

Transition As New Year Begins

As 2025 came to a close a Transition Task Force (TTF) was formed by our Church Council. As I reflected on my 3/4 time call to New Hope since 2018 I felt a need for a change. In November and December I reached a couple of milestones - the 40th anniversary of my ordination on November 10, 1985, and my 70th birthday - it seemed a good time for a change.

Over the years I've enjoyed calls as Associate Pastor to Hosanna Lutheran in Forest Lake, MN for three years, and then Senior Pastor at Hosanna for 22 years. I served as Senior Pastor at Edison Park Lutheran in Chicago for eight years. Most recently, I've thoroughly enjoyed being here in my home congregation - where I was baptized, confirmed, and ordained - for over seven years.

While I love my work here, I also face the reality of wanting to take some time in these years to stop and smell the roses. This is followed closely by the need to slow down physically.

I appreciate the Church Council's willingness to work with both the congregation's needs and mine. I assured the task force when I met with them prior to their discussions that I was open to small initial transitional changes, or complete retirement. My aim, and theirs, is first and foremost what is best for New Hope's ministry. Through its discussions the task force brought some initial transition recommendations to the Council's December 15th meeting.

In this initial phase of transition, the Council approved reducing my call to 1/2 time. I will focus my hours on worship and administration. I will prepare worship throughout the year, including the Sundays I'm away. I will continue to work with the Council, and with planning. At this point I will continue to be part of a team teaching Confirmation. This will mean that, generally, I will not have a presence in other ministry areas.

A part of the Transition Task Force's work will be to continue discussions and reflections on what the needs are beyond ministries covered in large part in my new call. As needs arise, the task force will bring recommendations to the Council.

In some ministry areas the transition already began due to my hip surgeries in 2024 and 2025. Joyce Gilberts now leads our Visitation Ministry. To this point, she's covering much of this on her own. There may be opportunity in the future to create a team of people who would be willing to help with visitation. Joyce is willing to coordinate this ministry.

As you know, since 2018, we also developed a core group of lay leaders willing to help as Worship Speakers and Assisting Ministers. The use of these people's gifts has been invaluable while I was working 3/4 time. We've also used other Supply Preachers as needed. With my move to 1/2 time these resources will continue to give New Hope a base of worship support. Even at 1/2 time my availability in worship over the course of the year will remain the same, and continue the pattern we've shared since 2018. Though some work is done from home, my in-office hours will generally be Sundays, and early Monday/Tuesday mornings. Other appointments may always be made through the office.

In the coming weeks and months the Transition Task Force will continue their work, and looking for your input. Please pray for New Hope's ministry, and reflect on where you see the needs. While many needs may be met using the spiritual gifts of our people. This transition gives us the opportunity to fill needs with other part-time staff in areas of specific concentrated need.

Council also decided to put about 2/3 of the savings from this initial transition phase into a fund in preparation to address the congregation's felt staffing needs as they arise.

Peace,
Pastor Michael Sparby



HEAR OUR PRAYER

(People listed for 2 weeks. Contact the office with updates)

Jon Gilberts, Ken/Jan Gille, Sharon Hegna, Wayne Christopherson, Arlys Hoveland, Heather Irwin
Barron Care/Rehab: Bev Miller
Home Care: Astrid Sannes
Military: Capt. David E. Dahl, Jacob Messinger

Community Care

For pastoral visit/call, contact church office, Pr. Michael or Joyce Gilberts. To join our visiting team, contact Pastor.

FINANCIAL REPORT: November 2025

Detailed reports are available in the office

General Checking Balance 11/30/25	\$ 825.85
Revenue	
Unrestricted Offering	\$ 10,782.00
Restricted Benevolence, Mission, Other	\$ 2,599.35
Total Income	\$ 13,381.35
Expenditures	\$ 23,093.85

Year-to-date

Unrestricted Offering	\$162,380.73
Restricted Benevolence, Mission, Other	\$ 35,778.43
Total Income	\$198,159.16
Expenditures	\$228,874.18

2025 NOISY OFFERINGS/MISSION

NOV ELCA World Hunger **\$ 2,027.97 Matched**
“This funds relief and development projects through domestic and international partners. Not only does it assist our siblings in need; it also engages members of our church in education and advocacy to help change the systems that perpetuate poverty.”
-Haemin Lee, Director of ELCA World Hunger

DEC Christmas Critters **\$ 1,816.35 Matched**

2026 NOISY OFFERINGS/MISSION

JAN Missionary Support
FEB Malawi
MAR Luther Park

Thanks! Your financial support keeps us strong!

Offerings are received at our

*Pine Creek site offering plate (8:30a worship)
*Sand Creek site offering boxes (10a worship)
*Website: www.newhopescpc.org
*Post mail: Po Bx 85, Sand Creek, WI 54765



Pine Creek Site W/ELCA

Meeting: 9:30a, Sunday, December 4th

Sand Creek Site W/ELCA

Offering: Collecting, Monday, January 12th

Circles Eve: 6p/SC Wednesday, January 7th
Sophia: 9:30a/SC Thursday, January 15th

Winter Hats & Mittens for Local Schools

Collection box in Sand Creek site narthex

January Stewardship: Bath Soap & Towels

New, wrapped 4-5oz bars any kind soap

White Ivory for layette/baby care

2 kits use 2 bars per kit

3 kits use a bath towel

1 kits uses a hand towel



Our December 2025 Christmas Critter “Noisy Offering” collected \$1,816.35 to be matched.

We purchased:

2 Family Farms

1 Motorbike for a pastor

10 Chicks

X 2! THANK YOU!

Family Farm: Cow, 2 goats, dozen chicks, 2 pigs, farm tools, seed, and agricultural training.

Motorbike for a pastor: With a reliable source of transportation, pastors in rural areas can greatly increase the size of the community they serve.

Chicks: Continue to provide eggs and food, as well as help start a small business to generate a steady source of income.

“...Ask and ye shall receive.”

Janet Allison asked for plastic to be recycled for a bench at New Auburn School. This is ONE week’s collection! THANK YOU!

DEVOTION: Gentle Hands

“As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.”

-Isaiah 66: 13a

Late last October a baby was born into our family. A premature boy, named Henry, was delivered at 1 lb., 5 oz. He wasn't expected to come into this world at 27 weeks. But the gentle hands of Jesus guided him in. Henry is my grand-nephew. The neonatal unit in Dallas, TX took excellent care of him and his mom. He will be home from the hospital any day now.

I am thankful for the birth of this child and all babies. I am thankful when they are perfect and I'm thankful when they need extra care and help. All children are precious as they grow and develop. I am thankful for God's plan of families.

I am thankful for the children born in my age group. Two especially that I've been friends with since fourth and fifth grade. Both live in Oklahoma where we were born; children of the Heavenly Father, born to love and care for others and still best friends after all these years. Other friends, a little more recent, are just as precious.

We've just celebrated the most important baby of all. Jesus, who was born to become our Savior. Blessed be the name of the Lord. May we continue in that Christmas joy to love Him and live for Him each day.

Dear Jesus, I am so thankful for you. Amen.

-Sue Piotrowski



Attention 2026 Graduates

In honor of your upcoming achievements, please provide the office with info for our New Hope Comforters to create quilts. **Graduate Recognition will be Sunday, May 24th.**

Provide school graduating from, future plans if known, favorite color, hobbies, interests, etc, as soon as you are able.

Our 2026 Graduates: Luke Anderson, Katie Audorff, Samantha Lien, Sophia Martinson, Mason Mikl-Tio, Noah Nelson, Kyra North, Aspen Peterson. Alert the office of corrections/updates.



Scholarships

Our New Hope Men's Group supports our recent graduates continued education. Application forms are available in the narthex or our church website at www.newhopespc.org. Attach proof of registration with class schedule and submit to the church office.

Our 2025 Graduates: Bryce Killoren, Jacob Messinger (U.S. Navy), Abbie Neilsen, Layne Peterson.

Luther Park Camp 2026

Registration opened December 1, 2025. New Hope Lutheran Scholarship applications are due March 22nd—**Must visit www.lutherpark.org to register online with \$175 initial deposit fee by March 31st.** Forms are in the narthex and on our church website.

LOOK AHEAD

FEBRUARY

Sun. Feb. 1 reg. sch *Speaker: Carol Anderson*
Mon. Feb. 2 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Feb. 4 6:30p/SC Confirmation
Sun. Feb. 8 reg. sch *Speaker: Joyce Gilberts*
Mon. Feb. 9 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Feb. 11 6:30p/SC Confirmation
Sun. Feb. 15 reg. sch *Speaker: Mark Gilberts*
Mon. Feb. 16 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Feb. 18 *Ash Wednesday*
11:30a/SC Worship/noon lunch
6p/PC Confirmation serves supper
7p/PC Worship
Sun. Feb. 22 reg. sch
Mon. Feb. 23 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Feb. 25 *Lent 2 11:30a/SC & Noon lunch*
Wed. Feb. 25 6:30p/SC Confirmation

MARCH

Sun. Mar. 1 reg. sch
Mon. Mar. 2 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Mar. 4 *Lent 3 11:30a/SC & Noon lunch*
Wed. Mar. 4 6:30p/SC Confirmation
Sun. Mar. 8 reg. sch
Mon. Mar. 9 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Mar. 11 *Lent 4 11:30a/SC & Noon lunch*
Wed. Mar. 11 6:30p/SC Confirmation
Sun. Mar. 15 reg. sch
Mon. Mar. 16 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Mar. 17 *Lent 5 11:30a/SC & Noon lunch*
Wed. Mar. 17 6:30p/SC Confirmation
Sun. Mar. 22 reg. sch
Mon. Mar. 23 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting
Wed. Mar. 25 *Lent 6 11:30a/SC & Noon lunch*
Wed. Mar. 25 6:30p/SC Confirmation
Sun. Mar. 29 *Palm Sunday* reg. sch
Mon. Mar. 30 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting

APRIL

Fri. Apr. 3/Good Friday 7p/SC
Sun. Apr. 5/Easter reg. sch
Mon. Apr. 6 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting

Veteran Quilt Recognition: Jan. 18, 2026

Veterans please contact the church office so we may honor you in worship with our sincere appreciation.



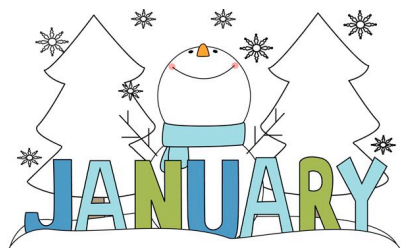
New Hope Lutheran Church

E9085 County Road V

PO BX 85

Sand Creek, WI 54765

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*A welcoming community of faith inspired
by God's grace to love, grow & serve.*

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 25th at our Pine Creek Site

Coffee Fellowship prior at 9:20a

1 Worship service at 10a immediately followed by annual meeting

New Hope Council 2025

President : Linda Bilodeau
Secretary: Marie Swanson

Vice President: Joyce Gilberts
Treasurer: Joe Bilodeau

Family Education

Jesse Buhr	715-781-1860	lacey.buhr@gmail.com
Samantha Goodremote	715-765-2209	sgoodremote@gmail.com
Kristi Welle	715-658-2303	kristi_welle@yahoo.com
Stephani North	715-271-6275	stephaniomtvedt@yahoo.com

Property & Management

Mark Gilberts	847-650-9364	mark.gilberts4@gmail.com
Jerry Loftus	715-456-2163	lofty1@chibardun.net
Joe Bilodeau	715-458-2479	j78bilodeau@gmail.com
Lon Christopherson	715-949-1131	londo@chibardun.net

Outreach + Stewardship + Evangelism

Pat Bechard	715-658-1014	paanbe@yahoo.com
John Loy	715-658-1000	johnloy89g@gmail.com
Joyce Gilberts	715-933-4747	jlg@citizens-tel.net
Linda Bilodeau	715-458-2479	lbilodeau992@gmail.com

Worship & Music

Roger Paulson	651-343-8877	roger.a.paulson@gmail.com
Lou Ann Gilberts	715-658-1317	louanngilberts@hotmail.com
Marie Swanson	715-658-1208	mertmarie69@yahoo.com
Dawn Kunkel	715-949-0065	dakunk13@gmail.com



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by God's grace to love, grow & serve.*

Pastor Michael D Sparby 715-764-9779 nhpastor@chibardun.net
Office Hours 9am-1pm 715-658-1470 newhope@chibardun.net
Pine Creek Church 715-949-1750 E6698 Cty Rd V, Ridgeland
Sand Creek Church E9085 Cty Rd V, Sand Creek
Website: www.newhopescpc.org Like us on Facebook!

WORSHIP

8:30 am/Pine Creek 9:20a Coffee Fellowship + Sunday school
10 am/Sand Creek 9:20a Coffee Fellowship
Sunday school during worship (Sept.—May)

Telephone Ministry 1-534-444-4300

FREE Live stream <http://newhope.listentochurch.com>

YouTube Link to View Streamed Services

New Hope on the Creeks

New Hope Lutheran Church of Sand Creek & Pine Creek

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgsG8Jl-RdcdnKSnFI48DyQ>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <i>Happy New Year!</i> office closed	2 office closed	3
4 <i>Speaker: David Wendlandt</i> 8:30a PC Worship 9:20a Fellowship-both sites <i>SC: Sophia Circle</i> 9:30a PC W/ELCA 10a SC Worship 3p/SC Piano Lessons	5 8:30a/SC Comforters SC W/ELCA offering	6 7p/SC AA	7 6p/SC Eve Circle 6:30p/SC Confirmation	8	9	10
11 <i>Baptism of Our Lord</i> 8:30a PC Worship 9:20a Fellowship-both sites <i>SC: Sophia Circle</i> 10a SC Worship 11a/SC CPR Training 3p/SC Piano Lessons	12 8:30a/SC Comforters	13 7p/SC AA	14 6:30p/SC Confirmation	15 9:30a/SC Sophia Circle Newsletter articles due	16	17
18 <i>Veteran Quilt Recognition</i> 8:30a PC Worship 9:20a Fellowship-both sites <i>SC: Men's Group</i> 10a SC Worship 3p/SC Piano Lessons	19 8:30a/SC Comforters	20 7p/SC AA	21 6:30p/SC Confirmation	22	23	24
25 1 Worship: 10a/PC 9:20a Fellowship 11a Annual Meeting followed by brief council meeting 3p/SC Piano Lessons	26 8:30a/SC Comforters	27 7p/SC AA	28 6:30p/SC Confirmation	29	30	31



Altar Guild

PC: Dawn Kunkel

SC: Carol Anderson & Joni Berres (*January/February*)

Date	Lectors	SC Communion	SC Hospitality (Council)
4	PC Lisa Mickelson SC Carol Anderson	Carol Anderson	<i>1st Sun.:</i> Marie Swanson / Samantha Goodremote
11	PC Mary Peterson SC <i>To be determined</i>	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>2nd Sun.:</i> Lou Ann Gilberts / Mark Gilberts
18	PC Linda Bilodeau SC <i>To be determined</i>	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>3rd Sun.:</i> Stephani North / Kristi Welle
25	PC 1 Worship/Annual Meeting Jenna Bartels	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>5th Sun.:</i> Jesse Buhr / Jerry Loftus

New Hope Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

(Draft subject to approval)

Monday, December 15, 2025 / Sand Creek Site

6p Budget Meeting

6:30p Committees if needed

7p Full Council

PRESENT: Pr. Michael Sparby, Jesse Buhr, Joe/Linda Bilodeau, Roger Paulson, Lou Ann Gilberts, Mark Gilberts, Joyce Gilberts, Pat Bechard, Marie Swanson, Jerry Loftus, Kristi Welle, Lon Christopherson, Samantha Goodremote.

Also present: Becky Loftus, Parish Admin. **Absent:** Stephani North, Dawn Kunkel

CALL TO ORDER: 7p by Council President, Linda Bilodeau

OPENING PRAYER: Pr. Michael Sparby

SECRETARY'S REPORT: M/S/C (*Mark Gilberts/Roger Paulson*) approve October 20, 2025 minutes as printed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Joe Bilodeau, Treasurer.

*Parish balance 12/15/25 = \$8,240.00 holding without borrowing. M/S/C (*Lou Ann Gilberts/Joyce Gilberts*) to accept report.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Printed copy disbursed includes schedule through Easter/April 5, 26 and 2026 transition plan.

***Transition Task Force Update**

Per Pr. Michael's request, council created the *Transition Task Force* (*Carol Anderson, Mark Gilberts, Joyce Gilberts, Linda Bilodeau, Dawn Knutson, Robbie Jo Ellefson*) to reflect/share proposals with council and congregation re: our future staffing.

The task force brought its first report, with recommendations. After discussion, M/S/C (*Joyce Gilberts/Marie Swanson*) to accept Pr. Michael's request to move from 3/4 time to 1/2 time beginning January 1, 26. With these hours his main duties will center around Worship/Administration. He will continue to teach Confirmation and address needs in other areas as they arise.

Visitation team already began transitioning with Joyce Gilberts leading; she will continue to cover most visitation. Pastor will no longer chaplain at nursing homes. He will officiate funerals and refer weddings. Pr. Michael's presence in worship over the course of the year will remain much the same as it's been since accepting our call in 2018. In-office hours will be Sundays, and early Monday/Tuesday mornings. As always, additional appointments can be scheduled.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PROPERTY/MANAGEMENT

Pine Creek Site: Nothing to report

Sand Creek Site

*Outside nativity lights burned out breaker with a timer. May have to look into changing the outlet. Lights will be on continuously throughout the Christmas season until Epiphany.

WORSHIP/MUSIC

*Christmas Pageants: December 14th/PC and December 21st/SC

*Christmas Services: 8:30a/PC Sunday, Dec. 21st, 5p/SC Christmas Eve, Wed., Dec. 24th—NO Christmas Day.

OUTREACH *Ongoing Acts of Kindness*

*CPR Class Sunday, January 11, 2026 at our Sand Creek site following worship. Light lunch will be served.

\$25 registration fee made payable to New Hope Lutheran Church; Memo: CPR.

*Suggest offering ride share to church.

FAMILY ED

*Rehearsing for upcoming Christmas Pageants

*Sunday school will resume from Christmas break Sunday, January 4, 2026.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS

*M/S/C (*Joe Bilodeau/Roger Paulson*) to accept proposed 2026 Annual Budget with Pr. Sparby's 1/2 time transition plan.

*Submit annual reports to the church office by Sunday, January 4, 26 to prep for January 25th Annual Meeting/PC.

*Annual Meeting Elections: completing council terms are Stephani North (*Family Ed*), Joe Bilodeau (*PC Prop/Management*), John Loy (*Outreach*), Marie Swanson and Dawn Kunkel (*Worship/Music*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Council Meetings will move to 4th Mondays due to schedule conflicts.

NEXT MEETING: **Monday, February 23, 2026/Sand Creek Site**

ADJOURN/LORD'S PRAYER 8:05p M/S/C(*John Loy/Joyce Gilberts*)

-Marie Swanson, Council Sec. / Becky Loftus, Parish Admin.