

March 2023

Mt. Hope Lutheran Church, Bloomington, MN

Ask the Lord for rain in the spring, for he makes the storm clouds. And he will send showers of rain, so every field becomes a lush pasture. Zechariah 10:1 NLT

It's March! Can you believe it!! March 1 is considered the beginning of meteorological spring and Spring officially arrives on March 20. It is a season of large variations in our weather, but also brings with it the beginnings of new life once again. Have you seen that first Robin yet?

We continue our Lenten journey to the cross where we will, once again, remember and celebrate the ultimate New Life given because of Jesus' death, resurrection, and victory over sin, death, and the devil. I pray that you are blessed through our Wednesday evening services, *At the Crossroads*. Join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm in March.

In the end, each service in the series reveals in some way how Christ and his cross help us to decide which path is in line with God's will for us.

Our *At the Crossroads* series will continue during Holy Week. Palm Sunday is April 2, then we will also worship at 6:30 pm on Maundy Thursday (April 6), Good Friday (April 7) and Easter Sunday, our 9:30 am Resurrection Celebration (April 9). These are wonderful opportunities to invite a friend to join us.

Gathering for worship is vital in our faith journey. Consider this "throwback" from our emphasis prior to the COVID shutdown.

The following is by Thom S. Rainer, *Nine Good Reasons To Attend Church Weekly* (Thomrainer.com)

I think I've heard most of the excuses.

"You don't need to attend church to be a good Christian."

"We give our family priority when we miss church to do sports on Sunday."

"My church really doesn't meet my needs."

"I'm not getting fed at my church."

"Sunday is really the only day we have off."

"My church has a bunch of hypocrites."

I will deal with these and other lame excuses later. For now, I want to focus on the positive. Why is it important for us to attend church services regularly, usually weekly? Allow me to share nine reasons.

1. The local church was God's plan in the New Testament. From the founding of the first local church in Jerusalem to the growth of new congregations throughout the Roman Empire, the New Testament is clear. God wanted His people gathering regularly and faithfully. And lest we forget, all of these congregations had problems. All of these churches had problem people. Hypocrisy was real and pervasive, but it was not a valid excuse to give up the local church.

2. The Bible speaks clearly about the priority of local congregations. If you read the New Testament from Acts to Revelation, you will see that a gathered church was not just one important factor for the Christian, it was one of the highest priorities. After the ascension of Jesus, the local church was truly “the body of Christ.”

3. We are commanded and designed to enjoy worshipping the one true God as a gathered community. What if church members really did one thing in worship services? What if they asked God to let them see Him and know Him fully as the church gathered together? What if that was the priority over evaluating the style of music? What if that was more important than the preacher preaching five minutes more than you deemed appropriate?

4. A unified church can stand strong in a culture turning away from God. We can't be a unified church with sporadic attendance. We can't stand together if we aren't persistently gathered together. Do you remember how the early church in Jerusalem reached a culture opposed to God? The outside world saw the unity and joy of the church and wanted to know more about this Jesus they worshipped. Remember, they were “praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those were being saved” (Acts 2:47). A faithfully attended church is a unified church. A unified church is an evangelistic church.

5. The world looks at our priorities and evaluates what we deem as important. Expanding on the previous point, we can't expect the community we serve to get excited about our church if the members of the community see it to be a low priority among the members. The twice-a-month attendees make the church an afterthought. The once-a-month attendee hardly thinks about the church at all.

6. Accountability takes place in the local church. When we gather together worshipping with others, we are holding each other up and accountable. When we belong to a small group in the church, our absence is conspicuous. We need people holding us accountable in love. We need others looking after us. Accountability is indeed a good thing.

7. Families that attend church faithfully and regularly are happier and healthier families. The research from the secular world is overwhelming. Study after study shows that families who are in church almost every week are among those with the best-adjusted children. Marriages are healthier. Small children grow to become mature and joyous adults. Though these studies are affirming, we can see throughout the New Testament how God has a clear and compelling plan for His children and their families to gather together regularly and faithfully.

8. Discipleship takes place in the local church. There seems to be this big mystery about discipleship. How do we do discipleship? Exactly what is discipleship? How does that work in the local church? Remember, discipleship is simply becoming more like Christ. We become more like Christ as we gather and worship together. We become more like Christ when we belong to a small group and do community together. We become more like Christ as we listen to the preached Word every week. We become more like Christ as we do ministry and evangelism through our local church. For sure, discipleship can take place outside the local church. But the New Testament clearly demonstrates the local congregation is God's “Plan A” for growing as a disciple.

9. God gives us great joy when we serve others through the local church. For sure, there are some grumpy and miserable church members. They seem to have a common trait. There are things in the church that aren't going their way. They are not getting their worship style. They are not getting themselves fed. They don't like the way the pastor does things because it's not their way. They focus on three people: me, myself, and I. But we can experience incredible joy as we serve others, as we put others before ourselves, as we don't focus on our own preferences and desires. We experience incredible joy as we serve other church members and those who reside in our community.

Faithful weekly church attendance is important. It brings us joy. It helps us to grow spiritually. It is one of the primary characteristics of a healthy family.

Your Friend,

Pastor Fran Green

Activities and Events

Weekly Events

Sunday Adult Bible Study

Join us on Sundays at 10:45 am in the Library for this study lead by Pastor Fran on Genesis.

Sunday Sunday School

Children ages 3-Grade 5 are welcome to attend Sunday School at 10:45 am in the Sunday School room.

GriefShare

Meets on Mondays from 2:00-3:30 pm. GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone.

Tuesdays at Two

Mt. Hope hosts conversation and coffee on Tuesdays at 2:00 pm. All are invited to attend.

Collections

Cancelled Stamps

Did you know that you can donate your cancelled stamps for charity? Save your stamps that have their perforations intact, leave at least ¼ inch on each side of the stamp when cutting it on each side from the envelope or postcard. Place your cut cancelled stamps in the labeled bin placed on the shelf above the coat rack by the front door.

Recycling Pill Bottles

Help improve the quality of health care in developing countries by saving and donating your clean, empty pill bottles. Matthew 25 Ministries in Cincinnati, OH accepts donations and distributes them world-wide.

Labels and glue residue must be removed. Wash and dry the bottles before donating. Place donations in the labeled placed on the shelf above the coat rack by the front door. Thank you!

Christian Reading Materials

Donate your religious magazines, books and bibles to Africa. Place your donations in the basket above the coat rack by the front door. Thank you!

Card Ministry

Take a moment to fill out the April birthday cards in the entryway. Write a little bible verse, add a birthday greeting and bless those at Mt. Hope who have birthdays in April.

Prayer Chain Ministry

Please send your prayer requests to Fran Wallin at fratwocor489@aol.com or telephone at 952-707-1881 or 612-644-4052

Prayer is a supernatural activity. What does that mean? Think about it for a moment. You are talking with a God who is unlike anyone else you could ever talk with. He has a personality and qualities you can understand and relate to, but you cannot expect to relate to God in exactly the way you might to a close friend or family member. He's so much bigger and more incredible than that. He is beyond what you can understand in the natural everyday world. He is supernatural.

Here are four great reasons why you might choose to pray as a Christian:

1. You want to tell God how much you love Him and why.
2. You need to say "I'm sorry" for specific actions or attitudes.
3. You want to thank God.
4. You want to bring a concern about your life or someone in your life to God and invite Him to help.

Now that you know the basics about how to pray, all that remains is to begin. The aim is not to become an expert on prayer but simply to move deeper into a relationship with your Father in heaven.

As with most other relationships, the things you talk to God about will develop as your trust in Him grows. Remember to listen to God as you talk with Him. Strong relationships are not built on one-way conversations.

So what will you talk about with God today?

Lent Series

For Lent we will be returning to a study titled, *At the Crossroads*. We learn from our focus on the *GoFirst! Initiative* that we need to go first when we reach the crossroads of life. This Lenten study will guide us along the way.

At the Crossroads is a Series of Services for the Season of Lent by Rev. Ted Schroeder

Many of those involved in the story of the Passion of Christ came to a crossroads and had to decide which way to go. Some chose well, some did not, and the stories of each of these experiences at various crossroads helps us to know what to do and what not to do when we encounter similar crossroads in our own lives. In the end, each service in the series reveals in some way how Christ and his cross help us to decide which path is in line with God's will for us.

Week 1-Betrayal • John 13:21-30

In Week One in the series Judas Iscariot comes to the point where he must either listen to Jesus or listen to the devil and he chooses to betray Jesus. When we are tempted by Satan to betray our Lord, we gain strength from our Savior to say, "No" to the devil. Come hear about it on Wednesday, March 1 at 6:30 pm.

Week 2 March 8-Judgment • Matthew 27:11-26

When Pontius Pilate is called upon by the crowds to make a judgment call about Jesus, his decision not to decide results in the death of Christ. We look to the cross of Christ to make definitive judgment calls in our lives.

Week 3 March 15-Compassion • Luke 22:47-51

When Jesus is taken into custody, he chooses to show compassion to a wounded participant in the arrest. We are called to show compassion, not anger, even to those in our midst whom we might consider our enemies.

Week 4 March 22-Declaration • Luke 22:54-62

When Peter is asked to declare whether or not he knows Jesus, he decides to deny his Savior. When questioned about our Lord, we are called to boldly declare our faith in Christ.

Week 5 March 29-Obedience • Matthew 26:36-46

When Jesus nears the time when he must die for our sins, he asks his Father if the cup might pass from him. But when the time comes, he obeys his Father's will. When we are called upon to follow God's will, we must obey.

Book Club

Friday, March 3 at 1:30 pm. Our Book Club will be meeting at Marilyn Nelson's apartment in March. Her address is 8641 Wentworth Ave S #225 in Bloomington. Join us for dessert and book discussion!

Women of Hope Meeting

Tuesday, March 7 at 12:30 pm. Join us as we discuss and make plans for the LWML Spring Rally. Mt. Hope Lutheran will host this event at our church. All ladies are welcome to attend.

LWML Spring Rally

Be a missionary here at home! Join the LWML Spring Rally as listen and learn from Pastor Mark Moss who tells us about Lutheran Heritage Foundation. Save the date for Saturday, April 1 at 8:30 am. Tickets will go on sale in March. More details to come!

LWML National Convention

Going to Milwaukee! The National LWML Convention is this June 22-25. Registration is now open. Jennifer Adamek and two others will be driving there together. There is room for one more! Go to internet and type LWML Convention 2023 for more details. Or contact Jennifer at 952-451-5860.



LWML Spring Rally

Saturday, April 1st, 2023

Pastor Mark Moss with Lutheran Heritage Foundation



LUTHERAN
HERITAGE
FOUNDATION

Translating the Word of God to the World's Many Languages
In the past decade, LHF has published and distributed over 1,300 titles and 3 million Lutheran books to pastors, seminary students, missionaries, schools and churches all at no cost to them.

8:30 Registration

9:00 Breakfast

10:00 Speaker

Gifts from the Heart-Monetary donations needed to purchase children's textbooks for the 300+ children enrolled at the Concordia Preparatory School in Ghana.

Give as much as you'd like: \$5-1 book, \$20-4 books, or \$100-20 books!

Tickets: \$10 See: Jennifer Adamek 952-451-560 to purchase.

Deadline to Purchase Tickets: Sunday, March 19

Mt. Hope Lutheran Church
3601 W Old Shakopee Rd, Bloomington

Mt. Hope Celebrations - March 2023

Birthdays

4 Al Johnson
10 Orpha Radford
10 Emily Vogland
11 Jennifer Adamek
16 Erica McMullen
18 Debbie Lingen
20 Maria Killam
21 Lloyd Quittschreiber
24 Darlene Buelow
27 Vivian Brantner

Baptismal Birthdays

4 Harriet Buelow
6 Katie Jacob
10 Hadley Lang
10 Holden Lang
18 Zachery Brantner
20 Candy Frein
20 Al Johnson
20 Todd Mack
23 Karen Mack
23 Anika Quittschreiber
27 Charlotte, Jack, and Penelope Rosner

Anniversary

1 Kirk & Dorene Vogland-38 yrs.
8 Jerry & Harriet Buelow-65 yrs.
24 Bart & Maria Killam-39 yrs.

VEAP'S MARCH FOOD & FUND DRIVE

March Food & Fund Drive is underway, which began on Feb. 27th, and goes until April 9th.

VEAP has experienced an unprecedented need for pantry items due to ongoing inflationary pressures, and there are many items they cannot easily purchase on their own. Please take note of the current "Most-needed Items" : Canned and boxed goods, Personal care and household items (shampoo, detergent, toothpaste, soap, etc.) Baking essentials, Paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, etc.) Gluten-free products, Whole grain cereal products, and Children's birthday party items.

As Mt. Hope congregation, let us concentrate on the bold items, for the March drive. As in the past, any and all donations will be delivered to VEAP. This year they are aiming to raise \$250,000 and 100,000 pounds of food. Every \$30 donated, feeds an individual for an entire month. VEAP is also always in need of more volunteers, to meet the needs of the community. Go to veap.org for more information. Thank you for your continued support of VEAP.

Coffee & Coffee Clean up: March – Holly Traetow

Receptions: March – Renata Melby, Ina Adams

Altar: March – Linda Quittschreiber, Darlene Wendt

Altar Flowers

Sponsoring the altar flowers is a beautiful way to honor loved ones. Flowers are often given to mark special life events such as birth and birthdays; anniversary of a wedding, baptism, confirmation; the memory of a loved one; or as a thanksgiving for life's blessings.

The 2023 Altar Flower Sign Up Calendar is up on the bulletin board in the information hallway. Please sign up for a date and place your \$30 check, payable to the Women of Hope, in Karen Mack's mailbox in the information hallway. Karen Mack phone number is 952-831-7428 for any questions you may have.

March 5 - Jerry and Harriet Buelow
March 12 - Bob and Carol Tolzin
March 19
March 26 - Kristi Voth

March 2023

Where Guests become Friends and Friends become Family

Mount Hope Lutheran Church Preschool and Childcare

3601 W Old Shakopee Rd Bloomington MN 55431

www.mthopelutheran.org

church@mthopelutheran.org

952 888 5059



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Lent Service	2	3 10:00am IFC 1:30pm Book Club at Marilyn Nelson's	4
5 9:30am Worship 10:45am Education Hour	6 10:00am IFC 2-3:30pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	7 12:30pm Women of Hope Meeting 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	8 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Lent Service	9	10 10:00am IFC	11
12 9:30am Worship 10:45am Education Hour	13 10:00am IFC 2-3:30pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	14 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	15 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Lent Service	16 6:30pm Governing Board Meeting	17 10:00am IFC	18
19 9:30am Worship 10:45am Education Hour	20 10:00am IFC 2-3:30pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	21 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	22 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Lent Service	23	24 10:00am IFC	25
26 9:30am Worship 10:45am Education Hour	27 10:00am IFC 2-3:30pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	28 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	29 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Lent Service	30	31 10:00am IFC	

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 am In-Person Worship

10:30 am Adult Bible Study

Services Online at

www.mthopelutheran.org/sermons

and, **YouTube Channel:**

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Phone: 952-888-5059

E-mail: church@mthopelutheran.org

Website: www.mthopelutheran.org

Facebook: Mount Hope Lutheran Church,
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Address Service Requested

