

Spirit of Hope

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Preschool and Childcare

August 19, 2020

Message from Pastor Fran Green

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13 NLT)

"What is truth?" If you were in worship yesterday at Mount Hope you heard me talk about this question and the current struggle in our world as it seeks Truth. Feel free to read through that message, which is included in this week's newsletter.

I think what I find most exciting is that we know the truth. We love and worship the one who is Truth. Our Lord Jesus is the only truth that will satisfy the longings and desires of our broken and hurting world. Aren't the words from *Romans* listed above a wonderful description of how and why we can live happily and filled with content in these uncertain times? Further, *Romans 15:13* reminds us that our hope is not only for us, but that this hope overflows for us to share with others. That is who we are and what we are about here at this Mountain of Hope, Mount Hope.

Fall is fast approaching! **We continue to make plans for fall.** Much like schools we are thinking through various options for delivery of Sunday School, Bible Study, and other gatherings. We are only certain that we will have a virtual/online option for these events; beyond that, we will work to offer something in-person if it can be done safely and within the guidelines and restrictions of our state. **Please let us know if you WOULD attend an in-person Bible study. My email is pastor@mthopelutheran.org**

Do you Zoom? Many people, including our Vision Team has been using Zoom these months of the pandemic. This could be a nice way to conduct Bible study and other gatherings this fall. Please let me or any of the staff know if you are "up" on Zoom. We could also hold a class and help those who might be interested in learning how to create an account and use the service. Most likely, we will offer an in-person Bible study in our sanctuary so that we are able to physically distance for safety and also offer a live feed by Zoom or another application. Keep an eye on this newsletter and our website for updates.

Please contact the church office to **get your spot** to receive Holy Communion, Thursday, August 20. If Thursday does not work, please let Kim know what does and I will work you in. I have had a few people ask me if we will stop offering the Lord's Supper on Thursdays and offer it during the worship services. We are discussing the possibility of offering communion again during worship but have not made a decision yet. At this time, we will continue to offer the private communion option. Many who are coming are not attending in-person worship, plus this gives a wonderful opportunity for me to connect with you. This is truly a blessing!

Thank you for your prayers, God is faithful!

We are Mount Hope, *Where Guests become Friends, Friends become Family.*

Pastor Fran Green

The Message

It was quite a week! Several things happened and as I sat down to write this message, I found myself thinking the words of Pontius Pilate; ***“What is truth!?” (John 18:38)***

NO, I’m not having a crisis in faith, but thinking about Christianity and the LIFE OF FAITH pushed me to uttering those words. Here’s what I mean...Every day I receive email after email and mailers on THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, how/what to do to teach people to live a life of faith. What to do to grow a church and on and on...

Add to that the information out there on the great and growing divide in our country. Can you be a Christian and be on a particular “side” when it comes to the heating up election? What about coronavirus? How does faith play into what I believe about COVID-19? What about RACE RELATIONS? How does my faith impact what I believe about RACE IN OUR COUNTRY? WHAT IS TRUTH?!!

Then I was reminded of these words from pastor and author *Tim Keller*, *We find ourselves for the first time in history where all people do not believe there is a TRUTH outside of us. At one time all believed feelings and desires inside were to be put in alignment with TRANSCENDENT TRUTH (outside).*

Now, we are being told truth is inside of us. The accepted “norms” outside of us are not reality. We need to discover truth inside. My feelings are REALITY and the world outside needs to align with them. The result is the unraveling of our social institutions. WHAT IS TRUTH?

Then on Tuesday evening when our Vision Team met, we were challenged with the questions, WHY DOES YOUR CHURCH EXIST? What is the unique VISION THE LORD HAS GIVEN MOUNT HOPE?

This all came full circle for me anyway, when I opened an email forwarded to me containing a devotion with a wonderful reminder from AW TOZIER titled, ***Are We Missing the Church’s Purpose? AND THERE IT IS! THE TRUTH!!*** Of course, we know this! We have heard it many times, but WE NEED FREQUENT REMINDERS.

“God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display His wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was His eternal plan, which He carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Ephesians 3:10-11 NLT)

WE KNOW THIS. JESUS IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE! The church’s work is to proclaim this TRUTH! Both our Scripture readings for today talk about JESUS, the Truth, God’s gift of grace given because He so loved the world. *NT Wright, in writing on our Romans passage for today.* The death and resurrection of Jesus, though seldom mentioned in Romans ch. 9-11, is after all present underneath, determining the shape of the thought and argument. But in order for the mercy thereby gained to be available for all as a gift of grace rather than a privilege or right, it was necessary for all people, Jew as well as Gentile, to be shut up in the prison called ‘disobedience’.

Only so could grace be grace, with all human pride being humbled, and mercy – as opposed to reward – be available to all. This is the big picture of the plan of God which Paul has finally laid before us.

Paul lays this out for Timothy very clearly, (1 Timothy 2:3-7), *“For this is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.*

For, there is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity – the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time. And I have been chosen as a preacher and apostle to teach the Gentiles this message about faith and truth. I’m not exaggerating – just telling the truth.”

What is truth? Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life! FOR EVERYONE! It’s so simple! IT IS A SIMPLE MESSAGE OF TRUTH. The world, our world, so needs this message today.

We know that there is TRUTH a Transcendent Truth, Jesus Christ, God’s Son.

How do we reach what Tim Keller and many others are calling a Post-Christian world where this world is Catechizing our kids and influencing our culture?

Perhaps, we simply need to get back to the basics. It comes up frequently, but the basics of our life together are laid out in (Acts 2:42-47).

“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.”

We will resume our “BACK TO THE BASICS” study in a few weeks. How are we/you doing in devotion to God’s Word? Our fellowship, even if it is virtual or by phone, etc. To sharing what we have? What about our prayer life? Are we praying for the lost world? Are we praying specifically for one or two people we know who need to know Jesus?

Verse 43 offers the result of back to the basics living; *“A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.”* Powerful!

“And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared their money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity – all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people.” It sounds like a rhythm of life that is being shaped by a transcendent power and authority. It is a life shaped by The Truth.

What is the result? *“And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”* The Lord added. We do not do the adding, we live by the basics, living a life of devotion and focus on our Lord Jesus. He does the rest.

It would be much easier to huddle up and stay in our safe zones. But our commitment to the basics, to following Jesus calls us out. (2 Corinthians 5:14)

“Christ’s love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. He died for everyone so that those who receive His new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

So, we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know Him now! This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone, a new life has begun!”

Our world so desperately needs the Truth. Our world (everyone) needs Jesus! NOW THAT IS THE TRUTH! AMEN

Announcements

Thursday - Communion

Pastor Fran will continue to offer in person communion at Mount Hope in the sanctuary. Make your appointment from 10:00 am-5:00 pm. Appointments are 15 minutes apart allowing for a visit of approximately 10 minutes. Please call the office at 952-888-5059 between 9:00 am-3:00 pm to set an appointment. You can also email your request to church@mthopelutheran.org.

For your safety and for the safety of the Center families and the staff, we will be using the East door. There will be hand sanitizer available at the entrance. We also ask that social distancing practices are followed and that masks are worn if at all possible. You will be able to drop off your offering and LWML Mites offering and pick up a Portals of Prayer as well. You will not have access to the rest of the building at this time. Thank you for respecting these guidelines. Pastor will follow safety protocols when preparing the wine and wafer for communion.

Altar Flowers

We will begin ordering Altar flowers again on September 13 to beautify our church. If you would like to keep your week that you have signed up for please let us know. September 13 is Dawn Vogland and Betty Weberg, September 20 is Jerry and Harriet Buelow, September 27 is Dave and Fran Wallin. If you would like to keep your week that you have signed up for please let us know.

Non-Perishable Food Supplies



Non-perishable food supplies are now being collected for VEAP. Supplies are being collected in collection boxes place in the entry way to church and at the Thursday communion table entry.

Thank you, Karen Mueller.

Back to School Supplies



VEAP and SAMARITAN'S PURSE SHOE BOX MINISTRY Back to School Supplies are being collected in collection boxes place in the entry way to church and at the Thursday communion table entry. School items are on sale now. The Dollar stores have many items. You can ship to your home from Target and Walmart.

Thank you in advance, Carrie Newton and Karen Mueller.

Thrivent Action Grants

Thrivent has let it be known that they are ready and willing to give out Action Grants! If you can think of a worthy cause and you are a Thrivent member contact Jennifer Adamek for more info-jadamek@mthopelutheran.org.

LWML -Mite Offerings

Give this summer to the purple MITE BOX on the East door entry table. The LWL (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) MITE BOX is used to receive gifts of gratitude to support mission grants of the LWML. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the missions may give.

Our new goal for the MN South District biennium 2020-2022 is \$265,000! Last week we highlighted 4 of these grants. Check out another 4 listed below:

Minnesota South District Student Aid Scholarships..... \$30,000

Tuition assistance for future church workers enrolled in on the Concordia Universities.

LCMS Missionary Support at Just the Right Time (Mission Central)..... \$10,000

Grants will be dispersed to LCMS missionaries for flights to and from the mission location where they serve, transportation within the mission field, insurance coverage, housing expenses, utilities, office equipment, education for children, salary for family and orientation and training costs.

The Dwelling Place – General Operating Support..... \$10,000

Transitional housing and supportive services and education for women and children escaping abuse and equipping them to live Christ-centered lives.

Rooted*Celebrating*Growing-Capital Campaign of Camp Omega..... \$20,000

On-going Capital Campaign to construct a Family/Adult Retreat Center.

The whole list is posted on the hallway bulletin board.

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30am In-Person Worship

Services online at

www.mthopelutheran.org

Phone: 952-888-5059

E-mail: church@mthopelutheran.org

Website: www.mthopelutheran.org

Mount Hope's Staff

Fran Green	Pastor pastor@mthopelutheran.org
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Kim Wuebke	Director of Preschool and Childcare Administrative Assistant church@mthopelutheran.org
Steve Sundseth	Custodian

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Address Service Requested

