

# Spirit of Hope

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Preschool and Childcare

September 9, 2020

## Message from Pastor Fran Green

*"I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms." (Ephesians 1:19-20 NLT)*

I am taking this week as a week of vacation. There will be no communion this week, but we will resume next Wednesday, and we will also begin our Connecting Hour on Sunday, September 20. Here's the important information from last week's newsletter, have a great week!

Adult Bible study will be held in the sanctuary following our worship service at 10:30. This seems to be the best option to be able to use PowerPoint while also live-streaming via Zoom, Google Meet, or Facebook live.

Sunday school and confirmation will be offered virtually in partnership with St. Michael's Lutheran Church much like vacation Bible school this summer. We are grateful for the privilege and openness of our congregations to work together for the mission of the Church. Please check out St. Michael's website for more information on *Connect Kids at Home*. When you are ready, **please register at the following link by September 8** <https://smlcb.org/ministries/children/>. All materials will be delivered to Mount Hope after this date in time for a September 20 kickoff. Please contact me if you have any questions. [pastor@mthopelutheran.org](mailto:pastor@mthopelutheran.org)

For now, we will continue to offer one in-person worship service at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. Our numbers have slowly gotten larger, but we are still within safe parameters to remain at less than 50% capacity. Our online worship attendance appears to remain well-attended. Thank you to all of you for your patience and flexibility as we navigate these challenging times.

**Communion is moving to Wednesdays.** In order to fit with my schedule for the next few weeks, we are changing communion visits to Wednesdays. Please contact the church office to **get your spot** to receive Holy Communion, Wednesday, September 16. If Wednesday does not work, please let Kim know what does and I will work you in.

As mentioned, the past few weeks, I have had people ask me if we will stop offering the Lord's Supper privately 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. We plan to continue to offer the private communion option as long as there are people who desire it. 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

# Sunday School

Sunday school and confirmation will be offered virtually in partnership with St. Michael's Lutheran Church much like vacation Bible school this summer. We are grateful for the privilege and openness of our congregations to work together for the mission of the Church. Please check out St. Michael's website for more information on *Connect Kids at Home*. When you are ready, **please register at the following link by September 8** <https://smlcb.org/ministries/children/>. All materials will be delivered to Mount Hope after this date in time for a September 20 kickoff. Please contact me if you have any questions. [pastor@mthopelutheran.org](mailto:pastor@mthopelutheran.org)

## Discipleship 101 at Mount Hope

The Scriptures command us to be growing disciples and part of that growth occurs as we become more engaged in the Body of Christ, His Church. It all begins with Class 101 where we Discover Our Church Family. This is our "new member class" and is the starting point to becoming a growing disciple of Jesus where you can discover your place in God's story. We will walk through the fundamentals of the Christian faith, build community with one another, and see what following Jesus looks like. In Class 101 you will learn who we are and what we believe as a family of faith. Contact Pastor Fran for more information on Class 101.

## Adult Sunday Bible Study-10:30 am

**Class 201 *Discovering Spiritual Maturity*** is the next step in our spiritual journey to develop a few key habits in our lives so that we grow and mature as followers of Jesus. Class 201 is designed to teach you about these simple habits and show you the different steps you can take to mature and grow as a Christian.

Class 201 will resume on Sunday, September 20 at 10:30 after our worship service in the sanctuary at Mount Hope. Contact Pastor Fran for more information.

In **Class 301 *Discovering My Ministry***, you will learn that what you do with your life matters to God. You were created for a purpose, God shaped you in a unique way, by your spiritual gifts, your heart, your abilities, your personality, and your experiences. Class 301 is designed to help you find the perfect place to serve based on who you are. You were created to make an impact in the world. Class 301 will begin immediately following Class 201 in early October.

**Class 401 *Discovering My Life Mission*** will lead you to discover that God designed you to live life on mission, every day could be an opportunity to make the world a better place. You have a role to play. Class 401 is designed to equip you to tell your own story and share your faith with others. You will also learn how to be a part of the outreach opportunities of Mount Hope. Class 401 will be offered in early 2021.

\*\*CLASS, *The Life Development Process*, used with permission *Pastors.com*.

# The Message

***Don't tell me what a friend I have in Jesus, until I see what a friend, I have in you. Dr. Gene Habecker***

*These – and other such commandments – are summed up in this one commandment: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” “Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.” (Romans 13:9-10) And of course, Jesus said the same, (John 15:17), “This is my command: Love each other.”*

In so many ways, we see our world in turmoil. Many are calling the divisions a Civil War. How does one actually LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR? It is tempting and so much easier, to silo ourselves and take care of me.

Perhaps it is coincidence, or not, but I have been re-reading a book from seminary on church history by scholar Dr. Bruce Shelley. It is always fascinating to look back at the early church to see how they lived out their faith in what often much more turbulent and dangerous time than ours. In fact, I believe there is so much we can learn from our history. Further, I find direct application for our church today, to live in this uncertain world. Shelley writes, *Several prominent factors appear to have contributed to the growth of Christianity.*

*First, and rather obviously, early Christians were moved by a burning conviction. The Event had happened. God had invaded time and Christians were captivated by the creative power of that grand news.* How many Christians today are moved by a burning conviction? How many of us are living passionately excited about the fact that Jesus rose from the dead?! How many of us are captivated by the power of the Holy Spirit and so captivated that we simply cannot NOT share this amazing news?! The first and most important way to love our neighbors is to share the good news that fuels us.

*Second, the Christian gospel met a widely felt need in the hearts of people. Only the God of love – rather than the individual’s self-respect – could make the Christian life possible and direct the believer outward to the needs of his fellow men.* As mentioned the past couple of weeks, God changes our hearts by the power of His Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “My peace I give you.” That peace that surpasses all human understanding. This builds on or off of THE EVENT. Jesus’ resurrection changes everything! And our faith in this Gospel message brings us into the peace. This is our great Hope. This flows from our life in the Lord. Remembering earlier in (Romans 8:14-15) *“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’”* By the power of God’s Holy Spirit He fills us; fills the hole in us that only He can. That is the *widely felt need in the hearts of all people* that makes following Jesus possible. Which leads to...

*Third, the practical expression of Christian love was probably among the most powerful causes of Christian success. Tertullian (155-240, an early Christian writer) tells us the pagans remarked, “See how these Christians love one another.” Christian love found expression in the care of the poor, of widows; in visits to brethren in prisons or to those condemned to a living death in the mines; and in acts of compassion during a famine, earthquake, or war.*

(Romans 13:8) *“Owe nothing to anyone – except for your obligation to love one another.”*

*Lactantius, the North African scholar (c.240-320) wrote, “We will not allow the image and creation of God to be thrown out to the wild beasts and the birds as their prey; it must be given back to the earth from which it was taken.”* He was talking about the Christians often providing burial service for people, not just Christians. This was a tremendous witness.

Dr. Shelley writes *The impact of this ministry of mercy upon pagans is revealed in the observation of one of Christianity's worst enemies, the apostate Emperor Julian (332-63). Julian wanted to set aside Christianity and bring back the ancient faith.*

*Julian writes, Atheism (i.e. Christian faith) has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers, and through their care for the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jew who is a beggar, and that the Galileans care not only for their own poor but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the help that we should render them. Wow! What an expression of the love of Jesus. What an expression of loving the neighbor.*

It would be easy for us to look at this and come up with a program, a Church Growth Program. Let's package this and sell it, let's make some money on this formula for church growth, people do it all the time. If we stop and think about our readings for today and the witness of the early church, we realize that this is a backwards approach. If one pursues church growth simply to grow a bigger and better church, this misses the point. How can we grow the church? Be the church!

It all begins with The Event. As if we needed a reminder; but, it all begins with Jesus. (Romans 5:6-11) *"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* And God raised Him from the dead. We celebrate this boldly each year at Easter, but don't talk enough about the resurrection at other times. I think sometimes we may even shy away from bold proclamation of Jesus' victory, especially with unbelievers. But the resurrection is The Event that sets Christianity apart. It is The Event that changed the course of history. It is The Event that proves God's love for us. The power of this Event is the same power that is our fuel faith and living the life of faith.

(Ephesians 1:19-20) *"I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms."* Our love of neighbor begins with Jesus. Our love of neighbor begins and flows from our love of Jesus. Our love of neighbor is empowered by Jesus' love, the love He poured out for us on the cross. That love we receive from Him is for us to share with others.

*"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and truth."* (1 John 3:16-18 NIV) Amen.

# Announcements

## Wednesday Communion

Pastor Fran will continue to offer in person communion on Wednesdays 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](mailto: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.

## In-Home Bible Study

Ladies, you are welcome to attend our new study on *Hymns*! We will be meeting at the **church** this year in the **Youth Room**. We will follow state mandates by social distancing mandates and by wearing masks. We will be meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday during the months of September – May. At our study we will look at 3-4 hymns; who wrote them and their meaning. Our first study will be on **Tuesday, September 22 at 6:30 pm**. If you would like the study book or have any questions, please contact Jennifer Adamek at 952-451-5860.

## **Altar Flowers**

We will begin ordering Altar flowers again 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.

## **Church Library**

Check out our great selection of books in the church library. There are five fiction bookshelves and two non-fiction bookshelves. There are Christian love stories, mysteries, books of hope and relationships, autobiographies, bibles, and bible studies to choose from. Browse and pick books to read, return them when you are finished. It's that simple! You do not need to check them out, just return them when you are finished.

## **VEAP**

The VEAP "Back to School" donations were delivered to VEAP on Monday, 8/31/20 along with additional food items, weighing 60 lbs. that had been donated. Including our March Food Drive we have donated 280 lbs. of food. You so generously donated: 30 boxes of color crayons, 88 glue sticks, 2 bottles of glue, 19 boxes of colored pencils, 4 boxes of lead pencils, 23 markers, 17 note books, 18 folders, 20 scissors, 6 pkts. pens, 9 erasers, 2 pencil sharpeners, and 2 post it notes. I was also able to deliver a \$50.00 check and \$20.00 in cash. Once again thank you for your participation. We will continue to receive food items and COVID -19 donations, for VEAP, as mentioned in last week's newsletter.

Thank You, Ministry Partner Rep. Karen Mueller

## **Lutheran Woman on a Mission**

Pick up your free copy of the Lutheran Woman's Quarterly Magazine at the communion table in the entryway.

Check out the attached Great MNS Mission Get Together held at Mayer Lutheran on Saturday, October 10. Jennifer Adamek will be attending if you need a ride. The deadline to rsvp is September 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **LWML-Mite Offerings**

Give this fall 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! The whole list is posted on the hallway bulletin board.

**Ladies, you are invited to attend:**

Masks and social distancing mandates will be followed.

**“TELL EVERYONE WHAT HE HAS DONE!”**



**THE GREAT MINNESOTA SOUTH  
MISSION GET—TOGETHER**

**Saturday, October 10, 2020**

**Mayer Lutheran High School**

305 5th St NE, Mayer, MN 55360

Doors open at 7:00 a.m.

Worship Service: 9:00 a.m.

MNS LCMS President Lucas Woodford, Proclaimer

Keynote Speaker, Jan Struck

Devotions Moments

Mission Speakers

Silent Auction    Servant Events

Lunch

2 Offerings: *benefiting MNS LWML*

*Mite Goal, Phil's Friends, Trinity First—  
Minneapolis, Chance International*

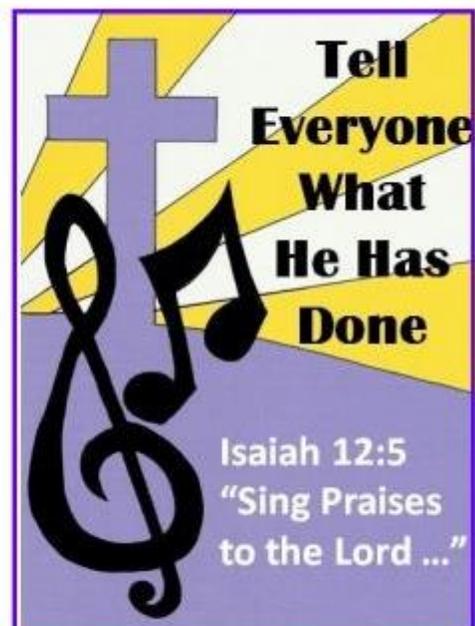
Registration: \$30.00

Register online at [mnslwml.org](http://mnslwml.org)

Deadline: September 19, 2020

*Live Stream*

Minnesota South District LWML/Facebook



**Sponsored by MNS LWML**

## Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30am In-Person Worship  
Services online at  
[www.mthopelutheran.org](http://www.mthopelutheran.org)

**Phone:** 952-888-5059

**E-mail:** [church@mthopelutheran.org](mailto:church@mthopelutheran.org)

**Website:** [www.mthopelutheran.org](http://www.mthopelutheran.org)

## Mount Hope's Staff

Fran Green	Pastor <a href="mailto:pastor@mthopelutheran.org">pastor@mthopelutheran.org</a>
Christina Brantner	Music Director <a href="mailto:music@mthopelutheran.org">music@mthopelutheran.org</a>
Jennifer Adamek	Administrative Assistant-Media <a href="mailto:jadamek@mthopelutheran.org">jadamek@mthopelutheran.org</a>
Kim Wuebke	Director of Preschool and Childcare Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:church@mthopelutheran.org">church@mthopelutheran.org</a>
Steve Sundseth	Custodian
Sam Killam	Custodian

Mount Hope Lutheran Church  
3601 W Old Shakopee Rd  
Bloomington, MN 55431

Address Service Requested

