

HOPE HERALD



June 2026-August 2026

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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PASTOR'S CORNER:

JOYS AND SORROWS

²⁸ And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?

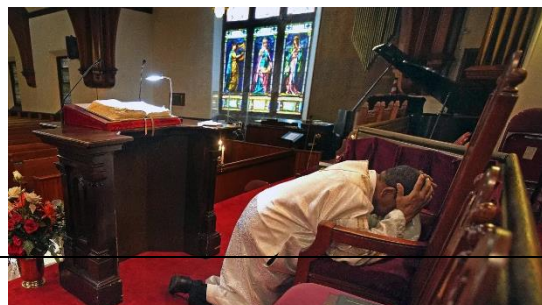
2 Corinthians 11:28-29

The decision to retire from my call at Hope Lutheran Church did not come easily. Many members and friends have extended their best wishes for me in the future with understanding and sympathy for the difficult decision. That has cushioned the difficulty and I am grateful.

The transition causes a great deal of introspection. In my nearly 10 years here, the saints who have been called to their eternal home frequently pop into my mind – a sorrow. Funerals are certainly the hardest thing for me to do emotionally because even with the sure and certain promise of the Gospel, I miss them and have a hard time letting them go – no differently I suspect than many of you.

I also think often and pray frequently for those who have drifted from the church. Some of these have latched on to other churches. Although I understand the dynamics and desire to be gentle rather than harsh, attending a different church than the one in which a person holds membership, (travel and special circumstances excluded) reflects a consumer mentality toward church. A church is viewed by many as something of which I make the decision about the one that best suits me and I can change brands for any reason that seems right to me. One does not find such a mentality in scripture! Where the Gospel is rightly preached and the sacraments rightly administered, that is where the Christian has a central obligation to “bind” him/herself in membership and serve. (There is no mention of membership in the New Testament but it reflects the concept of fellowship in which those who walk in the light are connected, not only to God, but to one another.) Membership is a bond and a vow. It is like marriage in that respect and so when one joins a church but then worships in other churches, it is akin to being married but going out with other people. This has been a sorrow – aggravated more by the fact that when Hope members have done this, it is partly my fault that I have not taught them well enough.

Even worse are those who have drifted from the church and are



not even going to heterodox churches; they worship nowhere. This saddens me deeply. Luther wrote that someone who does not attend worship and take the Lord's Supper at least four times a year should be considered a pagan. Behind this is the truth that absenting oneself from worship for an extended time is evidence that the spiritual life has been eclipsed. The flame was not stoked and is growing cold. At what point is it gone? Only God knows; but we are charged by God to warn such people that they are in danger of dying in their sins. We do not have authority to tell someone that his sins are forgiven and that he will go to heaven someday, when the indicators of faith have vanished. We have had to expel some people from membership who dropped out and did not respond to our efforts to engage them. We will probably have a few more in this situation to clean up the rolls before I retire. This is a sorrow.

At the same time, we have witnessed the Lord do extraordinary things. There are some who have grown in their faith in ways that are visible and demonstrable. They serve. They give of themselves. They demonstrate healthy appetites for more and more of the truth. This is a joy!

There are those who have come from all kinds of backgrounds and the law/gospel message of our Lutheran identity has resonated with them. They have discovered a biblical perspective that made sense out of religion and brought comfort to their souls. It still staggers my mind to watch the light bulbs go on in people's minds when all of a sudden, the Holy Spirit makes things clear. This is a joy!

The things I have described here are common to all churches which seek to be faithful to God's Word; but When I feel down about those who have drifted, it is in my mind the faces of those

who are shining testimonies to the work of the Holy Spirit which restores and reassures my heart. So although in my introspection, I have no cause for pride when we observe the seeds that have been sown upon the path or among the weeds or on the rocky ground, I do have cause for joy, great joy, to see what God has done in His fertile soil at Hope Lutheran Church.

A NEW SHEPHERD

I thought a few notes would be in order about what to expect next concerning your shepherd.

My retirement date is Aug 31st. Although some may imagine a new pastor coming to Hope Lutheran Church immediately thereafter, it is wiser to expect a longer period of time. In the meantime, the Elders of the church will work in conjunction with the South Wisconsin District to either find an interim pastor (someone who fills the pastor's main roles until a permanent pastor is found) or to provide for pulpit supply which likely entails a variety of pastors stepping in here and there to "cover" the services.

Something termed a "Call Committee" has already been formed. The President of the congregation has constitutional authority to select its members and has followed advice from District leadership to populate it mostly with the Elders. The "Call



*Call
Committee*

Committee" has that name because of its role in bringing about the "Call" to a potential pastor. The "Call" is like a job offer except much more in that it includes the conviction that this is not a merely human proposal; it carries with it the belief that God Himself wants that candidate to serve as

pastor of this congregation (which of course, the potential pastor too must believe to be the case if the call is accepted). The Call Committee is tasked with the legwork to examine processes and candidates in order to recommend a pastor to the congregation. They will consider many factors to determine which candidate is the best “fit” for Hope. It is the congregation which will have to make the final decision at a Voter’s Meeting to either extend a call to a certain individual (a process that can take many months) or to request an assignment from a new seminary graduate.

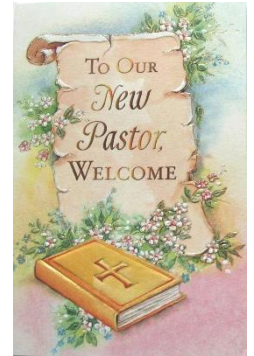
Members of the Congregation will have the opportunity to nominate names to the Call Committee; and the District will submit names of candidates whom they believe to be a good fit. The Call Committee may narrow those down and even bring some candidates in for an interview before they settle on a recommendation to submit to the Voters.

Another possibility is to request a new graduate from the LCMS seminaries in the Spring. In such a situation, Hope does not select a particular candidate, but our District President works in conjunction with the seminaries to find the candidate that they feel is right for us.

There is an important fact to remember. Our Synod (like most other denominations) has a serious clergy shortage right now. We do not have enough pastors to meet the needs. In fact about 500 LCMS churches across the United States have unfilled vacancies. Some churches wait for years to get a new pastor. Our congregation, however, is in a very good place. We are a growing congregation, financially stable, with no serious internal conflicts, and have the ability to offer a parsonage which is very helpful in the current housing crisis. The timetable is in our favor as we have enough time to call a candidate at large; and if

that does not work out, there is time to request a new graduate in the Spring.

Whatever happens however, and whoever emerges as the final choice, it is critical that we pray for the process and for that man, and that we commit to supporting the new shepherd with the conviction that God knows what he is doing and has a plan for us here.



For myself, I expect even in retirement to remain a part of Hope. It is not merely “where I worked;” but it is my spiritual family and I love all of you dearly. It is crucial however that the new pastor feel like he can lead without being in the shadow of a previous pastor. His success in ministry (and consequently, in the Lord’s plan, the One Who gives us this new shepherd) - that is my chief aim. So to give him space to learn and grow, I expect to be gone a lot doing pulpit supply for other churches. When I am here, I intend to keep my mouth shut, and through prayer and love, encourage every direction our new leader offers. Should not we all do the same?

When our new man of God comes, let us all do everything in our power to make him and his family if he has one, feel welcomed



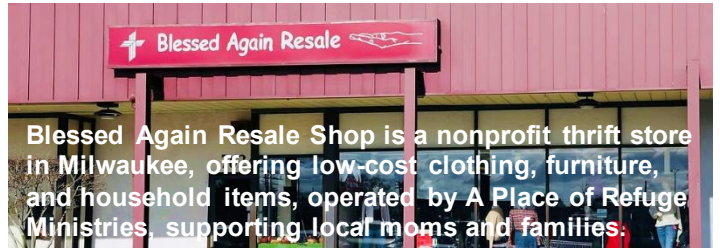
and appreciated. Let us avoid trying to steer him toward our own pet visions for how things should go. Let us silence the voice of the devil telling us to hold back our support if the pastor changes something in the worship or has some

ideas that we do not like. God has a reason for it. I for one, imagine one of these new young pastors with a beard (which I have never liked) but whom God may be calling to reach our younger families in ways that I have failed. Whatever it turns out to be, I believe in God’s plan and His design for this

congregation. Join me in this and do not withdraw from anything in the congregation but expect to engage with it even more.
SOLA DEO GLORIA!

NEWS AND MISSION PARTNER UPDATES

Hope recently had a collection for the Place of Refuge and also gives to them from our annual budget. We received this note back from them.



Dear Hope Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your generous donation to A Place of Refuge. It's only through contributions like yours that this ministry can continue to provide life-changing care and support to single mothers and their young children. We rely on faithful supporters like you to keep this ministry and the people it serves in your prayers. Please continue to pray for the staff, volunteers, women, children, and pre-born babies in all aspects of APOR.

In His Service,
Abigail Hambann

Hope also supports Rev. Dr. Walt Steele and his wife, who teaches at the Lutheran Seminary in the Philippines, and his wife, Deaconess Robyn Steele. He recently traveled to South Korea to help Lutheran pastors there strengthen their confessional identity

by concentrating upon what the scriptures say and their central focus upon Christ rather than us and our needs.

Our South Wisconsin District of the LCMS is supporting two efforts to plant new churches – in Monroe, WI which had its first baptism last month, and Veroqua, WI whose new pastor will be ordained June 14th. Won't you pray for them today?

Pastor Tim attended the excellent Spring Pastor's conference which held its opening worship at Trinity Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, a beautiful old building constructed in 1849. It suffered a catastrophic fire in 2017 and Hope raised almost \$800 to support its rebuilding. Pastor is pleased to report that the rebuilding efforts are ongoing and the sanctuary looks absolutely beautiful.



Women of Hope

All women of Hope are members of the Women of Hope. We are also a part of LWML, Lutheran Women's Missionary League which is nationwide. We are District 21 of the South Wisconsin District.

Mission Statement

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

Monthly Mites will be collected the first weekend of the month, Saturday/Sunday after services. Please continue to check the bulletins for these monthly collections. The large mite box will be in the back of church. These collections will go to the LWML organization for missions, both locally and globally. We thank you for your support.

District 21 Spring Rally at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church was attended by Beth and Mary Beth in April. It was a very nice event, Pastor Prince delivered a devotional/sermon on Mary and Martha, and their mission was “Crosses for Benny” through Forged by Fire ministries. We met many new sisters in Christ from other churches in our District.

Backpacks & School Supplies will be collected by WOH Trina Metz and Melani Wachholder will give us their wish lists for their schools. The collection will take place during month of July, so they have supplies for August/September back to school! Please stay tuned for further information to come in the church bulletins!

WOH will host the District 21 Fall Rally on Saturday, October 10th. Further details to be confirmed with Pastor and the Elders. More information and planning will be discussed at the next quarterly meeting.

WOH Quarterly Meeting- We will meet on Tuesday August 4th at 4:30pm at the church in the lower level. We welcome all Women of Hope to participate in what is happening and what is being planned for the rest of the year.

Brat Frys will take place on Saturdays June 20th and August 15th, 10am – 2pm, **not** in July. Opportunities to participate with selling brats, setup/take down and the outreach table with free cookies or help by baking cookies ahead of time.



ON AUGUST 30TH, we will celebrate Pastor Oswald's 35 years of ministry and the rich blessings God has bestowed on Hope Lutheran Church. Worship will be at **10:00am** followed immediately with a delicious luncheon. A mailing will go out this summer with all the details.

CALL COMMITTEE

The Call Committee is busy working with the South Wisconsin District LCMS to find a Pastor who will lead Hope Lutheran Church into the future. God knows the man who will be Hope's next Pastor. The Holy Spirit will guide the Call Committee and ultimately the Congregation make that decision.

Call Committee Members are: Mike Gonski, Patti Holbeck, Susan Keating, George Kelm, Gary Schaetten, Paul Schneider, Jim Tonkinson, Paul Trettin, & Peter Voigt.



CHURCH PICNIC

Please place Sunday, October 4th on your calendar for Hope's Annual Church Picnic. Details in the next Hope Herald.

Paul Trettin - President



CAR SHOW 2026 JULY 11

Plans are coming together and we are getting excited for our 25th annual car show. Thanks to all who are helping. Flyers are in the Narthex - mark your calendars and take as many flyers as you would like to give to family, friends, other car show fans and your favorite businesses. Sign-up sheets for helping, donations and silent auction info are on the table in the Narthex, as well as a list of businesses that have contributed in the past. We could use your help contacting any new businesses that might wish to help with a gift card or silent auction item donation. We can easily add them to the list. Don't forget your favorite places in Richmond, Silver Lake, Antioch, etc. Please give new business names to Phyllis to add to the list. Letters that prove our non-profit status are also available for your use for businesses that require that in order to donate. Silent auction items can be brought in at any time and placed on the marked tables downstairs. Please be sure to log them in and give gift cards /tickets and jewelry to Phyllis to lock up. Flyers to display with the gift card/ticket bid sheets are appreciated. Supplies for making baskets and extra baskets for your use are downstairs as well –this is new this year, and many have already responded very positively! We will not have a “nearly new” category this year.

Our next meeting will be late-June to touch base on what we are working on. Set up will be on Friday, July 10 at 2pm, or come

earlier if you would like. Peter is looking for help on the day of the show prior to the 9:30am service to take care of last minute tasks. Proceeds from the 2026 car show will be donated to the LCMS Church Worker Tuition Support program and A Place of Refuge If you'd like to help, please see one of the people below or sign up in the Narthex - "floaters" always welcome and appreciated!

- ☐ Promotion/Advertising/Signs – Phyllis, Brian, Cheryl, George, Peter, Gail
- ☐ Registration Table – Peter
- ☐ Cars/Parking/Outside Displays – Gary S, Mike S
- ☐ Spaghetti/Sloppy Joe Dinner – Tami
- ☐ Silent Auction – Gail
- ☐ Outreach – Paul S
- ☐ LCC Comfort Dog, KSD K9's – Beth S
- ☐ Prizes/Trophies/Door Prizes – Gary S
- ☐ Photography – Craig
- ☐ General Questions – Gail

See you all there for the fun!
2026 Car Show Committee



The Easter Egg Hunt was an amazing success. A couple of dozen members volunteered. We thank each one of you. We couldn't have done it without you, each playing an integral role. A special call out to Tabra, Mike, and Vicky. This was a first-time event for us. Our goal was to show the community that we

are willing to address their spiritual need and sharing the Gospel with those present in a fun way. Being a new event for Hope, we had no expectations and hoped we would serve anywhere from 25 to 100 visitors. We were pleasantly surprised when we experienced a surge of visitors first arriving around 10:45am and almost no time to catch our breaths until closing at 1pm, with some attendees staying until 1:15pm. We estimate about 250-300 attendees. About 2,000 candy-filled eggs were taken along with another 55 toy-prize eggs. The vast majority of visitors were unchurched, and most were receptive to having spiritual conversations, and the majority of those entered our building for more spiritual conversation and to be told the account of Jesus' Passion week by several of our church members. We estimate that this biblical account was shared at individual stations with about 75 children and their parents. We used a modification of the popular Easter season tool, 'Resurrection Eggs'. We called it 'Journey to Easter'. Free lunch was also provided with an estimated 160 meals served. A Sunday-School-Style craft table was also fully occupied for the entire duration of the event. Many children got their pictures taken holding live bunnies at our decorative 'He is Risen' bulletin board. Numerous children and adult Gospel tracts were distributed plus one request for a Bible.

We wish we could quantify the number of spiritual conversations made with the community in addition to the families hearing the account of events of what we refer to as Holy Week, but it surely had to number an additional 50, 60 or more. We pray fully leave in God's hands the next spiritual-journey steps for our visitors. We are ready to welcome them here with open arms if this is where God wants to place them. Based on the success of the easter Egg Hunt we are considering a Christmas themed community event in December.

Thank you everyone who attended the Spiritual Conversation Workshop and Bible study. Hopefully you have been able to use your new skills. Remember, fail faster.

The outreach table at the May brat sale once again touched someone. “Robert” stopped at the table and talked about how he was struggling and trying to change his ways. A conversation followed and Mary Beth prayed with him. Hope was there for him when he needed help. Outreach will have a table at the remaining brat sales and car show.

Paul Schneider

CHOIR NOTES



Another choir season is coming to an end and we are now ready to take a break for the Summer. Our last day to sing before taking the Summer off is 6/14. We look forward to coming back after Labor Day. Thank you does not seem enough to say to everyone who participated this year – we have been blessed with such a dedicated group with beautiful voices raised to praise the Lord! Always appreciate the help, suggestions, and enthusiasm. A special thank you to George for accompanying us for the services, rehearsals, and suggestions. And a special thanks to all who are helping with harmony on our 4-part selections – for those who would like to try harmony, George and I can work with you separately if you would like more practice. Our next choir season will begin with rehearsal on Sunday, September 13, and we will sing for the services for the first time on September

27. For the most part, we will practice every week and sing every 3 weeks. We are starting after Labor Day so everyone has a chance to get vacation and last minute school plans in. Special practice days and times will be talked about as we approach the holidays. Hoping to begin work on selections for Christmas early (early may actually happen one of these years), so please share your thoughts on anything you would like us to consider singing to celebrate Jesus' birth. If you are interested in becoming part of our choir, please just come to practice at 8:15am on Sundays during our choir season, or talk to me. Thank you and abundant blessings to everyone who supported and encouraged us – we always feel blessed to hear your kind words. We look forward to praising the Lord with our voices and music again very soon. Enjoy a blessed Summer!

Gail Feick
Director



STEWARDSHIP CORNER

“David reminds us in Psalm 24:1 that everything belongs to God. He is the owner. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein. Paul reminds Timothy of God's ownership in 1 Tim. 6:7: For we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. In the self-centered society that we live in today, God's words to His special

people Israel in Deut. 8:18 are still relevant. You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. These verses help us to understand God's ownership and that in response or gratitude to that ownership, we give offerings to Him.

In addition, as His children by Baptism and faith, we are Christian stewards. That adds a stewardship or management component to what God blesses us with. Everything we are and have is to be used for His purposes. So we are accountable to Him for our stewardship”.

The above paragraphs were included in an article about Stewardship from the South Wisconsin District. In brief, it continues on how not only finances but time and talent are so very important to the local congregation. In the past, I have mentioned this three-prong approach to Stewardship as it applies to our daily walk with God. I see many of you using your time and talent to further His kingdom in our congregation here at Hope. May God bless you for your time, talent and finances. I wish to remind you of our Endowment Fund with the LCMS. This is a wonderful way to assure future funding for our congregation. Please see me if you would like information for the fund. I would like to mention one area of service that Altar Guild offers. Additional assistance is needed at this time. Please see Tami Voigt or any Altar Guild member if you would like additional information.

God bless and have a wonderful summer,

George Kelm, Stewardship Chairman