

Spirit of Hope

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Preschool and Childcare

December 30, 2020

Message from Pastor Fran Green

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel” (Matthew 1:23)

All of our mid-week advent and Christmas Eve services are available online at www.mthopelutheran.org/sermons or on YouTube at Mount Hope Lutheran Church or Facebook at Mount Hope Lutheran Church. DVD's are also available on the table near the east entrance of the church or call the church office and we will send you a copy in the mail.

Thank you to all who contributed to our Advent and Christmas services with special music, donations, decorations, and video help. Our Christmas season here at Mount Hope was special even during pandemic precautions because of you.

We will continue to offer private communion on Wednesdays for now. These visits have been well-received and are a wonderful time to connect in a meaningful way with our Lord. Please contact the church office to get your spot to receive **Holy Communion, Wednesday, January 6**. If Wednesdays do not work, please let Kim know what does and I will work you in. Please note, **there will be no appointments on Wednesday, December 30** and the church office will be **closed this week (December 28-January 1)**.

“Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57

We are Mount Hope,
Where Guests become Friends, Friends become Family!
Pastor Fran Green



We celebrate Jesus, God with us, once again as 2020 comes to a close. May we never tire of this miracle as we joyously and expectantly wait for Jesus' return.

We are grateful for our shared ministry of the Gospel and for all of you, our Mount Hope family.

Blessings – Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

Pastor Fran, Tammy, Zeke, Silas

Thank You!!

We are grateful for the Christmas gift that you gave to our family.

It is such a blessing to serve our Lord with all of you who are so generous, thoughtful, and caring.

Thank you so much! Pastor Fran, Tammy, Zeke, Silas

Sunday's Message

December 27, 2020

“In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, who he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.” Hebrews 1:1-2

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). Matthew 1:22-23. Incredible words! God with us. How often have we had to cling to those words during this year of all years – 2020? I have heard many times and have even said myself, “Never in my life have I experienced ... Unprecedented”. We know and trust that God is with us.

What does it mean to celebrate Jesus' birth once again in this year of all years 2020? Is it the comfort, familiarity, and celebration? Is it being able to go shopping, dreaming of returning to some sense of normal? There is no doubt that we have all been challenged; is Jesus with us? Difficulty and challenge often have a way of turning our focus on ourselves rather on Jesus, the God who is with us.

What is our greatest desire? To live long and prosper? That is pretty close to what our country promotes. This has played out openly this past year. If we think about the pandemic it seems the world's greatest desire is life. Much like modern health care, we will do everything we can to extend our lives. We spare no expense to salvage any amount of time of life. Life seems to be the greatest good.

Of course, I believe that people are created in God's image and that we should protect human life; but is that why Jesus came? I read a very challenging article this week that had this quote of theologian and professor Stanley Hauerwas: *As a matter of fact, Christians do not believe that life is sacred. I often remind my right-to-life friends that Christians took their children with them to martyrdom rather than have them raised pagan. Christians believe there is much worth dying for. We do not believe that human life is an absolute good in and of itself. Of course, our desire to protect human life is part of our seeing each human being as God's creature. But that does not mean that we believe that life is an overriding good. To say that life is an overriding good is to underwrite the modern sentimentality that there is absolutely nothing in this world dying for.*

Nothing in the world worth dying for? What about you? Are you worth dying for? Absolutely!! Jesus thought so!

Jesus lived this out for you and for me. He came to give us life, but more importantly, He came out of love. He lived and died to restore our broken relationship with Him. That was His desire. He wants to be your desire. Even more than life itself.

Isaiah 26:8, “Yes Lord, walking in the way of your truth, we wait eagerly for you, for your name and renown are the desire of our souls.” What is your greatest desire?

The Christmas story is an incredible one. Think about it. Jesus, Immanuel God with us, loves you more than life itself.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us.

“And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.” 1 John 1:1-4

The apostle John saw our Lord with his own eyes, he touched Him, he had fellowship with Him. He was filled with joy in this relationship. And he desires that we too, are living in a relationship with Jesus. Is Jesus our greatest desire? Are we consumed by His love and this relationship?

See how very much our heavenly Father loves us, for he allows us to be called his children – think of it – and we really are! But since most people don’t know God, naturally they don’t understand that we are his children. “Yes, dear friends, we are already God’s children, right now, and we can’t even imagine what it is going to be like later on.” 1 John 3:1-2 TLB

Immanuel, God with us, in Jesus. May He be our desire more than life itself.

1 Peter 2:2, “like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.”

“As a deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?” Psalm 42:1-2

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.” 1 Corinthians 9:24 Is that how we pursue our Lord? Our desire for the Lord grows as we spend time in His Word and prayer.

“Seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon him while he is near.” Isaiah 55:6 “Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Acts 2:21

“And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” Hebrews 12:1-2 Our desire!

“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.” 1 John 4:9 Be our greatest desire today, Immanuel!!

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). Matthew 1:21-23

AMEN.

January Celebrations

Birthdays

- 2 Brady McMullen
- 4 Vicki Johnson-Schmidt
- 6 Max Blauvelt
- 8 Matt Frein
- 10 Marilyn Nelson
- 11 Jenn Schleifer
- 13 James Froemming
- 14 Peggy Maas
- 15 Tammy Green
- 15 Stephanie Hinz
- 19 Dan Adamek
- 19 Zachery Brantner
- 20 Anika Quittschreiber
- 22 Jenny Rosenlund
- 27 Darlene Wendt
- 28 Claire McMullen
- 30 Tracie Klug-Melbostad
- 31 Steve Sundseth

Baptismal Birthdays

- 1 Shirley Favorit
- 9 Linda Carstens
- 11 Lea Fox
- 12 DJ Fox
- 13 Ed Borgen
- 15 Karen Mueller
- 19 Arlene Schmidt
- 19 Corban Lumives
- 20 Pastor Green
- 28 Drew Adamek
- 29 Ina Adams

Announcements

Happy New Year 2021

After the difficult, extraordinary 2020 year we pray and have hope for a brighter year ahead. May God bless and keep you in the year 2021!

Altar Flowers

The new 2021 Flower Calendar is up on the bulletin board in the information hallway. Please sign up for a date that you would like to recognize a special date or want to beautify the church. The arrangements are \$30-make your check payable to *The Women of Hope* and place it and your dedication in Karen Mack's mailbox or call her at 952-831-7428.

Action - Sharing Jesus' Love through December

Mitten Tree

We will be collecting outdoor gear for the children of Trinity First Lutheran School in Minneapolis. Hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and gators can be placed on the Mitten Tree in the entryway hallway. Thank you for your donations!

KARA Project

Mt Hope is collecting monetary donations now through the end of the year by offerings and online donations for KARA (Kids At Risk Action Group). **ABOUT VIDEO**. The final dollar amount collected will be then sent directly to the organization in Hopkins, MN to support their efforts. Monetary donations are to support these traumatized and vulnerable children and fund the efforts of advocates to make a change at the government level. Please visit <https://www.invisiblechildren.org/> and learn how you can get involved in volunteering, signing petitions, sending letters to politicians and policymakers. -

Send your donation to: (write "KARA donation" in the memo)

Mt Hope Lutheran Church

Attn: Finance

3601 W Old Shakopee Rd

Bloomington, MN 55431

Donate online: mthopelutheran.org/giving/ (Click on the-Apply To-drop down option and select-Mission Outreach)



New 2021 Directories

There are new 2021 directories available in the entryway of the church or if you would like one sent to you please call the church office at 952-888-5059.

2021 Offering Envelopes

Offering Envelopes for 2021 are now available in the information hallway or if you would like them sent to you please call the church office at 952-888-5059.

Facebook and Instagram

Check out Mount Hope's Facebook page for services and posts. You can click on the share button  Share or the like button  Like and Mount Hope's posts-spreading the Good News of Jesus with your friends and family!

Stamps for Missions

The stamps on your everyday mail can earn money for missions. Just cut around the stamp leaving at least a ¼" paper margin and place them in Wayne Markel's church mailbox. Thank you!



New Life Family Services Baby Shower

In honor of Right to Life Sunday we will be collecting new or gently used baby clothes (up to size 2), diapers and formula from Sunday, January 10, until Sunday January 31. There will be a baby crib available to place your items in the vestibule at church during these dates. They will be taken to New Life Family Services in Richfield at the end of the month. If you have any questions please call Jennifer at 952-451-5860 or email her at k2adamek@gmail.com. Thank you for your donations!



Book Club

Book Club will not be meeting in the month of January. Visit your local library for interesting fiction and new topics. Let your imagination take you away!

Hymn Bible Study

Our next HYMN Bible Study will be on Tuesday, January 12th at 6:30 pm in the youth room at church. Please read month 4. Pick your favorite Hymn in month 4 and be ready to discuss. Book 2 will be available at this date.

Our thanks to the HYMN Bible study ladies who donated the beautiful white poinsettias for the worship center this Christmas season. They made the sanctuary look so festive! Thank you!



Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30am In-Person Worship

Services Online at

www.mthopelutheran.org/sermons

Phone: 952-888-5059

E-mail: church@mthopelutheran.org

Website: www.mthopelutheran.org

Youtube Channel: Mount Hope
Lutheran Church

Mount Hope's Staff

Fran Green

Pastor

pastor@mthopelutheran.org

Christina Brantner

Music Director

music@mthopelutheran.org

Jennifer Adamek

Administrative Assistant-Media

jadamek@mthopelutheran.org

Kim Wuebke

Director of Preschool and Childcare

Administrative Assistant

church@mthopelutheran.org

Steve Sundseth

Custodian

Sam Killam

Custodian

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

3601 W Old Shakopee Rd

Bloomington, MN 55431

Address Service Requested

