

# Herald of Hope January 2026



## Hope Lutheran Church, ELCA

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

218-547-1850

*All are Welcome!*

[www.hopelutheranchurch-walker.com](http://www.hopelutheranchurch-walker.com)

### Hope Lutheran's Staff

Senior Pastor	Matt McWaters	<a href="mailto:hopepastor@arvig.net">hopepastor@arvig.net</a>
Pastor	Dave Smith	<a href="mailto:davidsmith@arvig.net">davidsmith@arvig.net</a>
Youth Director	Michelle Anderson	<a href="mailto:hopeyouth@arvig.net">hopeyouth@arvig.net</a>
Office Manager	Michelle Dowson	<a href="mailto:hope-michelle@arvig.net">hope-michelle@arvig.net</a>
Bookkeeper	Kris Knowles	<a href="mailto:hopekris@gmail.com">hopekris@gmail.com</a>
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](http://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

#### January Menu

- Jan. 7: Sloppy Joe or Pulled Pork Sandwich
- Jan. 14: Pancakes & Sausage
- Jan. 21: Ham Slice & Scalloped Potatoes
- Jan. 28: Lasanga & Garlic Bread

*Followed by casual worship at 6:15*

### Annual Meeting of the Congregation Sunday, January 25th following worship

(around 10:15)

Please plan on attending to elect council members and vote on the proposed mission plan for the upcoming year, as well as proposed constitutional changes. (See Pastor Matt's article inside).

## JIGSAW PUZZLE CHALLENGE

Youth Camp Fundraiser

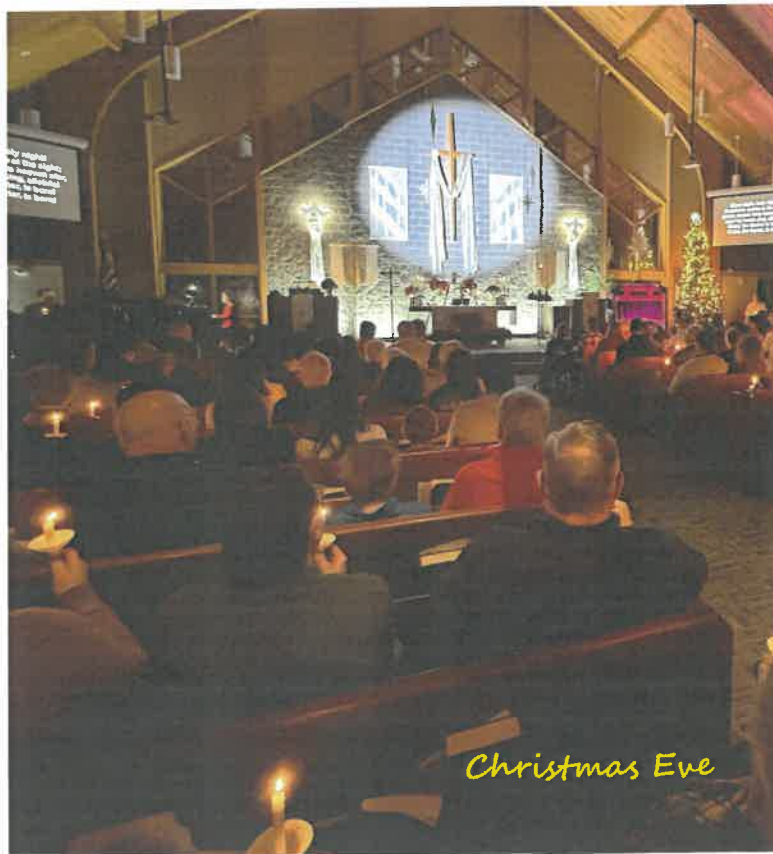
SUN.  
FEB 1

10:30  
A.M.

FOOD!

PULL TOGETHER YOUR TEAM OF UP TO 4 PEOPLE, AND TRY TO FINISH YOUR PUZZLE FIRST. COST IS \$20 PER PERSON. FREE FOR YOUTH

Contact Angie Osatiuk at 612-310-6860 by 1/12/26 to register your team. Sponsored by Women of Hope



Christmas Eve

## From Pastor Matt

### 2026 Annual Meeting, January 25

Hope Lutheran Church's Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 25**, at 10:00 am. This year we will again gather in a hybrid setting, held both in-person (for those who choose to) and online via ZOOM. This will allow members near and far to join us in doing the good and salutary work appointed us by God through Hope's 2026 mission plan. In anticipation of our Annual Meeting, please feel free to contact Pastor Matt or Church leadership to discuss any questions, joys, or concerns you have ahead of time.

Our Agenda will include one special item of note this year, in addition to constitutionally mandated items including elections and approving the 2026 Mission Plan. Congregations in the ELCA are to occasionally review their constitution, making required updates per ELCA Churchwide Model Constitution for congregations. In addition to these required changes, Hope's leadership has made a few proposed changes to the constitution that we might more efficiently organize ourselves for ministry. These proposed changes will effectively remove the requirement of church council members to also serve as board chairpersons, remove defunct ministry boards from the constitution, and provide new language concerning our nominating committee. Language for these proposed changes is available in the church office.

Besides these items and a few remarks from Pastor Matt and Congregational President Barb Sherman, staff and ministry board reports will only be communicated through the written 2026 Annual Report, though leadership will be available to engage in dialog as needed. As we've learned the last few years, hybrid annual meetings run a little slower, but we're committed to patience to make sure everyone can participate.

#### **Congregational Leadership Matters**

Hope Lutheran Church has been blessed with outstanding volunteer leaders over the years! While congregational leadership often works quietly through monthly meetings, their planning, discernment, conversations, and decisions guide our mission and ministry more than many know.

Hope's Church Council is made up of four elected at-large members who also serve as Ministry Board

chairpersons and four officers (who make up our Executive Committee) who meet monthly with pastors to review mission planning, discuss highlights of ministry, provide support to staff & programs, and more.



In the past year, this group's discernment has contributed to church mission and ministry, especially as we live into our strategic initiatives and Renewing Hope's Promise Capital Appeal. Our Board Chairpersons currently also lead their respective ministry boards, assisting a wider team of volunteers in spearheading church ministry in the areas of Outreach, Property, Fellowship, and Worship.

Hoping the constitution changes pass muster and vote, future at-large members will no longer be required to serve as a designated board chairperson, though they may continue to do so. This will allow board chairpersons more time to invest in their area of ministry without the responsibility of attending a monthly church council meeting. It will also invite members with gifts in congregational leadership to consider serving on Hope's Church Council, without the added responsibility of leading a ministry board.

We are grateful for all who have served on council in the past, who continue to serve, and for all whom God has prepared to serve moving forward. We do have space on our ballot for the 2026 Annual Meeting for vacant positions on Hope's Church Council beginning in 2026. If you have any interest in serving in leadership, please contact Pastor Matt or Barb Sherman.

Thank you to Hope's 2025 Church Council, listed below.

#### **2025 Council-**

*Barb Sherman (President)  
Maggie Melby (VP)  
Martha Vetter (Secretary)  
Dean Deck (Treasurer)  
Brian Bruns (Property)  
Emily Turney (Worship)  
Joe Sherman (Fellowship)  
Barb Sellevold (Outreach)  
VACANT (Education)*

#### **Sunday Worship Asst.**

##### **Ushers**

Jan 4: Strosahls  
Jan 11: Richardsons  
Jan 18: Osatiuks  
Jan 25: Brian Hein

##### **Readers**

Jan 4: Alice Groth  
Jan 11: Margie Richardson  
Jan 18: Jeanne Mehlhop  
Jan 25: Marty Cook

##### **Acolytes**

Jan 4: Everly Felton  
Jan 11: Emily Townsdin  
Jan 18: Christian Ringle  
Jan 25: Elaine Townsdin



## Women of Hope

Have you gathered your friends or family members to form a team (up to 4 people) for the jigsaw puzzle challenge on February 1st? This event will follow worship service, around 10:30 a.m. with brunch for all teams and the "puzzling challenge" starting around 11:00. Get your team member names to Angie O., 612-310-6860, by January 12th. She needs to know how many puzzles to order and numbers for food prep. Cost is \$20.00 per person (all youth, no matter what age, are free) with proceeds designated to our youth camperships. If you want to participate but do not have a team, let Angie know. We will make up teams, if necessary, or add you to one of the existing teams. Everyone is invited for a fun day!



### Coming Up...

January 7 10:00 a.m. Women's Board mtg  
Noon General meeting/potluck/Bible study  
January 12 Last day to get your Puzzle Challenge names to Angie

## Women of Hope Potluck Lunch & Bible Study Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at noon

in the Fellowship Hall

Bring your favorite potluck item to share.

Pastor Dave will lead the *Gather* study on Prayer.

Everyone welcome... invite a friend!

The **Women of Hope 2026 General meeting** will be held on January 7th at noon. This includes all Circles plus any women who are not in a circle but would like to join us. A potluck luncheon will be served at noon (please bring a dish to share), Pastor Dave will lead us in the winter Bible study from our "*Gather*" magazine, which is a two-session study on prayer, and a short business meeting will conclude the day. Our 2026 Women of Hope brochures will be available at the meeting - thank you, Tanis, for your terrific talent in producing these. No individual circles will be held in January. The Women of Hope Board are your hostesses for the day. Come and bring a friend!

If you happened to look down the hallway on December 3rd you noticed many, many black bags which contained quilts or blankets to be included in the Christmas Food Boxes. **Thank you to our wonderful quilters!** Such beautiful creations and a fun group to work with. Join in on Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. We'll put you to work.

A huge **thank-you to all the amazing bakers of Hope** who donated Christmas cookies for the December 14 fundraiser for the Walker Area Food Shelf and to those who helped pack the boxes. Thank you, too, all of you who donated to the Food Shelf by buying some of these cookies. Through this effort, we raised \$540 for the Food Shelf!



### **Christmas Food Box Ministry**

This ministry lives out our call to make a difference in our community. Hope Lutheran was able to serve 231 families this year! A record for sure. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way. The confirmation class helped move all the quilts from the garage to the Fellowship Hall and then helped sort, count and stack them onto tables. We had an amazing crew from the congregation that helped pack the 156 food boxes. Of course no amount of thanks can convey the gratitude owed to the quilters. They supplied 110 adult quilts and 119 youth quilts. There were also 95 fleece given, made by various individuals. The Christmas food box ministry received donations from the Women of Hope and the Endowment fund, plus a Thrivent Action grant. Other grants included those from Beltrami Electric Coop Operation Round Up and Lake Country Power. However, this project could not be possible without personal donations from congregation members. Thank you one and all for your generous support.





## 2025 Hope Lutheran Christmas Musical... *Miracle on Main Street*

*directed by Olivia Murphy*

Allison Anderson - caroler/sheep  
Brooklyn Anderson - caroler/Mary  
Maddy Beard - caroler/shepherd  
 Murray Bright - house #1 occupant  
 Audrey Deck - caroler/angel  
 Deacon Deck - caroler/narrator  
 Charleigh Freeman - caroler  
 Blake Hopen - caroler/donkey  
 Leslie James - house #2 occupant  
 Rick James - house #2 occupant  
 Asher Johnson - caroler/Joseph  
Azrielle Johnson - caroler  
 Izabella Johnson - caroler/wisewoman  
 Amari Krueckeberg - caroler  
Arlo Krueckeberg - caroler/wiseman  
 Lucy Kuechle - caroler

Trenton Kuechle - caroler  
 Trevor Kuechle - caroler  
 Leia McCollough - caroler  
 Liam McCollough - caroler  
 Addie McGill - caroler  
 Matt McWaters - Mr. Mayor  
 Paxton Murphy - caroler/wiseman  
Taytum Murphy - caroler/announcer  
 Pat Roush - house #1 occupant  
 Willa Snyder - caroler/shepherd  
 Olivia Udem - caroler  
 Sophia Udem - Mayor's daughter/  
 house #3 occupant  
 Everleigh Young - caroler  
 Grace Zumwalt - caroler/narrator



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

In memory of Rick Sistek, a gift to the *Hope Quilters* from Bill & Mary DeVries; and gifts to the *Endowment Fund* from Jan Filkins, and family & friends

In memory of Bill & Scott Niswonger, a gift to the *Memorial Garden Fund* from Gloria Niswonger

In memory of Dee Jensen, a gift to the *Hope Quilters* from Gene & Linda Smith.

## Christmas Food Box Thank Yous

On behalf of Cass County Health, Human and Veterans Services, we want to express our sincere gratitude for the nutritious Christmas food boxes, and beautiful fleece blankets and quilts. Your generosity brought joy and happiness to adults and families in need during this Holiday Season. A big thanks to all the folks at Hope Lutheran Church that worked to make and put these gifts together. Your compassion and service to those facing challenges in our communities is truly appreciated. *Renee Lukkason, PHN- Cass County HHVS*

Just want to say thank you, Hope Lutheran, for all your hard work putting these together.

*Boys & Girls Club of the Leech Lake Area*

Thank you for all you are doing!

*Bi-CAP Supportive Housing*

Thank you for the gift certificate. Very much appreciated!  
 M

**THANK YOU to all of the volunteers who represented Hope Lutheran staffing the Walker Area Food Shelf during December!**



# JANUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1 New Year's Day</b> OFFICE CLOSED No Quilters 9:30 Bone Builders 11:30 Women's AA	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 9:00 Communion Worship 10:00 Coffee & Fellowship 6:00 pm 6 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> Youth Group	<b>5</b> 9:30 AA 1:00 pm Bone Builders 5:30 pm Board of Property	<b>6</b> 7:15 am HS Bible Study at Walker Bay Coffee 9:00 Card Makers 9:30 Bone Builders Noon: Lectionary Bible Study	<b>7</b> 10:00 am Women of Hope Board Mtg Noon: Women's Potluck & Bible Study 1:00 pm Bone Builders No Joyful Noise or Wednesday Kids 4:30 pm Celebration Handbells 5:30 pm Simple Supper 6:15 pm Wednesday worship 6:45 pm Confirmation classes 7:00 pm Sr High Youth Group	<b>8</b> 8:30 am Quilters 9:30 Bone Builders 11:30 Women's AA 4:30 pm PEO	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 9:00 Communion Worship 10:00 Coffee & Fellowship	<b>12</b> 9:30 AA 1:00 pm Bone Builders	<b>13</b> 7:15 am HS Bible Study at Walker Bay Coffee 9:30 am Card Makers 9:30 Bone Builders Noon: Lectionary Bible Study	<b>14</b> 11:00 & 12:30 Worship -May Creek 1:00 pm Bone Builders 1:00 pm 3-5th grade Release Time 3:30 Joyful Noise 4:15 pm Wednesday Kids 4:30 pm Celebration Handbells 5:30 pm Simple Supper 6:15 pm Wednesday worship 6:45 pm Confirmation Classes 7:00 pm Sr High Youth Group	<b>15</b> 8:30 am Quilters 9:30 Bone Builders 11:30 Women's AA 1:30 pm K-2nd grade Release Time	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 9:00 Communion Worship w/Hatten-Virning baptism 10:00 Coffee & Fellowship	<b>19</b> OFFICE CLOSED 9:30 AA 1:00 pm Bone Builders	<b>20</b> 7:15 am HS Bible Study at Walker Bay Coffee 9:00 Card Makers 9:30 Bone Builders Noon: Lectionary Bible Study	<b>21</b> 1:00 pm Bone Builders 3:30 Joyful Noise practice 4:15 pm Wednesday Kids 4:30 pm Celebration Handbells 5:30 pm Simple Supper 6:15 pm Wednesday worship 6:45 pm Confirmation Classes 7:00 pm Sr High Youth Group	<b>22</b> 8:30 am Quilters 9:30 Bone Builders 11:30 Women's AA 5:00 pm Girl Scouts	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:00 Communion Worship 10:00 Coffee & Fellowship 10:15 Annual Meeting	<b>26</b> 9:00 am Northwoods Quilters 9:30 AA 1:00 pm Bone Builders	<b>27</b> 7:15 am HS Bible Study at Walker Bay Coffee 9:00 Card Makers 9:30 Bone Builders Noon: Lectionary Bible Study	<b>28</b> 1:00 pm Bone Builders 1:30 pm K-2nd grade Release Time 3:30 Joyful Noise 4:15 pm Wednesday Kids 4:30 pm Celebration Handbells 5:30 pm Simple Supper 6:15 pm Wednesday worship 6:45 pm Confirmation Classes 7:00 pm Sr High Youth Group	<b>29</b> 8:30 am Quilters 9:30 Bone Builders 11:30 Women's AA 1:00 pm 3-5th grade Release Time	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>





*Thank You Sherren Fass  
and our  
Advent/Christmas  
Decorating Crew!*

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

218 547-1850

Walker MN 56484

PO Box 506

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Walker, MN

#4

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Organization

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