

**GOD
FIRST.**

*from your pastor's
point of view 4-29-18*

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MY WITNESS

While you may have heard parts of this before, let me share with you my witness, my God-story. Growing up as a pastor's kid, most people assumed that I was a Christian, even I did. For almost the first decade of my life, I just figured that I was covered under some cosmic family plan and all was well.

It was a Thanksgiving Eve service though, on November 24, 1980 that, after my father had preached a message series on each person's need to accept Christ for themselves, that it dawned on me that I hadn't done so. So, when the altar call came, I went. It shocked everyone including my father. I had accepted Christ to avoid the truth of hell, which most of us may have done, but I understood little about love.

I finished high school, went to college, got a degree in Food Marketing and became a retail manager. I got married and moved to Florida with my new wife, and eventually we moved back. All during that time, I tried to be faithful to my faith, but didn't feel like I was doing enough. It was at an Emmaus walk where I learned all about God's love and grace, and I learned that God already did enough for me.

I began seminary (just to learn, not to be a preacher) and eventually came into full-time pastoral ministry after God answered every excuse I had. Jamie and Matthew arrived that first couple years, and ever since we've been trying to share God's bodacious Grace, faultless Truth and tremendous Love wherever we find ourselves.

Does this connect with you?
What's your God-story?

Pastor Greg

April 29 - "God First in Our Witness" - Acts 1:1-11
(Consecration Sunday, God First Series)

Intro

Series passage: "In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success." (Proverbs 3:6 LB)

God needs to be first in our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service.....and our witness.

Witness = our God-first story

Who were we before let everyone know we were Christian?

How did we accept Christ by believing in Him, asking for His forgiveness, committing to His direction in our lives?

Then when did we let other people know?

How has Christ changed our lives since?

How can our witness be helpful...or elicit a response...leading folks to faith?

Review - "God, help me to put you first in everything."

God-first prayer means communicating with God.
God-first presence means being here because of God.
God-first giving means striving for a tithe and beyond.
God-first serving means serving as Christ serves us.
God-first witnessing means being ready, willing, and able to tell our God-story, our witness, to everyone.

Bottom Line & Application – 1 Peter 3:14-16 (MSG)

UPCOMING MESSAGES – 9:45 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

"Filled - Living in the Power of the Spirit" series, May 6 – June 3

May 6 – "Filled: Convicting and Forgiving" – I John 1:8-10

May 13 – "Filled: Courageous and Powerful" – Acts 1:6-9

May 20 – "Filled: Comforting and Sustaining" – Acts 2:1-4, 14-24

May 27 – "Filled: Spiritual Gifts and Equipping" – I Corinthians 12:1-14

June 3 – "Filled: Living in the Spirit, Showing Fruit" – Galatians 5:22-32

Pastor Greg (or our speaker) is handy after the service if you'd like to say hi, ask questions, check-in, or just share comments. They are normally at the front of the worship space so that a conversation is easier. Stop and say hi.

This week the New Hope bulletin
is being sponsored by:

Courtright Water Wells, Inc.
Mecosta, MI

*Our advertisers
help defray the cost of our Sunday bulletin.*

**April 22, 2018 Stewardship
Presence**

9:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. – 12

Tithes and Gifts

General: \$3,083.00
Building: 175.00
Total: \$3,258.00

April 29 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Gracious God, you are the vine grower and we belong to you. Thank you for carefully tending us, especially in difficult times. You provide what we need in order to grow as disciples of Jesus. Help us to abide in him, the true vine. May these offerings and our lives bear much fruit and bring glory to you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.
(John 15:1-8)

May Administrative Meetings

Staff Parish – Monday, May 7, 6:00 p.m.
Finance — Wednesday, May 9, 6:30 p.m.
Trustees – Wed., May 16th at 6:30 pm.
Church Council – Thurs., May 17th @ 7:00 p.m.
Staff Meeting – Mon., May 21 @ 6:00 p.m.

**APRIL/MAY MINISTRY
OPPORTUNITIES TO REMEMBER**

- S 4/29** 9:45 a.m. Sunday Worship
11:45 a.m. "Uncommon Worship"
- M 4/30** 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study
- T 5/1** 9:30 a.m. Craft Day
5:30 p.m. Faithfully Fit Class
5:30 p.m. Men's Emmaus
6:30 p.m. Men's Bible Study
- W 5/2** 10:00 a.m. "Covering the Book"
Bible Study
3:00 p.m. Praise Too Practice
4:00 p.m. Choir Practice
5:30 p.m. Tech 'n Check
6:00 p.m. Worship Design
- S 5/6** 9:45 a.m. Sunday Worship
11:15 a.m. "Uncommon Worship"
- M 5/7** 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study
1:30 p.m. Mary Martha
6:00 p.m. Staff Parish
- T 5/8** 9:30 a.m. Craft Day
5:30 p.m. Faithfully Fit Class
5:30 p.m. Men's Emmaus
6:30 p.m. Men's Bible Study
- W 5/9** 10:00 a.m. "Covering the Book"
Bible Study
3:00 p.m. Praise Too Practice
4:00 p.m. Choir Practice
5:30 p.m. Tech 'n Check
6:00 p.m. Worship Design
6:00 p.m. Youth
6:30 p.m. Finance
- F 5/11** 6:00 p.m. Ladies Night Out
- Sa 5/12** 6:00 pm. Booth Brothers Concert

Birthdays this week:

1st - Jennifer Allen
4th - Marian Ritter
Marcia Alderink
5th - Nile Young
Beverly Brown



Anniversaries this week:

none 😊

**New Bible Study Coming to
Wednesday Nights @ 7 pm**

The "Covering the Book" class, which currently meets at 10 a.m. on Wednesday mornings in room 110, will also be meeting Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. from May 16 - August 29 in the library. Some have asked for a later "after-work" time for a study, so Pastor Greg is offering this one. The same scriptures will be covered in both classes. Bring your Bibles and your note taking preferences. (These items are also provided.)



Thank You

We would like to thank the New Hope congregation for the many acts of kindness and for the prayers around the loss of David's father, Edd. You are each a true blessing.

David and June Marston

Sisters of Sobriety Wish List

SOS would appreciate any used magazines that you might have. They will take all kinds, Hunting and Fishing, Housekeeping, Fashion and News. They do not need to be current and it doesn't matter how old the issues are.

If you would like to donate just bring them to the church and put in the SOS basket in the fellowship hall and either Bev or I will get them delivered.

Thank you for helping to meet the needs of SOS. We are very fortunate to have this facility in our area. At this time the house is full and have a waiting list. Please keep the ladies who come and go here for rehabilitation in our prayers.

Thanks for your support,
Linda Randall

The church is being lit to celebrate the dedication of a sculpture in the Big Rapids Dog Park

A graphic with the text "LIGHT THE CHURCH" in white capital letters on a dark background, with a lit candle in the center.

LIGHT
THE
CHURCH

The Finance Committee invites you to take in an opportunity to help New Hope in a unique way. It's referred to as "Light the Church for a Week." The cost of lighting New Hope is approximately \$85 per week. When you choose to "Light the Church for a Week, you would pay that amount and also honor a love one's memory, celebrate an important date – birthday, anniversary etc. which would be shared in the church bulletin.

To participate, please indicate on your giving envelope or check that it is for "Light the Church for a Week". *"Let Your Light Shine" Matthew 5:16*

Church Clean Up Day

Due to our late start on Spring the Church Clean Up Day has been pushed back to Friday, May 18th, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Many hands make light work, and more help may mean a shorter time spent on the clean up!

New Directory Pages Available!

The Church Directory address pages have been updated and are available for pickup at the Information Center.

As address changes occur, I will include them on the Prayer Page in the bulletin, if possible, until the Directory is updated again.

Also, if you would like your photo updated, please contact me and we can arrange a time!

Serving Him JOYFULLY with you,
Gen Abrams

Kingdom Kids

The current Kingdom Kids program will be over at the end of April, and we need to start planning by June for next fall. ***In order for Kingdom Kids to continue, we need at least four teachers and four helpers each Wednesday afternoon (normally 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.).*** At this moment we have two teachers, AnnMarie Buchner and Linda Sbraccia, and three helpers, Nancy Santer, Bev Rothenberger and Gerry Herrmann, signed up. **We still need at least two more teachers and two more helpers.**

Prayerfully consider what God is asking you to do. If you want to help but this sounds like too much of a commitment, please talk to us. Even one day a month can make a difference. We are flexible!

We would love to talk to you if you have questions, and if you think this may be something you would like to do.

Thank you,
AnnMarie Buchner - 989-621-7681
Bev Rothenberger - 317-413-7491



Keith Boyette visits Michigan May 3-6!

Rev. Boyette is the president of the WCA and a clergy member of the Virginia Annual Conference. He has 20 years experience as a church planter and has also served on the Judicial Council. He will be at several locations to explain the WCA and why it is needed. This is a great opportunity for all UM laity and clergy to find out about the WCA first hand, learn about the state of the UMC and make some new friends.

Please review the meeting schedule below and plan now to come. An all-state mailing to churches and clergy is coming but we invite you to forward this e-mail to all your UM friends in Michigan!

Schedule: Rev Keith Boyette

- May 3, 10:30 AM Dexter United Methodist Church
- May 3, 3:00 PM Jackson First United Methodist
- May 4, 10:00 AM Michigan Ministry Center--Lansing
- May 4, 3:00 PM Clare United Methodist Church
- May 5, 10:00 AM Flint: Bethel United Methodist Church
- May 6, 11:00 AM Worship at Fraser: Christ UMC

For more info contact Tom Anderson at tanderson@humc.us and visit www.wesleyan covenant.org

2018 Concert Series --- Booth Brothers Concert is Sold Out!

Our concert season for 2018 will start with The Booth Brothers on Saturday, May 12th at 6 pm. Doors will open at 5 pm. ***THIS CONCERT HAS BEEN SOLD OUT!!!!***

Kevin Mills (he was the bass singer for Keepers of the Faith) will be in concert on Saturday, July 28 at 6:00 pm, (this will be a free-will offering with all proceeds going to New Hope) and The Hoppers on Saturday, August 25 at 6:00 pm. Tickets for the Hoppers are \$15 in advance and \$18 the day of the concert.

More information on Kevin Mills and the Hoppers will be given at a later date.

Second Saturday Munch Bunch

The Second Saturday Munch Bunch will meet for breakfast at 9 AM on Saturday, May 12th at Udderly Delicious located at 315 Cass St. in Morley. Cass Street is the main street that goes thru Morley and Udderly Delicious is located on the right side if you are heading south and are just heading into Morley.

The Second Saturday Munch Bunch is open to everyone in the church and is a great way to get to know other people. We usually meet at a restaurant the second Saturday of each month for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Come enjoy a great meal, conversation, and fellowship! There is no obligation to going every second Saturday—come when you are able!

If you have never attended one of our outings, why not try us! There is a sign-up board located in the Narthex by the pastor's office.

Any questions, please call Laura Hall at 231-972-7000.



Compassion Sunday

May 13, 2018 is Compassion Sunday.

This special Sunday allows those who are interested, the opportunity to hear and discover how to sponsor a child which helps them grow in faith and helps get them out of poverty. Children are blessed and you will be too when you receive letters and updates regarding your sponsored child.

Church Yard Sale

LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS AND SERVE!

YARD SALE IS COMING!
YARD SALE IS COMING!

JUNE 21, 22, 23
ARE THE SALE DATES!

IN THE GYM PREPARATIONS BEGIN:
MONDAY, JUNE 1ST

SEE THE FLIER FOR DONATION DROP-OFF
DATES AND TIMES

MONDAY JUNE 1ST WORK IN THE GYM
BEGINS TO CLEAN, TEST, AND PRICE

GYM WILL BE OPEN FOR WORKERS @
LEAST 9-3 MON TUES WED

DAYS AND HOURS OF WORK WILL
INCREASE AS NEEDED

NEED MEN or "ROSIE THE RIVETER"
POWERED WOMEN or YOUTH TO HELP
COVER DONATION DROP-OFF UNLOADING
VEHICLES.

HELPER SIGN-UP SHEETS ARE IN THE
NARTHEX

UNKNOWN AVAILABILITY?
ROLL UP THOSE SLEEVES & COME ON IN
WHEN YOU CAN!!

THIS IS NEW HOPE'S BIG ANNUAL
FUNDRAISER! PLEASE SERVE AS YOU
ARE ABLE!!!