



# Spirit of Hope

## Mount Hope Lutheran Church

### April 28, 2021

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. John 16:13 (NRSV)*

This past Sunday was Good Shepherd Sunday and we considered Jesus' words as He explained that those who were His sheep know His voice. Do you "hear" Jesus' voice? This can be a difficult thing, for Lutherans anyway, to think about. We might get a little uncomfortable when we hear someone say, "Jesus spoke to me" or "I heard Jesus telling me".

Yet, Jesus told us that His sheep know His voice. We know that neither Jesus nor the Scriptures lie. So that leaves us to consider how Jesus speaks to us. Martin Luther stated, "Let the man who would hear God speak, read Holy Scripture." Yes, Jesus does speak to us through the Holy Scriptures. That ultimately includes the Sacraments, which are Jesus' promises spoken to us in His Word.

Even though it may be difficult for us to explain to others, Jesus speaks to us through the Holy Spirit. It is our sixth sense, if you will. Clearly, the *John* passage above and the Scriptures tell us that Jesus continues to speak to His people who have received the Holy Spirit in Holy Baptism. His voice may not be the same as when two of us are communicating, but He does continue to speak to each of us. What a gift! The entire message from Sunday is included in this newsletter.

As we move into our second year of COVID-19 challenges, we are slowly working to resume "normal" practices. We do plan to continue our **in-person worship times of 8:30 and 10:45**. We are hopeful that another in-person option will allow more to return to church as more are vaccinated and many resume pre-COVID activities. **We are again having Bible study between services, 9:30-10:30 (more info below).**

**NOTE the change in times: We have changed the first service** worship time to **begin at 8:30**. We are doing this since our services are consistently running 45 minutes or less, which means that those attending early service that also want to stay for Bible study would have 30 minutes or so to wait. Changing the time allows for a better flow to our mornings and eliminates the long wait period. Thank you, as always, for being flexible as we work to return to our new normal.

We understand and support each individual decision and comfort level with being in public spaces. Corona virus is still a threat and appears that it will continue to be for some time.

Invite a guest to join us in person at 8:30 or 10:45 each Sunday or via live streaming on our YouTube page [Mount Hope Lutheran Church - YouTube](#) or catch it at a later time either on our website [mthopelutheran.org](http://mthopelutheran.org) or call for a DVD copy. Remember, there are a lot of people "out there" who need to hear the Good News of Jesus.

**For the first two weeks in May, the vision team will be leading Bible study** while also sharing the work it has done for nearly the past two years. This is a wonderful opportunity to join in the conversation around the identity of Mount Hope and the work that the Lord has called us to. **Come with your questions and input.** It is an exciting time to be the church!

**Finally**, we are planning on returning to a **once-per-month newsletter**. Therefore, the next newsletter, following this one, will arrive sometime the last week of May. We will mail a hard copy of the sermon from Sunday and any other information that you might want to those who are unable to attend worship or access online, just let the church office know please.

**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

# April 25, 2021 Sunday Message

What is your favorite animal? Which do you identify with? Maybe a lion, the king of the jungle. A horse perhaps, the elegance and speed; maybe some type of bird. I know I have always loved and had a fascination with eagles. Incredible and amazing. Why? Why don't many choose a sheep? 😊

Yet, that's who Jesus compares us to. SHEEP – Sheep cannot survive on their own. Most animals can survive in the wild. Not sheep; unable to fleece themselves or protect themselves from predators. They are completely dependent on a person. There is our reason for why Jesus compares us to sheep. It is the same with people – Jesus, our Shepherd, is the only way we can survive.

**You don't have to teach sheep** to drift off. They just do it naturally. By their very nature they just kind of wander off and the shepherd must bring them back in. And they'll walk off a cliff. Sheep aren't really that bright an animal. They'll walk into a den of wolves, and into all kinds of difficult and dangerous situations. **Sheep tend to wander.** We don't tend to stay close to God. We tend to wander off just like sheep.

The Bible says ***"All we like sheep have gone astray. We each have turned into our own way."* (Isaiah 53:6)** In other words, like sheep we tend to wander. We get distracted and find ourselves **not listening** to the Shepherd's voice. What are the things that get in the way of our relationship with the Lord?

*John 10:16, I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold, (That includes you and me), I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. LISTEN TO MY VOICE?*

Think about your most important relationships, your family and friends. We need to spend time together. Focus on the other, that person you desire to be close to. It's ridiculous to think we can get closer to a person without being with them. The Message paraphrase offers a wonderful translation of *Jeremiah 29:13-14, God said, "When you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else...I'll turn things around for you."* HOW?

*Luther was quoted, "Let the man who would hear God speak, read Holy Scripture."*

*Isaiah 55:6, Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near.*

*James 4:8, Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.*

We hear the Lord in His Word!

1) INTENTIONAL – HABIT, Put the Lord first. Be in the WORD!

LCMS pastor Bryan Wolfmueller writes, *American Christianity starts with me, continues with my works, finds comfort in my closeness with God, and is always looking inside for hope and peace. This is the perfect recipe for pride and despair, for a trust in ourselves or fear of God's judgment. The Scriptures give us something different, something better. In the Scriptures, we find God long-suffering, abounding in steadfast love, with an abundance of mercy for us. And the Lord has preserved this teaching in the world.*

*I never thought I would end up in the Lutheran Church, but here, in the last place I expected it, was the simplicity of Christ, the clarity of the Scriptures, the sharpness of the Law (all the things we try to do), and the sweetness of the Gospel (the wonderful things the Lord has done). Here, in the Lutheran Church, the Lord's mercy found me, His promises took hold of me, and His Gospel surprised and delighted me. Here my sins are absolved. Here my conscience is comforted. Here I hear the voice of my Good Shepherd, Jesus, surprising me with His mercy and calling me to be His own.*

The means of grace, God's Word, Holy Communion, and Baptism. Ultimately, it is all about God's Word. We believe the Word of God is sufficient. God's Word creates faith. God's Word delivers the promises of God. We receive all we need through the Word of God. **Jesus speaks through the Word.** But the world is full of wolves and so many other predators.

There are so many other voices, so many distractions in the world. What voices are distracting you? Sometimes the loudest voice is our very own as we repeat the lies of our enemy to ourself. *"You haven't done enough for Jesus to love you." "You are unlovable." "Why are you even trying?"* And of course, these are true! But, we must not forget that we are in the pen. Jesus has claimed us as His own through our baptisms. We can journey listening to His voice and following Him even with the wolves and distractions of life.

Jesus is calling all of us.

*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and My burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30*

Clearly, the Scriptures show that we need to be in His Word, to find time when we are quiet, blocking out all distractions, with the Lord. Time to be in prayer. The Scriptures tell us to *pray without ceasing, 1 Thessalonians 5:17*. The Scriptures and Prayer go hand in hand. We grow more sensitive to His voice.

Again, it takes a decision and then action – follow through. It is simply not going to “just happen”. When is that or when could that time be? Mornings work best for me; find your time. Ultimately, the goal is that this becomes an “all the time” listening. Wouldn't it be incredible if we were able to “hear” the Lord all the time, as we walk with Him?

Sheep pens in the first century held many flocks in them. What is interesting though, is that the sheep would be able to hear the voice of their own shepherd even with all of the other voices. Oh that we too would be that sensitive to our Shepherd's voice.

Make the decision – Follow with action and discipline. Then LISTEN. How, some may ask? Does God really speak today? To us? *John 10:4 states, After He has gathered His own flock, He walks ahead of them, and they follow Him because they KNOW HIS VOICE. and then verse 14 Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. THEY WILL LISTEN TO MY VOICE AND THERE WILL BE ONE Flock with one shepherd.*

Jesus said that we know His voice. Do you know His voice? Do you know anyone who desires to hear Jesus' voice and to be a part of the flock? *John 16:12, There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own but will tell you what he has heard...in verse 15, The Spirit will tell you whatever He receives from me.*

God speaks! He speaks by the power of the Holy Spirit in us. He speaks through His Holy Word. He speaks through our consciences, The Apostle Paul in *Romans 9:1 said, "With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it."*

When we “continue without ceasing to listen to Him” we hear His voice. When we gather and when we are with other followers of Jesus, He speaks to us as well. *"When two or more are gathered together as my followers, I am there among you." Matthew 18:20.* The Lord God speaks. We need to listen to His voice.

Make the Decision. Choose to “continue without ceasing to listen to Him.”

Next, FOCUS, take action, be disciplined. Intentional TIME – LISTENING. The Holy Spirit helps us.

*The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, He will give life to your mortal bodies by the same Spirit living within you. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. DON'T LISTEN TO THOSE VOICES!! For if you live by its dictates, you will die.*

*But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. THEY ARE LISTENING TO THE VOICE OF GOD!! For His Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. Romans 8:11-14 (NLT)*

I spent much time on my grandparent's farm when I was young. I remember my grandpa going out to the pasture to call the cows in. It always amazed me because he called out to them and they would hear his voice and come. I wanted so bad for them to do the same and respond to my voice. It was so frustrating to me because most times, they wouldn't even lift up their head in response to my voice.

I think that is such a powerful image for us to strive for in our own lives. Let us grow day by day in listening to and following our Good Shepherd! Amen.

# May Celebrations

## Happy Birthday

1 Armand Boehnke  
4 Joe Rosner  
5 Ted Simmons  
6 Josh Adamek  
7 Gene Roehrick  
7 Lorraine Wolden  
9 Richard Hinz  
11 Pauline VonDeylen  
13 Linda Borgen  
15 Cody Rosenlund  
15 Wayne Markel  
15 Fran Wallin  
18 Silas Melbostad  
20 Paul Hinz  
20 Dianne Ritter

## Birthdays con't.

25 Faith Alt  
26 Missy Quittschreiber  
28 Emily Woodhall  
29 Marjule Boehnke  
30 Pastor Dan Ritter

## Wedding Anniversary

1 Dan and Jennifer Adamek  
6 Pastor and Tammy Green  
25 Steve and Kathy Sundseth

## Baptism Anniversary

1 Ramona Duncan  
2 Kim Kunkel  
4 Cathy Frank  
7 Sam Killam  
8 Pat Roehrick  
11 Vivian Brantner  
15 Nathan Moss  
21 Hannah Gliten  
22 Max Blauvelt  
24 Lorraine Wolden

# 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!

Flowers given on Sunday, April 25 were given by Karen Mueller in memory of her husband, Bill, who passed away 12 yrs ago on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## VEAP REPORT

Our March Food and Fund drive donations were delivered to VEAP on Thur. Apr. 15th. There was an extremely long line of cars there picking up food. I was the only vehicle in line to donate at the time.

Because of your generous donations we were able to donate 282.6 lbs. of food and pantry items, along with \$20.00 cash and \$675 in checks, for a total of \$695.00. Each \$10.00 donation equals 30 meals, so we have provided nearly 2,085 meals.

Joe McDonald stated in a recent video, that at VEAP they expect there will be pandemic ramifications well into 2022, with regard to unemployment, rent dollars, and food insecurities. We will therefore keep our collection site (the green shelf in the narthex) in place on a continuing basis, and I will deliver to VEAP, as donations accumulate.

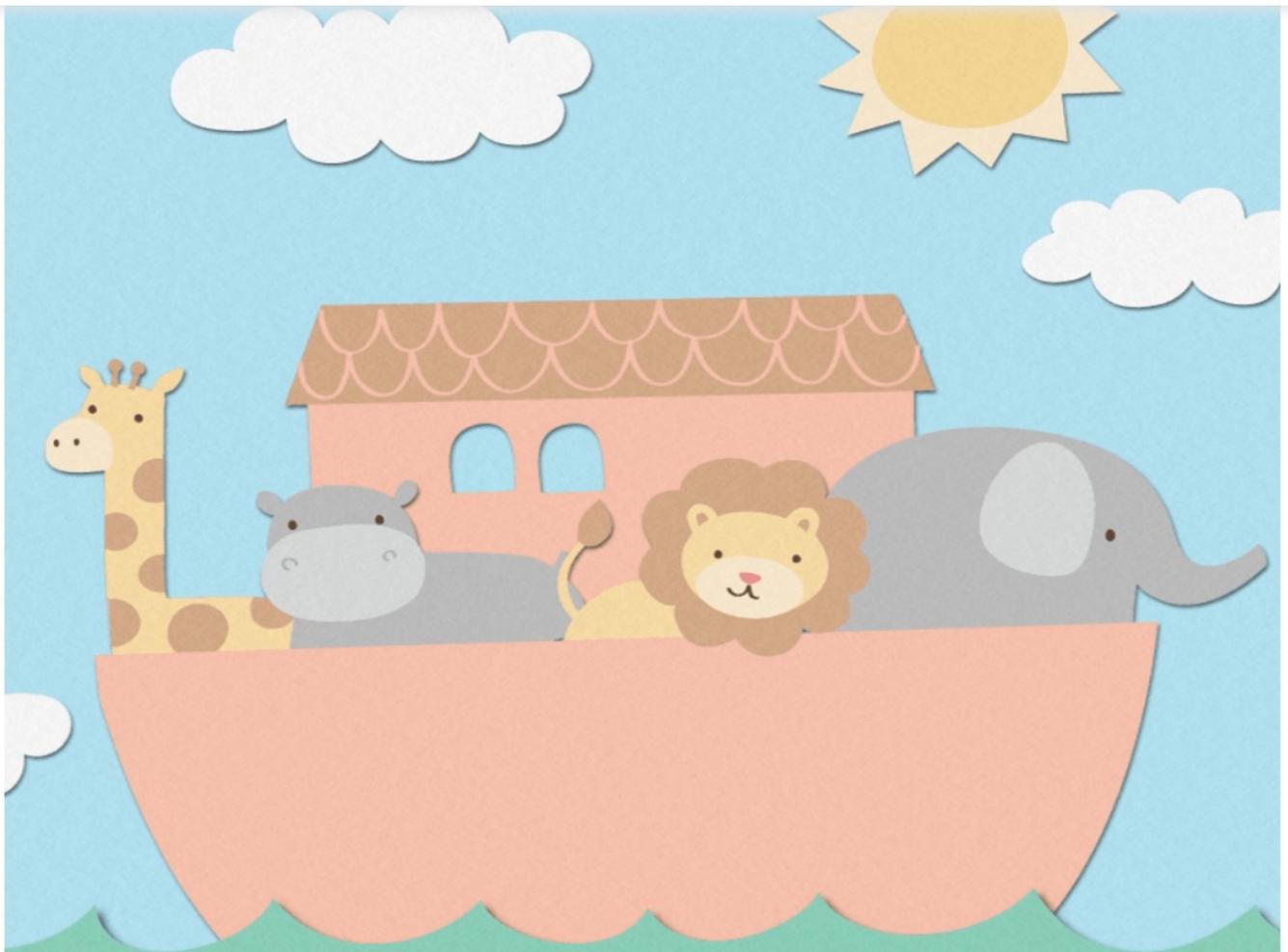
Karen Mueller, Mt. Hope Ministry Partner Rep.

# Back to 2 Sunday Services

**“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” Matthew 18:20**

**Two** services will be offered on Sundays at 8:30 am and 10:45 am. These services will be exactly the same. Pick the time that works for you! We are so glad that many of you will be able to meet again to Worship God in-person with the fellowship with other believers!

**“What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.” 1 Corinthians 14:26 NIV**



# Baby shower honoring Jenn Schleifer

Sunday, May 23 at 11:45 AM CT

The Grandmothers , Aunt Amber,  
Christina and Mary Mack

952-220-8550

Mt. Hope Lutheran Church  
3601 West Old Shakopee Road  
Bloomington, MN 55431

## MESSAGE FROM HOST

Although cards are nice,  
with their sentiment and prayer,  
they're read once or twice,  
then tucked away with care.

A book is a treasure  
with stories that unite,  
to be read over and over  
night after night.

So instead of a card  
to baby and mother,  
please give a book  
with your thoughts in the cover.

Your book will be cherished,  
God will watch from above.  
When we read, we'll remember,  
your kindness and love.

Lunch and games provided 

### **Sunday Worship Schedule**

8:30 am In-Person Worship

9:30 am Adult Bible Study

10:45 am In-Person Worship

Services Online at

[www.mthopelutheran.org/sermons](http://www.mthopelutheran.org/sermons)

**Phone:** 952-888-5059

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

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

**Youtube Channel:** Mount Hope

Lutheran Church

**Facebook:** Mount Hope Lutheran Church, Bloomington, MN

### **Mount Hope's Staff**

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