fun! – 12/20, 7-10 PM, Youth Center. For young adults, with games, food, and a \$25 White Elephant gift exchange.

Men's Christmas Bonfire – 12/20, 6:30-8 PM, Fire Pit Area. An evening of warmth, fellowship, and reflection around the fire.

For More Information

Come share in the warmth and joy of Christmas together! You can find registrations on Realm or Hope's Website.

Questions? office@hopelutheranwf.org

Volunteers at Hope

Special thanks to Janice Mortensen

Congratulations to Janice Mortensen, recipient of the 2025 Hammer of Hope Award! Each year, Hope's Ministry Leadership Team honors one outstanding volunteer who exemplifies faithful leadership and service. Janice has blessed Hope through her tireless dedication, leadership of the Count Team, and her willingness to step in and serve wherever needed. Her commitment and joyful spirit reflect the heart of Christ in action. We thank God for Janice and for all who faithfully share their gifts to support Hope's ministries.

Thank You, Hope Volunteers

Hope Lutheran Church is filled with faithful volunteers who make ministry possible every single day. From ushers and greeters to altar guild, tech teams, musicians, childcare helpers, office support, and countless others—each person's service plays a vital role in making Hope the warm, welcoming place it is. Thank you for sharing your time, energy, and gifts so that the Word and love of Christ can reach our community. Your dedication reflects the heart of Jesus, and we are deeply grateful for you.

Thank You to Sunday School and WNA Teachers

Kids are the future of our church and one of the greatest gifts from God. Planting seeds of faith in their hearts today helps them grow into adults who will carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ wherever they go. Through God's amazing grace, we've been blessed with the most wonderful Sunday School and Wednesday Night Alive teachers who shine the light of Jesus in their own special ways. Every Sunday and Wednesday, they share God's Word through stories, songs, crafts, games, and laughter—showing children how exciting and alive His Word truly is. This month (and always), we thank God for each of them and pray He fills them with strength, joy, and peace as they pour His love into the next generation.

Sunday School

Sunday Funday - Kids & Youth Service Project

Join us for a special Sunday Funday on 11/2 from 9:45-10:45 AM as all Kids Sunday School groups come together for a service project to bless families in need. We'll be assembling Disaster Relief Buckets to support those impacted by crisis, teaching our young people about compassion, teamwork, and serving others in the name of Jesus. Monetary donations are appreciated (not required) to help supply materials. Questions? bagner@hopelutheranwf.org

Kids

Kids Sunday School meets each Sunday from 9:45-10:45 AM with lessons designed to help children grow in faith and understanding of God's Word. This month, Preschool JAM and K1 Crew will focus on Thankfulness, Level 23 will explore the 10 Commandments, and Club 45 will dive into God Speaks: Hearing God's Voice in Our Lives. Groups are divided by age and meet in classrooms across campus—just follow the Sunday School signs. Questions? mnicotera@hopelutheranwf.org

Youth

This November in Youth Sunday School, students will dive into the book of Deuteronomy and discover what it means to live faithfully as God's people. Through discussion, reflection, and connection, they'll explore how God's Word continues to guide us in our daily lives. Join us each Sunday from 9:45-10:45 AM in the Youth Center for meaningful lessons, fellowship, and fun. Questions? wspottiswood@hopelutheranwf.org

Adult

Join us for Adult Sunday School – Songs of the Messiah throughout November from 9:45-10:45 AM. This class explores prophecies in the Psalms that anticipated Jesus' work and ministry, revealing how these poetic songs point to His life, death, and resurrection. Discover how the words of the Psalms continue to shape our faith and deepen our hope in the Savior's ongoing work in our lives today. Questions? dmurphy@hopelutheranwf.org

Night to Shine



We need you!

Help make Hope's Night to Shine possible! We need over 150 volunteers (ages 16 and up) to help create an unforgettable prom night experience for individuals with special needs. Our greatest need is for Buddies who will be paired with guests throughout the evening to share in all the fun. Other volunteer opportunities include food service, red carpet, photo booth, sensory room, check-in, and more. We'll also need help decorating and crafting to bring this year's Enchanted Forest theme to life! Volunteer sign-ups open 11/12 at 9 AM, with separate links for event-night and decorating volunteers. All volunteers 18+ will require a background check, and those under 18 will need a signed parent waiver. A volunteer training will be scheduled prior to the event.

Questions? nighttoshine@hopelutheranwf.org

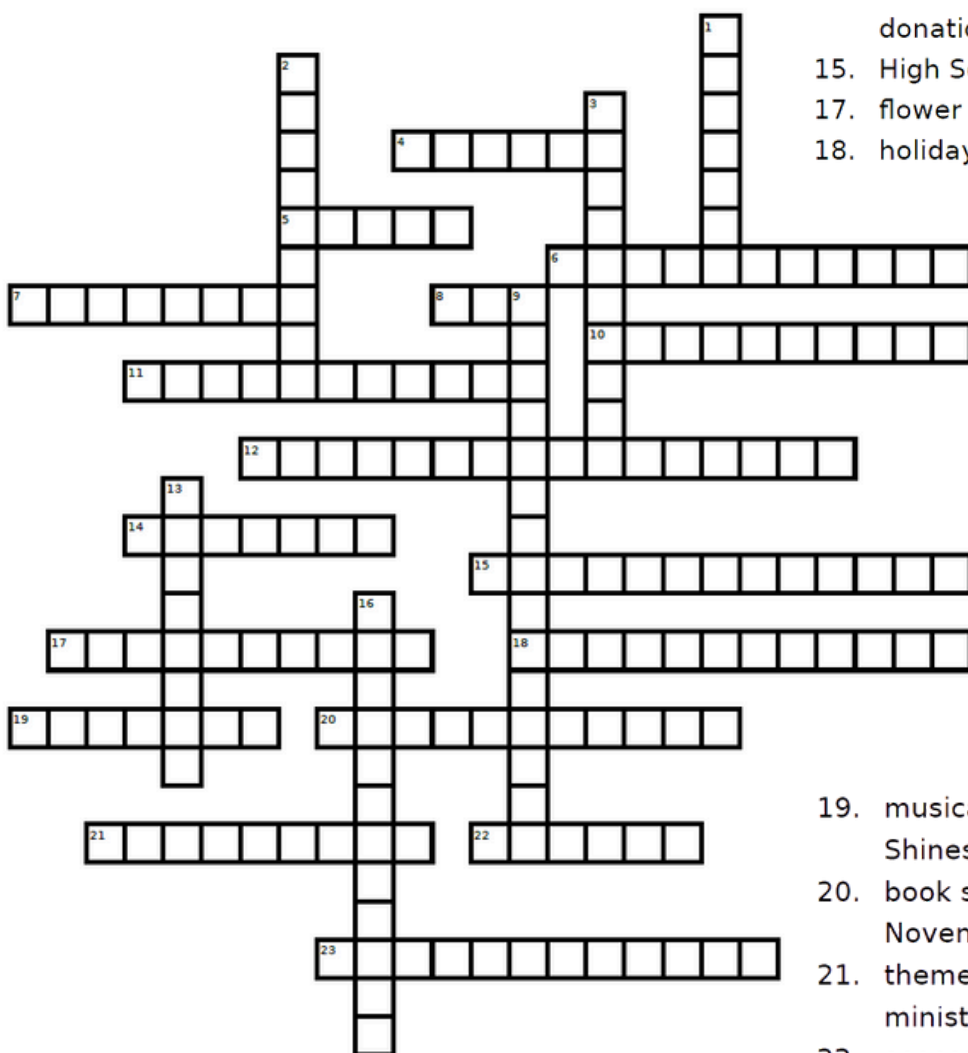
Just For Fun

Down:

1. focus of Adult Sunday School series "Songs of the ____."
2. ministry collecting Christmas gifts for families.
3. coffee hour and social connection after services.
9. title of Pastor Murphy's letter.
13. ministry that prepares lunches for those in need.
16. outdoor event retelling the story of Jesus' birth.

Across:

4. first name of the 2025 Hammer of Hope award recipient.
5. Sunday School group for 2nd and 3rd graders.
6. family event with vehicles and food trucks.
7. closing word in Pastor Murphy's letter "Hold tight to my hand as I hold tight to yours."
8. abbreviation for Ministry Leadership Team.
10. MLT section topic about holiday appreciation.
11. theme of the BREW Winter Retreat.
12. Kids and Youth performance on 12/17.
14. ministry collecting Thanksgiving food donations.
15. High School Thanksgiving gathering.
17. flower used for Christmas sponsorships.
18. holiday worship service held on 11/27.



19. musical Christmas worship event "A Light Shines in Bethlehem."
20. book studied by Youth Sunday School in November.
21. theme of serving others through outreach ministries.
22. season before Christmas highlighted in the worship series.
23. theme of Hope's Advent and Christmas worship series.

