

Spirit of Hope

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Preschool and Childcare

February 17, 2021

Message from Pastor Fran Green

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." (Mark 9:23 NIV)

We talked about believing yesterday in worship. It seems that for many the word belief could be defined as wishful thinking; but clearly that is not what Jesus is talking about. In fact, Jesus talks about belief as certainty when that belief is built upon Truth and we know that Jesus is Truth.

And we remember and celebrate that as we begin our Lenten journey together. Remember the apostle Paul's words, **"For God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. So, when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended, and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense."** (1 Corinthians 1:21-23 NLT)

We thank God for this "foolish plan", the entire message is included in this newsletter and can also be found on our website or YouTube page.

Invite a guest to join us in person at 9:30 each Sunday or via live streaming on our YouTube page: Mount Hope Lutheran Church or catch it at a later time either on our website: mthopelutheran.org or call for a DVD copy. Remember, there are a lot of lonely people out there and perhaps that lonely person is you. Your Mount Hope family is here for you, please reach out and connect with us.

We will continue to offer private communion by appointment for now for those who are able to come in to church during the week. Please contact the church office to get your spot to receive Holy Communion, Wednesday, February 17.

On Sunday, February 21, there will be opportunities to receive the Lord's Supper immediately following the worship service for those who are unable to come during the week.

On a personal note, I am scheduled for a total knee replacement on March 1. At this point, I will have pre-op appointments the week prior and on Saturday, February 27, I will have a COVID test. So, that means I will need to quarantine from that point on. Pastors Dan Ritter and John Stern will be covering for me while away. The surgeon has not been very specific in the amount of recovery time necessary, so we will proceed with our tentative plans for the month of March. Thank you, Pastor Dan and Pastor John, for helping us out during this time.

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!
Serving together,
Pastor Fran Green

The Season of Lent

Lent begins this week!

Our Lenten season will kick off this week with our Ash Wednesday service walking with Jesus to *Jerusalem*. This year we will be visiting *Places of the Passion*.

The places where the passion of our Lord took place hold special meaning to Christians the world over. These places remind us that Jesus walked this earth and stood in locations we can still find today to carry out his mission of salvation. This was no sightseeing trip for our Savior. There was a serious reason he came to be at certain places and at particular times to suffer and die and rise again. He was fulfilling the will of his Father who desired that we be forgiven and given a place in heaven with him forever.

PLACES of the PASSION



The City of Jerusalem

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Each week, these worship services will be available online at mthopelutheran.org/sermons and on our YouTube page. They will also be available in DVD at church or we can send them to you in the mail, simply let us know.

These prerecorded worship services will be available on the web at:

Youtube: [Mount Hope Lutheran Church - YouTube](#)

Facebook: [Mount Hope Lutheran Church, Bloomington, MN | Facebook](#)

Instagram: on your phone at Mount Hope Lutheran Church

and our Website: [Mount Hope Lutheran Church – Minneapolis, MN \(mthopelutheran.org\)](http://mthopelutheran.org)

DVD's will be available at church

or we can send them to you in the mail, simply let us know.

We are continuing with this format of online services during the week and in-person worship on Sundays as this has worked very well in limiting contacting or spreading COVID-19. For Easter Sunday, we will be asking people to sign up for one of two services so that we are able to gauge our worship numbers. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we navigate, what is hopefully, the final phase of the coronavirus limitations.

Sunday's Message

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." (Mark 9:23 NIV)

Do YOU believe Jesus here? EVERYTHING? I'm sure we can more likely relate to this statement, Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, **"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (v. 24)**

We can see this tension in the disciples and I'm sure we can see it in our own lives as well. I DO believe Lord, help me overcome my unbelief!!

What is belief anyway? Too often people get belief confused with or liken it to "wishful thinking". Immediately following our gospel reading today, Jesus is confronted by a man with a son possessed by an evil spirit. "Your disciples were unable to drive out the spirit." "You unbelieving generation!" is Jesus' reply.

In other words, I am not talking about wishful thinking here! Belief is accepting something as true, not a wish...Jesus is TRUTH.

Peter, James, and John were granted a "behind-the-scenes" look at who Jesus is. There they are Jesus visiting with Moses and Elijah! This is incredible isn't it? Peter is overwhelmed...we've got to do something!! **"Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters – one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."** Mark 9:5 Peter, as well as James and John are overcome!! They are terrified by the voice **"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"** Mark 9:9

Peter, James, and John are given access and are shown who Jesus is. We know that even with this and all that they had seen Jesus do, they were still confused at times. Even as Jesus is arrested, Peter draws a sword and lops off the ear of one of the soldiers. Peter denies Jesus three times. They are a work in progress.

They wrote down what they had seen and heard, after Jesus had been raised from the dead, then they became bold witnesses. Jesus is the Messiah – He is the Promised One.

That's when it all began to make sense to them; guided by the Holy Spirit they saw that Moses and Elijah are the Law and the Prophets; Jesus is the one they pointed to; Jesus is True Israel. He fulfilled God's plan of restoration. All prophecies point to Jesus. James became the first apostle martyred, Peter and John spread the message of Jesus, the Son of God. They are eyewitnesses.

We know this don't we? Every year before we move into Lent, we read about and remember the Transfiguration. Why? Peter comments on this very thing in his second letter. 2 Peter chapter 1. V. 12 **"So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things."**

Peter knew, The Holy Spirit moved him to remind us of what Jesus has done, we need reminding on who Jesus is. We too are a work in progress. SO THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE OR THAT YOU MAY CONTINUE TO BELIEVE!! (This is how John put it in his gospel, John 20:31) One scholar wrote these words:

Yes, we need reminders. Jesus is the Messiah; He paid the price; only He is qualified to redeem His people. It cannot be earned; we live by faith in what He has done. (We believe)

V. 16 "We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain."

We were there! You can trust our testimony!! I must keep reminding you!!! We have this, God's Word. John Piper writes these words in a book titled God is the Gospel, *The glorious person who once walked the earth is now unseen. All his decisive acts are in the invisible past. We do not have any videos or recordings of Jesus Christ on earth. What we have linking us with Christ and with his cross and resurrection is the word of God, and its center, the gospel.*

Our backstage pass, our "behind-the-scenes" look is in this – the Scriptures.

1 John 1:1-4, **"We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy."**

This is our "behind-the-scenes" look at Jesus!! We have fellowship with Peter, James, John and the Lord!! This is the way Jesus designed it. We see who He is through the Scriptures by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“Everything is possible for one who believes.” We are moving Forward as a church DREAMING boldly, in PRAYER, CHOOSING to FOCUS on JESUS’ mission for us, as we RISK everything for His DREAM for us here in BELIEF in His promises.

What are those promises? Here are a few...

Isaiah 41:10 **“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”**

John 16:33 **“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”**

Psalms 32:8 **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.”**

And then in the last chapter of Mark 16:14-16, **“Later He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table; and He upbraided (rebuked) them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw Him after He had risen. And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved!’”**

Do we believe this? What might be some of our limiting beliefs? When my boys were little we would play a fun game. Our house was such that the upper bathroom was at the top of a flight of stairs. I would holler GO! And my boys would take turns running through the bathroom and jumping out over the stairs into my waiting arms. It was great fun! They trusted me, in other words, they believed in me and knew that I would catch them.

That is exactly what Peter is reminding us of today. We can live with reckless abandon based on our belief in Jesus. We have this behind-the-scenes testimony of eyewitnesses. Our Lord gives us faith to believe by the power of His Holy Spirit. And just like me calling to my boys, Jesus tells us to GO! Where will you go? Who will you share this wonderful message with?

We have immediate opportunities for English teachers in our IFC (International Friendship Center-POBLO). Contact me to learn more. And/or, who do you know who needs to hear this Good News? There are so many opportunities!

Promises of love and forgiveness for you and for me. A *Call* for you and for me as well.
GO! BELIEVE!! Go and proclaim this good news!!

Amen.

Announcements

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. There are many spots available to choose from. Sign up today!

The flowers given on Sunday, February 21, 2021 are given by Al Johnson in honor of his mother's 105th Birthday! And a 2nd arrangement is from John and Karen Mack in celebration of February birthdays for Todd, Caleb and Karen.

Open Enrollment

Registration for the 2021-22 school year opens to the public on February 1. If you know of anyone looking for preschool, please have them contact Kim in the office or direct them to our website. Mount Hope cares for children starting at 33 months of age. We would love to reach more of our neighbors.

Thank You

Thank you for the many items giving for the Baby Shower for New Life Family Services in January. It was a great success! A delivery of these items will be made in February.

Live In-Person Worship

Wear your mask properly...

Use the following self-assessment If your answer to any of the following is "yes", you may not attend in-person church and should seek consult from your physician.

Are you or anyone in your household experiencing the COVID-19 symptoms? (see below)



Is anyone in your household waiting for COVID-19 test results?

Are you a "close contact" to someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

Do you have one of the following "more common" symptoms?

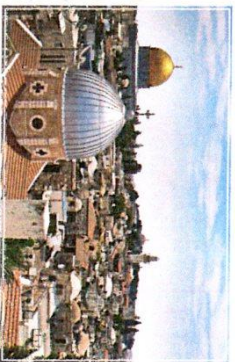
New onset or worsening cough Difficulty breathing Fever of 100.4 F or higher New loss of taste or smell

Do you have two of the following "less common" symptoms? Chills Muscle pain New onset of severe headache Sore throat Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea Excessive fatigue New onset of nasal congestion/ runny nose

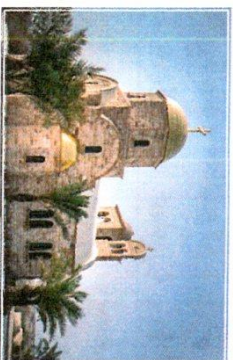
Wash your hands frequently and maintain six feet of distance between yourself and others.

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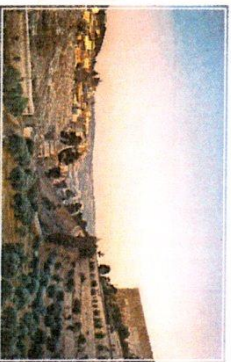
A Series of Services for the Season of Lent



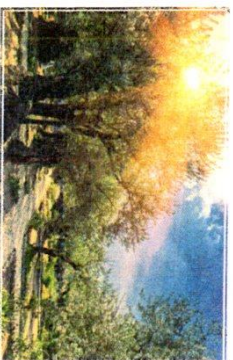
The City of Jerusalem



Bethany



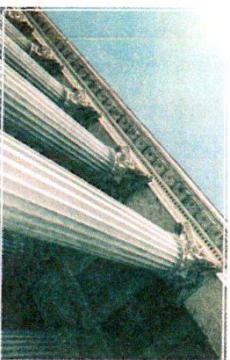
The Mount of Olives



Gethsemane



The Courtyard



Pilate's Judgment Hall

PLACES of the PASSION

Experience the Season of Lent

In this worship series for Lent, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, contemplating what happened at each place our Savior stood along the path of his Passion for our sake. Each service explores the meaning, history and spiritual inspiration associated with the location highlighted. Parishioners will learn things they may not have known before as they grow to understand the hard road our Lord took to open heaven to us.

ASH WEDNESDAY

The City of Jerusalem

Jerusalem is the place of the Passover, where Jesus gathers with the crowds.

Matthew 26:1-5

WEEK 1

Bethany

Jesus is anointed for burial by his friend Mary, at her home in this small town.

Matthew 26:6-13

WEEK 2

The Mount of Olives

The disciples sing a hymn with Jesus before they head out to this place of prayer.

Matthew 26:30-35

WEEK 3

Gethsemane

Jesus is betrayed and arrested in this garden under cover of darkness.

Matthew 26:47-56

WEEK 4

The Courtyard

While Jesus is put on trial before the high priest, Peter denies Jesus in this place.

Matthew 26:57-69

WEEK 5

Pilate's Judgment Hall

Pilate is positioned here to set Jesus free, but turns him over to be crucified instead.

Matthew 27:11-23

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

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