



HOPE HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 2012

Issue No. 01-12

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LOVE THOSE YELLOW SLIPS!

Pastor Mark Nieting

Every year I have to “renew” my memberships in the various organizations to which I belong: National Model Railroad Association, National Rifle Assn., Milwaukee Road Historical Assn, etc. You know the drill: check the box on the form and send the check and good for another year. Each year I have the opportunity to reflect on whether I want to “renew.” Then I can either recommit myself...or not.

The blessing of my baptism means that I belong to God forever! Despite my sinful condition, God welcomed me....and you...into His family through Baptism and through His Holy Spirit God, quoting Luther now, “*Keeps me with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.*” That’s an eternal relationship.

Our relationship with our congregation is both a spiritual one, called as we are by the Holy Spirit, and an “earthly” one. When we join the congregation we commit ourselves to a variety of spiritual disciplines:

- to attend worship regularly
- to live in a manner not offensive to God or the witness of our faith
- to develop a pattern of sacrificial tithing
- to grow in my faith through regular study and attending classes
- to discover and use our gifts in service to the Lord
- to allow ourselves to be admonished when we have erred
- to support our pastors, staff and church with our prayers.

What a wonderful thing it is then, that 102 of our members and/or families have intentionally and deliberately recommitted themselves to Hope since December 18. 100% pledged that they would worship regularly. 99% will pray daily for the ministries of Hope and deliberately work to grow in their faith.

I firmly believe it is good for us to reexamine our commitment to our Lord and to our church on a regular basis. It is good to make a “life check” of where we are doing well and where we need to be challenged. We have offered you that opportunity (again) this year.

What has been your response?



ASH WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 22, 2012

As we did last year, we will begin Lent with the Imposition of Ashes early on Wednesday morning, Feb. 22, from 6 to 8am. What a wonderful witness we can make as we go to work or school with the “mark of the ash” upon us. And what do you say when someone calls attention to it? Simply this: The ashes remind us that today is the beginning of Lent, the 6 weeks when we remember that Jesus suffered and died for our sins....and for yours as well. Our services that day will be at Noon and 6:30pm.



STEWARDSHIP

By: Gordon & Deborah Johnson



“I love you”

One of the best known days in February is Valentine’s Day. Some people are tempted to call February 14 “Hallmark Holiday.” Little wonder because in our country over 7,000,000,000 valentine cards are purchased each year. Most of these cards say “I love you” in one way or another. But what does “I love you” mean?

Some would say that “I love you” refers to being physically attracted to a person of the opposite sex. While it is true that physical attractiveness can draw people together we need to remember that physical attractiveness changes over time. Yes, it is an important kind of love, but it does not have the same lasting power as other forms of love.

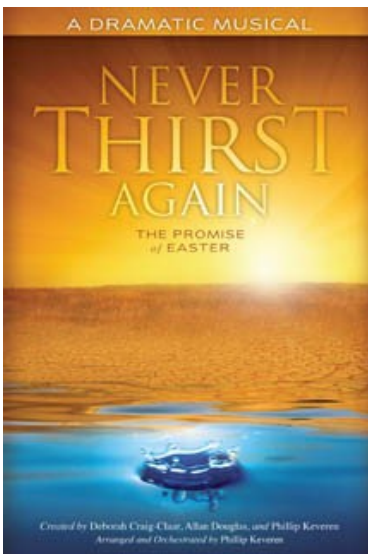
Others would say that “I love you” means you are my special friend. Good friends are sweet blessings in this life as we find things that we enjoy doing with certain people we like and with whom we have so much in common. A friendship kind of love is very special but, sadly, we know from experience that friends come and go.

There is a deeper understanding of what it means to say “I love you.” The word that comes to mind for many Christians is “*agape*” which we call God’s kind of love. It is unconditional and keeps reaching out to other people even when they may not return this kind of love. That is certainly true of God’s love for us sinners. Even when we say and do sinful things God’s love reaches out to us. As the Scriptures teach, “*while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*” (Romans 5:8 NIV). Jesus Himself said in John 15:13 (NIV): “*Greater love has no one than that he lay down his life for his friends.*”

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (NIV) describes agape love in this way: “*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*”

The Apostle John wrote in 1 John 3:1 (NIV): “*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called the children of God! And that is what we are!*” Good and godly children imitate the positive characteristics of their good and godly parents. As the children of God through Jesus Christ we imitate the love of our Father in heaven. “*We love because He [God] first loved us.*” (1 John 4:19 NIV) What does our Father in heaven delight in doing? John 3:16 (NIV) says it so well: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*”

God delights in loving and giving. Empowered by the Holy Spirit we are God’s children, God’s disciples, God’s stewards. There is no better witness to what it means to be a child of God than for us to use all of life and life’s resources in a way that brings glory to God and blessings to those whose lives we touch. May our “I love you” always be God’s kind of love, God’s agape love.



MUSIC NEWS

By: Meredith Mulcair

This Spring is an exciting time at Hope! We will perform a musical drama entitled “Never Thirst Again.” Three simple words spoken by Jesus one afternoon as He stopped by a Samaritan well for a drink. He encountered a woman there who had many secrets and many regrets. Although He initially asked her for a drink, it was she who received the promise of living water from this stranger – a Stranger who knew everything about her dark past and yet only spoke forgiveness. She would later learn the full measure of His redemptive love at the foot of a cross and the doorway of an empty tomb. “Never Thirst Again.” Three simple words—and our past is forgiven, our present is fulfilled, and our future is eternally secured. Now *that’s* the promise of Easter (Keveren)!

If you are interested in singing in the ensemble please show up for choir rehearsals in the music room, 7:30-9pm, on Wednesdays. Childcare can be provided upon request. Please contact Meredith at Meredith.Mulcair@gmail.com

DECEMBER 5, 2011 VOTER'S MEETING

By: Sara Morton

There were 65 Voting Members in attendance. The following topics were discussed and items passed:

1. William Myers, Tresea Myers, Rebekah Benninghoff, Thom Gross, and Dawn Oswald were unanimously accepted as new Voting Members.
2. Currently serving Ministry Team Leaders were unanimously reaffirmed and approved. There is still a need for Chairs of the following Ministries: Social, Evangelism, and Community Growth
3. An update on Envision Hope (Phase One) was presented by the Building Committee. The final project came in \$70,000 under budget.
4. An update on Envision Hope pledging was presented. We have collected 82% of the monies pledged for the project.
5. Nominations were made and accepted unanimously for SED President, SED 1st Vice President, District Secretary and Circuit Counselor.
6. Internal use and rental use alcohol policies were adopted by the voting members.
7. Rodger Stein presented the Treasurer's Report.
8. The Voting Members voted to grant Pastor Nieting a 3-month sabbatical in 2012, occurring approximately May 15 – August 15, 2012.

Detailed minutes of this meeting are available at the Narthex information area, the church office, or by e-mailing Council Secretary Sara Morton: SMorton102@gmail.com.



By: Kathryn Wacker

Lent is a time of repentance, a time to reflect on renewal of our faith and on life eternal through the resurrection of Christ. The period of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and ends Saturday before Easter Sunday. Calculating this by calendar days will figure at 45 days, but the 5 Sundays in Lent are excluded, giving a total of 40 days.

These 40 days represent the Temptation of Jesus during the 40 days of fasting Christ spent in the desert. (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:9-12; Luke 4:1-13) Lent is the time of year to think of our own sinful temptations and of Christ's saving grace.

Join us on Ash Wednesday to receive the mark of ashes and to humbly reflect how our time here on earth is short "*For dust you are and to dust you shall return*" (Genesis 3:19), but with Christ we have eternal life. Then beginning Feb. 29, return each Wednesday at Noon or 6:30pm for our Mid-Week Lenten services.

Ash Wednesday Service Schedule

6—8am Imposition of Ashes
12noon & 6:30pm Worship Services

Mid-Week Lenten Service Schedule

Feb. 29 thru March 28
12noon & 6:30pm Worship Services

TREASURER'S REPORT (December of Fiscal Year 2011-2012)

By: Jim Hammond



Total Income:
Total Expense:
Income Less Expense:

	<u>December Actual</u>	<u>Year-to-Date Actual</u>
	\$78,725.04	\$385,396.20
	- 69,452.72	- 397,704.99
	<u>\$ 9,272.32</u>	<u>\$ -12,308.79</u>

For a more complete Financial Report, please pick up a copy in the church office.

LEISURE LUTHERANS

By: Rollie Soderholm



The Leisure Lutherans met at the Lucky Oyster on Monday, Jan. 16, for a seafood luncheon. Our guest speaker was Gwen Elmore from Fun Tours who presented various tours to the group (i.e. day as well as overnight tours).



The next scheduled luncheon will be at Y'Not Pizza & Italian Cuisine located at 1036 Volvo Parkway in Chesapeake on Monday, Feb. 20, at 1130 am. The sign-up sheet will be on the podium in the narthex.

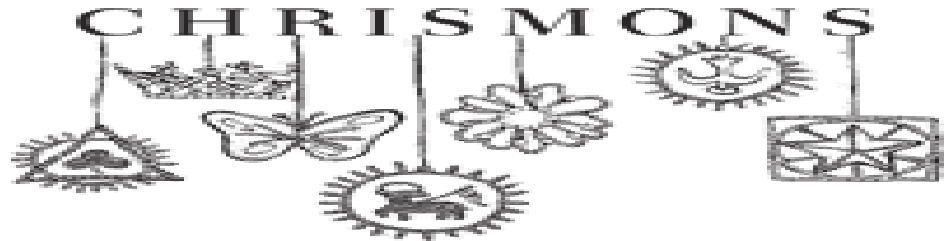
If you consider yourself to be a Seasoned Citizen, sign up and enjoy the fellowship. We'd love to have you! Any questions, contact Rollie at 471-5530 or rolsal@mac.com.



By: Margot Birkett

Thank you to everyone who made our January meeting a success! Our LWML bake sale will be on Feb. 12 between services. If you signed up to bring something, please drop it off in the kitchen before the early service.

Information about workshops will be sent out later this month. Our next meeting will be Saturday, March 17, at 9am in the Fellowship Hall. We will have a speaker from the Salvation Army.



CHRISMONS DONATION OF CRAFT ITEMS REQUESTED

By: Kathryn Wacker

The following craft items are needed to make Chrismons (Christian Ornaments), that will be used to decorate the Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall.

- white felt material any scrap at least 6" or more
- white or gold beads (any size)
- white or gold sequins
- wire gage 20 – 28 for crafting
- white or gold thread or embroidery thread

There is a box marked for these donations in the Main 1 classroom. Collections will continue through March.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

By: Martha West

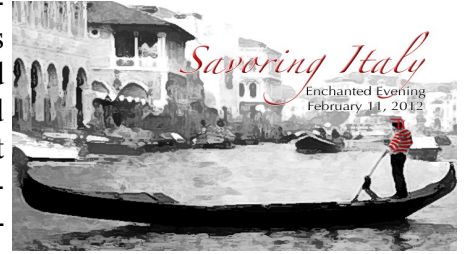
Keeping the church directory up-to-date is a **Daily Challenge** due to our transient membership. Please keep the church office up-to-date on your address, phone number and e-mail changes. Also, we would like to recognize your birthday and wedding anniversary in the Highlights.

Please contact the church office with any changes you have. It only takes a minute and it means so much. Call 424-4848 or e-mail Admin@hope.hrcoxmail.com. Thanks.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

By: Linda Muth

A big thank you to all who are supporting our Teen Ministry by attending Enchanted Evening. It promises to be an awesome event. Proceeds will help support TRUTH going to the 2013 National Youth Gathering and other youth activities. In order to have an event of this magnitude we need **all** TRUTH members to participate. Please sign up to help with at least two work shifts (Feb. 4, 10, 11 and 12). We will need all youth for the actual event on Saturday evening, Feb. 11. Parental help is also *greatly* needed for the both work days and the event.



Construction Zone for TRUTH is March 2-4 at the Cavalier Hotel. If you would still like to go and have not registered, please contact Linda Muth ASAP. We will meet at Hope at 5:45pm on Friday and return to Hope at 12:30pm on Sunday. You should eat dinner before coming on Friday. Please remember to bring your Bible, appropriate clothing, money for lunch and dinner on Saturday and also for offering, and a swimsuit. The balance of your registration fee is due by Feb. 19. You can use Enchanted Evening proceeds to help cover the cost. Please remember that once you are registered you are responsible for the registration costs, even if you cannot attend.

BODY will go to Charlotte, NC for Quake on April 13-15. Costs for this event are \$137 for Early Bird registration or \$152 for regular registration. To take advantage of the Early Bird price, a \$50 nonrefundable deposit must be turned in to confirmation teachers, Steve Plummer or Linda Muth, by Sunday, Feb. 5. Regular registration deadline is Feb. 26 at which time the total registration cost is due. If you would like to see what the weekend is all about please visit www.youthencounter.org.



BODY will have a movie night in the Loft on Friday, Feb. 24, from 6:30 to 9:30pm. We will have popcorn and chips, but youth should bring either a 2-liter soda or dessert to share. Bring your friends.

Our Confirmation II students, along with their parents, will start First Communion classes with the pastors on Wednesday, Feb. 29, from 6:30 to 7:30pm. These classes will run every Wednesday through March 28. This is a wonderful opportunity for both youth and parents to get an in-depth understanding of what this sacrament means to their Christian walk.

Activities at a Glance

Feb. 4, 10, 11, 12	Enchanted Evening work days (TRUTH)
Feb. 5	Quake Early Bird deposit due (BODY)
Feb. 24	Movie Night (BODY)
Feb. 26	Quake registration due (BODY)
Feb 29	First Communion classes begin (Conf. II)
Mar. 2-4	Construction Zone (TRUTH)



FOOD FOR THE POOR UPDATE

By: Bette Schember

Thanks to all members of Hope Lutheran Church for the generous gift of \$1,000 to Food for the Poor received from the Thanksgiving offering. This money will help build a home in Honduras for a family who really deserves it. The house will cost \$3,200. We are almost 1/3 of the way there. An anonymous donor will match this so that two homes will be built instead of just one.

Much has been given to us. Much is expected of us. We hope to pay for this home in 2012. Donations can be made on a continuing basis. Make your check payable to Hope Lutheran and write in the memo section: "Food for the Poor".

If you have any questions, please call the church office (424-4848).





Articles for the March issue of Hope Highlights are due Sunday, Feb. 19. E-mail your article to: Admin@Hope.hrcoxmail.com or leave a copy in Martha's box in the church office.



February Birthdays

- 1 Karen Banks
Matt Flom
David Weisenbeck
Brennan Werner
- 2 Mary Dugroo
- 3 Millie Gennaro
Michael Plummer
- 4 Matthew Cook
- 5 Kathy Young
- 6 David Hernandez
Jon Lee
- 7 Sam White
- 8 Misu Brown
Bill Cashman
Luke Ethridge
Melanie Oswald
Bill Riley
Caroline White
- 10 John Gebhardt
Connie Plemmons
- 11 Gannon Connor
Linda Santoro
- 12 Rosanna Mulske
Abby Sneath
- 13 Michael Leveskas
Nicholas Payne
Holly Sawyer
Bette Schember
- 14 Alisha Cofer
- 15 Alyssa Vargas
- 16 James Johnson
- 17 Jackson Hartje
Derek Lane
Marissa Melius
Chris Speckman
- 18 Shannon Frederick
Luke Frye
Neil Slinde
Paul Strait
- 21 Aimee Dohner
Tara Johnson
Nathan Lane
Nancy Roisen

- 22 Mason Ball
Nathan Barry
Scott Novotny
- 23 Lonnie Baird
Jared Flom
Deborah Johnson
Nicholas Woods
- 24 Josh Sneath
Rollie Soderholm
- 25 Bryson Young
- 26 Caroline Benninghoff
Luke Riccio
George Schaefer
- 27 Joanne Graebner
Ryan Mulske

ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 Matt & Becky Flom
Patrick & Amy Gordon
- 11 Matt & Nancy Harrell
- 14 Michael & Robin Cacese

MISSING?

If your birthday/anniversary is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office: (424-4848) or admin@hope.hrcoxmail.com

ALTAR FLOWERS AND ETERNAL LIGHT

There are many opportunities still available in 2012 to sign up for altar flowers or Eternal Light. Payment is due at sign-up. Cost of flowers is \$40 per week. Cost of Eternal Light is \$40 per month. Please see Kathryn Wacker in the church office (424-4848) or e-mail assist@hope.hrcoxmail.com



Sweets
for the
Sweet

LWML Bake Sale
Sunday, February 12
(between services)



DID YOU KNOW?

If you're reading this newsletter in paper form, did you know that you can also access it on Hope's website? Go to www.hopevabeach.org and click on Hope Highlights listed under Hope Links (lower right side).