

Herald of Hope December 2025



Hope Lutheran Church, ELCA

305 10th St. S Walker, MN 56484 (PO Box 506)

218-547-1850 All are Welcome!

www.hopelutheranchurch-walker.com

Hope Lutheran's Staff

Senior Pastor	Matt McWaters	hopepastor@arvig.net
Pastor	Dave Smith	davidsmith@arvig.net
Youth Director	Michelle Anderson	hopeyouth@arvig.net
Office Manager	Michelle Dowson	hope-michelle@arvig.net
Bookkeeper	Kris Knowles	hopekris@gmail.com
Music/Worship	Jill Anderson	
Accompanists	Mike Kerrigan & Emily Turney	
Custodian	Vic Fields	

Worship with us Sundays at 9:00

If you can't join us in person, you can view Hope's live Sunday worship at 9:00 a.m. at leechlaketv.org, or tune your antenna TV to Channel 21.5. The service is also broadcast live on KQKK 101.9 FM radio. BROADCAST SPONSORS ARE NEEDED. You can sponsor a Sunday broadcast in memory or honor of a loved one or special occasion for \$75. Sign up for the date of your choice on the bulletin board near the church office, or just call in.

Stay after worship for Coffee & Fellowship!

Wednesday Simple Supper & Worship

Join the family of Hope for a light meal at 5:30

December Menu

- Dec 3: Scalloped Potatoes & Ham
- Dec 10: Roast Turkey & Whipped Potatoes
- Dec 17: Turkey Stew over Biscuit

Followed by casual worship at 6:15

No Simple Supper or Wednesday Worship on December 31st!



Walker Community Christmas Concert

SATURDAY, DEC. 6, 2025

at Hope Lutheran Church
305 Tenth St. S.

5:30 PM SIMPLE SUPPER

Provided by Thrivent Action Team Grant
Served by Hope Lutheran's
Fellowship Committee

6:30 PM CONCERT

By local musicians/singers

Concert Freewill Offering
to support
Walker Area Food Shelf

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 7th following worship

Everyone is invited (kids and adults!) to trek on over to May Creek Lodge following worship on Sunday, December 7th, for Christmas caroling with our neighbors residing there. Meet in the narthex around 10:30; festive holiday hats encouraged...bring your elf ears and reindeer antlers!

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24th

Candlelight Communion Worship

3:00 & 5:00 p.m.

The 5:00 service will be broadcast live at
leechlaketv.org and channel 21.5 TV

Sunday, December 14th

Cookie Sale Fundraiser and the musical "Miracle on Main Street"

Donate Christmas goodies for our food shelf fundraiser, and join us on Sunday at 9:00 a.m. for worship featuring a Christmas message from the kids of Hope!

From Pastor Matt

Be A Light

"Let your light so shine before others, that they might see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven." -Matthew 5:16

(from the contemporary translation of Luther's Small Catechism, by Timothy Wengert; Augsburg Fortress Press. 1996)

Let your light so shine! Be a light! This call from the Baptismal liturgy of the church and from Jesus in Matthew's gospel, invites us to ponder *this little light of mine*, and how *I'm going to let it shine*, in this Advent season. These familiar lyrics many of us learned as children take on flesh in the ways we worship, the ways we serve, and the ways we connect to others in this life together. In a season that is often exhausting for us, bombarded by consumerism's messaging and the race to fit everything in, it is easy to forget our call to be a light. While we surround ourselves with strings of lights atop homes and around trees, we might neglect the light flickering in us. This year, these words call us back to this central calling for all the children of God, to Be A Light.



To be clear, the people of Hope have been a city shining on a hill for many, in many different ways in recent weeks. Christmas Food Boxes and Frozen Meal Ministry to warm hungry bellies, quilts to ward off the chill of the shadows, Habitat for Humanity houses dedicated and prepared to become homes, and Toys for Kids shopping with our youth are just a few examples. Outside of official church ministry, the people of Hope are shining their lights too! Many members of Hope volunteered and hosted the "Light up the WACC" event, to support our area community center, and yet others are ringing the bell at Super One for the Salvation Army Red Kettle drive.

Being a light doesn't have to be complicated. Many are shining in their homes in the everyday care they provide for family members, or at places of work, where they faithfully serve neighbors. You are being a light through small acts of kindness, checking in on a friend, or encouraging a teammate after practice. In all kinds of ways, you can Be A Light everywhere you go.

Let us not forget that the light shining in us comes from one who once declared, "I AM the Light of the World!" (John 9:5) In this Advent season, we await the birth of Christ, who shines *radiant beams from his holy face*, but we don't wait idly by. Take a moment in the days to come to ponder how you will Be A Light, as your way of responding to all God has done for us. *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."* (John 1:5)

Advent Wednesday Worship: Join us from 6:15-6:45pm as we host our Midweek Advent Services around the theme of Be A Light.

These services have been carefully planned by our 9th Grade confirmation students, crafted to help all in our community dwell deeply on being a light, shining your authentic light, and sharing the light with others. Come to hear meditative reflections, as we sing, pray, and commune by candlelight. Simple suppers will be served beginning at 5:15pm for a suggested donation of \$2/person, and as always, ALL ARE WELCOME.

Advent Sunday Worship: We gather as the people of God have for centuries, embracing the anticipated arrival of the Christ child. Worship will feature the lighting of our Advent wreath, and will draw us more deeply into themes of light. Sunday worship will feature the musical gifts of Hope's Chancel Choir, Sunday School children, Bell Choir, Joyful Noise choir, House Band, and other musical talents.

Community Christmas Concert: This year Hope will once again host a Christmas Concert on Saturday, December 6, to benefit the Walker Area Food Shelf. The concert, organized by Sherren Foss, will begin at 6:30pm, which will include a freewill offering. A sloppy joe supper will be served beforehand, beginning at 5:30pm.

Christmas Caroling: The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear! Join our roving band of carolers on Sunday, December 7 following worship, as we share the message of Christmas through the lyrics and joyful melodies of classic carols. All ages are encouraged to join us, and instruments will be available for those who wish to play along.

Christmas Eve: All are welcome as we gather for our traditional candlelight worship at 3:00pm and 5:00pm. At these services we will recount the heartwarming arrival of God in Christ, through scripture, singing the carols that draw us near the manger, and sharing the body of blood of Jesus, who promises to show up and invites everyone.

On a more personal note, as we journey through the preparation of Advent, and finally arrive at the celebration of Christ's birth, I pray that the Lord our God might bless you according to that which will lift your spirit here and now. From me, your brother and co-worker in Christ, and my whole family, have a happy Advent and a very Merry Christmas!

Pastor Matt



Habitat House Dedication

"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." (Psalm 127:1)

Leader: As a symbol of cooperative goodwill, work and sharing

All: We dedicate this house

Leader: That this house may serve as a place for rest, shelter and laughter

All: We dedicate this house

These words are part of the litany used on Saturday, Nov 22 to dedicate two of the Habitat for Humanity homes that Hope has worked on since September. Tara and Petra, the new homeowners, members of their families, Habitat personnel, community members, and members of Hope Lutheran gathered in the newly completed homes to celebrate. Through our Outreach Committee, Hope provided each homeowner with a gift basket of home supplies as well as a quilt donated by Hope's Quilters. Stories and food and traditions were shared making this a special day for the families and all others involved in bringing these homes to completion.

Poinsettias for Christmas Eve

Help us decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve by sponsoring a poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one. Fill out this form and return it with your payment to the offering plate or church office by December 10. Your dedication will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin and you may take your poinsettia following worship.

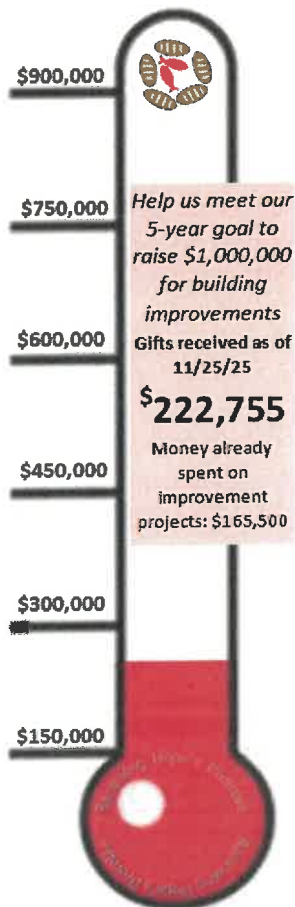
____ in memory or ____ in honor
of _____

Given by _____



_____ poinsettias X \$15 =

\$ _____



Christmas Food Boxes

The requests for food boxes this year are significantly higher than last – about 70 additional households in our community are now struggling financially... bringing the total request to over 230. We need your support. Any size donation will help!

We anticipate spending:

- ◆ \$50 for a household of 1-2 people
 - ◆ \$75 for a household of 3-4 people
 - ◆ \$90 for a household of 5-6 people
 - ◆ \$120 for a household of 7-8 people
 - ◆ \$150 for a household of 9+ people
- Make your donation of any amount payable to Hope Lutheran, marked "Food Boxes".

DECEMBER IS HOPE'S MONTH to staff the Walker Area Food Shelf. Volunteers are needed each Tuesday during December—especially during afternoon shifts. If you will take a shift, please sign up on the bulletin board across from the church office, or online walkerareafoodshelf.com. **A BIG THANKS** to everyone who donated butter last month! Hope collected over 100 pounds for the Walker Area Food Shelf. This basic staple is a rare treat for some!

News of Hope



Donation for Toys for Kids

Board of Fellowship members Scott Skalisky and Joe Sherman present a check to the Youth of Hope for \$1,239 which the kids used to purchase toys for Walker's annual holiday Toys for Kids project.

2026 Pledge Drive & Stewardship Update

Thank you to Hope's members and friends who continue to support our mission to invite all to connect with God and each other through worship, community, and service. Our pledge drive for 2026 has more households participating than we've seen in over 5 years! If you have not had the opportunity to make your pledge for 2026, there is still plenty of time. Pledge cards can be picked up in the church office at your convenience, or a simple email to our Bookkeeper, Kris Knowles with your intention for 2026 will help leadership make our mission plan for next year.

As of October 31, 2025

General Fund Offerings & Income:	\$429,661
General Fund Expenses:	\$480,390
Net Income:	<\$50,729>

Capital Appeal Income:	\$222,755
Capital Appeal Expenses:	\$165,500

As we tip into December you can expect to receive a giving update early in the month, with a final statement arriving in January. We trust the people of Hope will respond to fully fund their pledges and our mission expenses just as they have done in the past. Thank you all for faithfully stewarding all God has so graciously given.

Jigsaw Puzzle Challenge

Do you like doing jigsaw puzzles? If so, the Women of Hope will be hosting a jigsaw puzzle challenge fundraiser on **Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 10:30** in fellowship hall. This will be a fun event to do with your friends and neighbors on a cold February day in Minnesota.

Brunch will be served at 10:30 followed by the jigsaw puzzle challenge. Each team will receive the same puzzle at the same time. The first team to complete the puzzle, wins a prize. Cost is \$20.00 per person (youth play free).

All proceeds from this fundraiser will be donated to the youth for camp.

What do you need to do to participate in this fun event?

1. Create your team (max of 4 people)
2. Contact Angie Osatiuk at 612-310-6860 by 1/12/26 to register your team.



December Ushers

Dec 7: the Malards
Dec 14: Wayne Osatiuk
Dec 21: the Bovees
Dec 24: 3pm Loomis family
5 pm Wayne O & Brian H
Dec 28: Brian Hein

Readers

Dec 7: Nancy Bruns
Dec 14: Christmas Program
Dec 21: Pat Roush
Dec 24: 3pm Bonnie S
5 pm Judy Berg
Dec 28: Martha Vetter

Hope Lutheran Church gives thanks for recent gifts received...

In memory of **Christine Opheim**, a gift to the *Worship & Music Fund* from Mike & Julianne Kerrigan

In memory of **Bob Higdem**, a gift to the *Food Box Fund* from Bev Corr-Higdem

All Saints Sunday

On November 9th, we remembered the brothers and sisters of Hope who have passed during the year, as well as those who were baptized into new life.

Dick Aulich	Al Maas	Otto Ringle
Carl Berg	Brendaon Mankie	Robert Rowe
Jan Cyr	Steve Odgren	Doug Sacre
Rod Halling	Duane Ommen	Carolyn Schulz
Bob Higdem	Christine Opheim	Rod Taatjes
Dee Jensen	Greg Proper	Pat Wagner
LaWanna Johnson		

Baptized: Lillian Jerdec, Pria Frascione, Layla Kruckeberg, Payton Lange & Trevor Lange



YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR CHRISTMAS SHOW

Sunday, December 14th at 9am!

Come enjoy the Christmas Musical "Miracle on Main Street!"

Directed by Oliivia Murphy, come see how the kids bring the community together through caroling to convince the Mayor to let them put their show on in the town square! They have been working hard since October and are excited to present it to you.

Stars of the Show: Allison Anderson, Brooklin Anderson, Maddy Beard, Murray Bright, Audrey Deck, Decon Deck, Charleigh Freeman, Blake Hopen, Leslie James, Rick James, Asher Johnson, Azrielle Johnson, Izabella Johnson, Lucy Kuechle, Trenton Kuechle, Trevor Kuechle, Amari Krueckeberg, Arlo Krueckeberg, Leia McCollough, Liam McCollough, Addie McGill, Matt McWaters, Paxton Murphy, Taytum Murphy, Pat Roush, Will Snyder, Olivia Udem, Sophia Udem, Everleigh Young, Grace Zumwalt.

Youth of Hope

Sunday School

Sunday mornings kids will be invited out of worship to watch a video and read the Bible story during the sermon. Kids will return to worship after class.

December 7th - *Jews & Gentiles*

with Olivia & Everly

December 14th - Christmas Program-
No Sunday School

December 21st - *Angel Visits Joseph*
with Michelle

December 24th 3pm & 5pm-
Jesus is Born with Michelle

Joyful Noise & Wednesday Kids

All P3-5th graders join us on
Wednesday's for Joyful Noise or
Wednesday Kids, OR BOTH!

Joyful Noise is from 3:30-4:30pm
followed by Wednesday Kids 4:30-
5:30pm.

***There will only be JN & WK on
December 10th & December 17th this
month.***



6th-9th Grade Youth Group

Sunday December 7th from
6-8pm! Come hang out,
share about your week and
play some games.

10th-12th Gr Youth Group

EVERY WEDNESDAY! Start

in the youth room after
worship around 7pm for a
youth-led devotion.

Michelle Anderson will
join after confirmation to
catch up and play games
until 8:30...9...10pm-ish...
No Youth Group December
24th & December 30th

Confirmation

Wednesdays 6:45-8:00

6th-9th Grade Class:

December 3rd & 10th

9th Grade Only: Dec. 17th

No Class: December 24th &
December 30th



All Youth Gathering : Youth, adult leaders and our LYO at the NEMN Synod All Youth Gathering at Cragun's in November! Front: Lily Cairns, Paislee Erickson, Haylie Brock, Bri Jacobson, Ayla Jacobson, Addi Lissick, Brittan Young, Everly Felton, Tori Pederson; Sophia Udem, Josie Holly, Jenna Udean, Payton Lange, Piper Burns, Elizabeth Cairns, Cristin Udem, Vada Yeats; Back: Andrew Anderson, Noah McWaters, Trevor Lange, Garret Turney, Isaias McMurrin, Trevor Kuechle, Layla Krueckeberg, Anneliese Krueckeberg, Isabella Jacobson, Anja Turney, Michelle Anderson, Keeton Malard.

Christmas Eve Cinnamon & Caramel Roll Fundraiser : The Youth of Hope are heading to San Diego this summer to learn, serve & grow. They will be selling cinnamon & Caramel rolls on Christmas Eve to raise money for this summer. Grab your rolls for Christmas morning and support the Youth of Hope! Thank you!

Women of Hope

During the month of December...

*The Women of Hope Board will decide how we will disburse the money we've made this past year.

*The quilts have been given to the Food Box Committee for distribution. So begins a new year of quilting! Anyone is welcome to join us on Thursday mornings in the Fellowship Hall.

*We will be doing the third and final Circle Bible study on Money, Stewardship & Generosity. Read Pastor Dave's notes on the study and join in with one of the circle meetings.

*A final reminder that Tanis needs all updated Circle rosters, so please contact her with this information soon!

How about a box of cookies?

On Sunday, December 14, the Women of Hope will invite you to be part of "Food Shelf Cookie Free Will Sale." The Food Shelf is unable to accept homemade goodies; thus supporting them with purchasing a box of not only Christmas cookies, but a variety of yummy treats. The sale will be before and after worship.

COOKIE MAKERS: Bring your goodies to church either on Friday, December 12 before noon or Saturday 10:00-1:00. Helpers to pack the cookies are asked to come at 11:00 on Saturday.

HOPE CARD MAKERS meet on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall to make cards as a fundraiser for the Women of Hope. Anyone is welcome to help! All materials and instructions provided. Greeting cards for all occasions are available near the church office for \$2 each. **WE HAVE CHRISTMAS CARDS!**

Do you have a loved one or friend who could use the comfort of a prayer shawl? Stop by the church office and inquire!

Women of Hope December Gather Bible Study

Notes from Pastor Dave

Money, Stewardship and Generosity

Session Three

Generosity: There's a wideness in God's mercy

Many of us can identify with the lyrics of the musical icon Madonna, "We are living in a material world, and I am a material girl (or guy)..." We have material bodies that have material needs and how we gather and use the necessities needed for bodily living while recognizing that we are also spiritual beings is one of the dilemmas of being human.

The Leviticus and Deuteronomy readings highlight the difference between God's economy and our human created economies. While gleaning fields of grain in order to provide daily bread is not a common practice in 21st century America, the underlying philosophy is still

Join the discussion on this month's Circle Bible Study!

Miriam—Monday, Dec 8

Ruth—Wednesday, Dec 10

Lydia—Thursday, Dec 11

*Anyone is welcome! Pick the date
that works best and join us at 9:30*

relevant. Namely, that God has provided enough for all, unless some choose to hoard possessions or gather more than they need to maintain the basic necessities of life. The author also offers an interesting perspective on generosity as providing access to other intangible yet necessary "fields of life" such

as education, and community. Many now days also include access to wild places as something that should be available to all through public and protected natural spaces.

Consider question 6: Particularly how generosity can build community. Have you ever shared with someone and then had them share something with you? What was that experience like? A quick example; I was on a high-school youth mission trip. The home where we were working had suffered severe hurricane damage in one of the poorest parts of Louisiana. The youth shared not only their time but also pooled some of their spending money to purchase a few extras for the family. On one of our last days the mother of the family insisted on preparing a noon meal for our crew. Out of a mostly bare cupboard she produced a few cans and with the fresh catch of the day from the surrounding bayou produced a most delicious seafood gumbo. The youth offered their sandwiches and fruit to the meal. Mutual generosity made a simple lunch into a foretaste of the eternal feast to come.

Question 8 reminds us that God's radical and irrational generosity with us is to be extended through us to all the world. This generosity cannot be measured on a balance sheet or economically justified by any standard in this world. Such generosity only makes sense if we are living in God's economy.

Question 9 is a chance to consider some of Hope's ministries. What do we do? Where might we do more?

2 Corinthians 9:7-8 is a fitting close to this study. God is always the source and norm for our generosity and we live in the promise that "We will be enriched in every way for our great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God..." Blessings on your gatherings and your study.

Pastor Dave

★
FOR
unto us a
Child is
born.
unto us a *Son*
Is given; and the government
Will be upon *His* shoulder. and
His name will be called
Wonderful
Counselor
MIGHTY GOD
Everlasting Father
PRINCE OF PEACE
ISAIAH
9:6


HOPE
is alive!

HOPE'S MISSION

*Hope invites all to connect with
God and each other through*

... *Worship*
... *Community*
... *Service*