

January 2026



Mt. Hope Lutheran Church

Words from Pastor Fran

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's Body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

Happy New Year!

Welcome to [2026](#)! It is a great year to be the [Church!!](#) The Lord has us here for just such a time as this, and we are ready to go. Just for fun, I looked back at the January 2025 newsletter to see what was happening one year ago. Here is one paragraph from that newsletter:

We will be spending some time in 2025 discussing opportunities to serve our Lord through giving. Giving includes but is much more than the giving of money. We are called to give and be stewards of our time, talents, and treasures. All three, time, talents, and treasures, are needed by others and are given to us by our Lord to give away in loving and serving our neighbors. There are many opportunities at Mount Hope in which to serve.

Yes. Many ways to be the church.

Most of you will remember our emphasis, since early fall, on our identity at Mount Hope and our mission, the reason we are at 3601 W. Old Shakopee Rd. in Bloomington. We went back and talked about the incredible "Faith Moving Forward" initiative involving the remodeling of the church and school to include the building of the new sanctuary. What an amazing accomplishment. Praise the Lord!

There have been many ups and downs the past several years reaching, what I would consider anyway, our low point of having to close our preschool. The school has been a major piece of our identity since the beginning of Mount Hope. It hurts to lose such a major part of our identity.

Also, many of our Mount Hope family members have gone home to be with the Lord. Although we rejoice for their sake, it's been difficult for us as a congregation.

I don't think it is an overstatement to say that 2025 was a difficult year. And yet...

And yet, we serve a Mighty Big God! And yet, there has been a noticeable shift in our church for the past many weeks. The Lord is not finished with Mount Hope yet. We are still here, so we still have work to do. Many exciting things are happening. 2026 is a great year to be the church!

Here is where we are (my apologies for the things I will unintentionally miss!)

There is renewed excitement and energy in our church! Our relationship with Westwood elementary school is strong, and we now have the partnership with CarePortal and Westwood. You have already made a positive impact on the school through serving families there. The GriefShare ministry is healthy and strong. GriefShare is a gift to our community and also the Mount Hope family. The hosting of the community craft fair and The Gathered Table are tremendous gifts to the community. And be ready for our first community meal in January!

The forming of The Navigators is bearing fruit as well. We are excited for the children's ministry happening during our worship service. The Gingerbread House event was a success too.

We are also grateful for a vibrant Women of Hope group who do so much for our church. The Mount Hope Prayer Force, InTouch Ministries, altar guild, hospitality team (funeral/coffee/welcome), music ministry/tech booth, Bible studies, Sunday School, VEAP and other community involvement. And our elders, governing board members, the leaders who serve so faithfully. Finally, we are grateful for Centro Esperanza and all that they bring to our church family.

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Pastor's Message *continued from page 1*

And I/we cannot forget our amazing staff! Thank you to Katrina, Allen, and Sam for all that you do!

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's Body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

2026 is a great year to be the church!

A great year to be involved in our Mission: *Our Mission is to Reach our Friends and Neighbors with the Truth, Love, and Hope of Jesus Christ while Growing as His Disciples.*

A personal note: Thank you so very much for all the Christmas cards, gifts, and your generous cash gift from the Mount Hope family. We are so blessed to be serving with all of you! Mount Hope, what a wonderful place, ***Where Guests become Friends and Friends become Family.***

Serving together,

Pastor Fran Green

Choices We Make



At this time each year, I'm sure many of us gather with family and friends to celebrate the holidays. And I'm sure many of us speak about goals we are setting for ourselves or our families. It's a great time of year to reflect on the past—those resolutions that never came to be, the projects we didn't complete, the diet or exercise program we never started, or the apologies to loved ones never made. But, more importantly, it is a time to look forward to what we can be creating in the year to come. This got me to thinking about resolutions. Where did the idea of New Year's Resolutions come from?

After a bit of searching, I learned that ancient Babylonians were doing this very thing about 4,000 years ago. It was very common for them to promise to repay debts. Later, Romans made January 1st the official New Year, and often promised good behavior in the coming year.

But what about us today and the choices or goals we set for ourselves. The following by Anne Graham Lotz made me think deep and long.

From the time we make the choice to open our eyes and get out of bed in the morning until we make the choice to go back to bed and close our eyes in the evening, our days are filled with a series of choices. We choose—

where we go, what we do, what we believe, and how we behave.

Our own lives, reputations, relationships, careers, health, future, and values are shaped by the choices we make. The choice—,

to lie or tell the truth, to seek vengeance or to forgive, to ignore God or to acknowledge God,

determines the type of person we are. Without question, the most important choice you will ever make involves your attitude toward God and your relationship with Him.

After reading this and thinking on it for a very long time, I had to ask myself where do I stand? Yes, I know that the Christian life encompasses struggles. I also acknowledge my own imperfections. But I soon came to realize that I have chosen the way of truth to follow my Savior. And I pray you have too.

In this New Year, may you be richly blessed by
our Lord of Lords and our King of Kings.

Blessings. Fran Wallin

Events, Activities & This-n-That

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Adult Bible Study

10:45am in the Library

Sunday School

10:45am—classroom (resumes 1/4)

Mondays - GriefShare

GriefShare will start their next session on January 12th. Contact Joy Schneider for information.

Tuesdays @ Two

Mt. Hope hosts conversation and coffee on Tuesdays at **2:00 pm**. All are invited to attend. We usually have some treats too!



ONGOING EVENTS

1st Sunday of the Month

We always take a **Noisy Offering!** Bring your “noisy” coins that day to drop in the bucket (paper money donations gladly accepted also!) Monies go to the Children’s Ministry program.

Card Ministry

THE BIRTHDAY CARD MINISTRY IS BACK....!!

We are grateful that Kerry Muerhoff has agreed to take over the Birthday Card Ministry. Take a minute to check out who has a birthday in the following month, and sign or leave a greeting in their card. It's always fun to get that kind of mail. Many thanks to Kerry.



CHRISTMAS UNDECORATING DAY

No date has been set yet so stay tuned to the weekly announcements. Probably either the 12th or 19th, and we'll provide dinner for when we're done!!

Spare Books?

We are always looking for donations for our outdoor **Free Lending Library** out on Old Shakopee. Drop off your donations on the cart in our library.

Portals of Prayer



The Jan-Mar Portals of Prayer are available around the church. If you're not able to pick up a copy, just let the office know and we can send one out to you.

Also available outside the office is the Hope-Full Living devotionals for Jan-Mar.



2026 Offering Envelopes

Your 2026 offering envelopes are available to pick up at church. Let the office know if you would like them to be sent out to you.

PRAYER CHAIN



Each month we provide for you a daily prayer topic list. You can find it located at the information table outside of the office or at a number of other places throughout the church.

If you have a personal prayer request for you, a loved one, or a friend, our prayer group will include it in our prayers, and pass it along to Pastor Fran to include during worship (if desired). And, we rejoice when prayers are answered! If there is no longer a need to be included in our prayers, also please let us know.

If you have a personal prayer request, send your prayer requests to me at fratwocor489@aol.com or by telephone at 952-707-1881. *Fran W.*

A special thank you to Rania Nazy who has donated two olive wood creations to Mt. Hope! You can see them displayed in the archive case in the gathering area.



Join us for a time of
prayer and renewal
Fridays@10am
Contact Katrina w/questions

WOMEN OF HOPE



"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

The new year brings a unique mixture of gratitude for God's divine guidance in the last year and the renewed hope for the future year. Let's step boldly into 2026 confident of the Holy Spirit's leading, peace and joy.

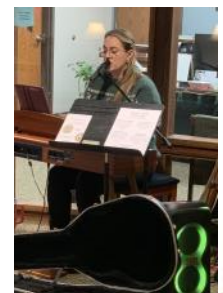
- * Many thanks for the support to Women of Hope during the December Craft Sale Raffle. It was a fun way to raise our financial needs and give back with prizes.
- * Look for an our annual baby shower for New Life Family Ministry. A crib will be set up in the narthex up for your donations of diapers, baby clothes etc during the month of January. If you have questions contact Corinne Condon at 952-215-6614.
- * We are thankful to Kerry Muerhoff for taking over the birthday card ministry. Please contact her or leave a note for Allen, the church administrator, if you have address changes or want to see someone remembered with a card at their birthday.
- * Our next meeting will be Saturday January 10 at 9:30AM. All women of Mt. Hope are invited and encouraged to come for food, fellowship and planning. We will be looking ahead to the ways we can serve at Mt. Hope and what outreach ministries to support in 2026.

*Save the Date!
Valentine's Tea
Sat., Feb. 14th*

Happy New Year as we enter this new year with hope in the power of the Holy Spirit!

DECEMBER FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND FESTIVENESS!!

Operation Shoe Box packing, Community Craft Fair, Gingerbread Bash, Women of Hope Christmas Brunch, the Mitten Tree, and some beautiful poinsettias!





NOW SHOWING
Secondhand Lions
January 4th @ 6PM

CHRIST IN CINEMA

From our Brothers and Sisters at Redemption Lutheran:

Join us on the evening of the first Sunday of each month for movie night! We will watch a popular movie and discuss the message through a Christian lens. Popcorn and Pop will be available for everyone joining us. So bring the whole family for our showing of "Secondhand Lions" on Jan. 4th at Redemption Lutheran (927 E. Old Shakopee Rd). See you there!

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN
MOBILEPACK™

Jan. 30th & 31st, 2026
@ Cross View Lutheran
6645 McCauley Trail West,
Edina, MN

THE GOAL:
 Pack 125,000 Meals
 That's enough to feed 340 children for 1 year.

OUR NEED:
 625 Volunteers & \$35,000
 Our *suggested* donation of \$50 per person will cover the cost of the food (but not mandatory).

Please sign up to VOLUNTEER and/or DONATE at give.fmsc.org/crossview



- A delivery was made to VEAP on December 16, weighing 73 pounds.
- As we look to the new year, the featured item for January is the paper grocery bags, which are used by those folks receiving goods from VEAP. The plastic shopping bags are NOT accepted.
- Of course any non-perishable food items are always welcome. As well as general household and personal hygiene items.

Thank You for your continued support!
 Karen Mueller, *Ministry Partner Rep.*

Join us. You're invited to celebrate the holidays at our annual festive Holiday Lights Drive-Thru! This event is FREE and OPEN TO ALL in the community!

Now through January 4
Open Daily: 5:00 – 10:00 p.m.
 1401 E 100th Street, Bloomington

Memories of Home is a unique gift and home décor business that is an intentional beautiful blending of products. The purpose of the store is to glorify God with faith-based merchandise offering Christian gifts to celebrate not only various occasions such as weddings, baptisms, First Communion, Confirmation, anniversaries, and memorials, but also the gift of everyday life. The items are encouraging and uplifting to remind individuals of Jesus' love and forgiveness. They are located at 9635 Anderson Lakes Pkwy (off Hwy 169 next to Jerry's Foods) and is owned and operated by Joann Shockey (wife of Pastor Shockey@St. Peter's Lutheran) Ph.: 612-799-6189 memoriesofhomestore.com

If you haven't sampled their soups yet, go to their website: thegatheredtablemn.com and see what they have to offer! The next pickup date is Jan. 28th from 6:30-8:30pm.

January Celebrations!!

BIRTHDAYS

1/2 Brady McMullen
1/4 Vicki Johnson-Schmidt
1/6 Max Alan Blauvelt
1/8 Matt Frein
1/10 Marilyn Nelson
1/11 Jenn Schleifer
1/13 James Froemming
1/14 Peggy Maas
1/15 Stephanie Hinz
1/15 Tammy Green
1/19 Zachery Brantner
1/20 Anika Quittschreiber
1/27 Darlene Wendt
1/28 Claire McMullen
1/30 Tracie Klug-Melbostad
1/31 Steve Sundseth

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

1/1 Shirley Favorit
1/9 Linda Carstens
1/11 Lea Fox
1/12 D. J. Fox
1/13 Ed Borgen
1/15 Karen Mueller
1/19 Arlene Schmidt
1/20 Pastor Fran Green
1/29 Ina Adams

ANNIVERSARIES

1/1 Craig & Tricia Regan – 4yr



Serving in January

Coffee/Receptions/Clean up: Corinne Condon

Altar: Holly & Vern Traetow

Elders: 1/4 - Dave S., 1/11 - Al J., 1/18 - Steve S., 1/25 - Richard E.

Altar Flowers

Jan. 4 – Holly & Vern Traetow—Blessings in the new year for all!

Jan. 11 – (open)

Jan. 18 – (open)

Jan. 25 – (open)



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 **2026 Altar Flower Sign Up Calendar** is now 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 opposite the bulletin board. Karen Mack's phone number is 612-408-4084 for any questions you may have.

NOTE: Each month, by the 20th, I send to the office, the next months list of people who have signed up to donate flowers. If, by chance, there is an open spot in the next month and you sign up after the 20th, please let me know, so I don't miss your name and consequently have no flowers. Thank you.

January 2026

Where Guests become Friends and Friends become Family

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

3601 W Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington MN 55431

www.mthopelutheran.org

church@mthopelutheran.org

952 888 5059

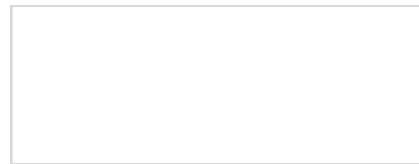


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Mt. Hope Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 1:00pm-5:00pm				New Years Day 1 Office Closed 1:30pm Book Club @ Marilyn's	2 7:00pm Leaders Discipleship	3 10:00am Teen Discipleship
4 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm <i>Centro Esp. Worship</i>	5 10:00am IFC	6 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm <i>Music Cls.</i> 7:00pm <i>YA Disc.</i> 8:00pm AA	7 10:00am IFC 7:00pm <i>Bible Study</i>	8 7:00pm <i>Bible Prep. Institute</i> 7:00pm <i>Worship Tm Rehearsal</i>	9 10:00am IFC 10:00am <i>PrayerTime</i> 7:00pm <i>Marriage Discipleship</i>	10 9:30am Women of Hope Mtg.
11 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm <i>Centro Esp. Worship</i>	12 10:00am IFC 1:00pm <i>GriefShare</i> 7:00pm <i>Men's Disc.</i>	13 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm <i>Music Cls.</i> 7:00pm <i>YA Disc.</i> 8:00pm AA	14 10:00am IFC 7:00pm <i>Bible Study</i>	15 6:30pm Govern Bd 7:00pm <i>Bible Prep. Institute</i> 7:00pm <i>Worship Tm Rehearsal</i>	16 10:00am IFC 10:00am <i>PrayerTime</i>	17 10:00am Teen Discipleship
18 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm <i>Centro Esp. Worship</i>	MLK Jr. Day 19 10:00am IFC 1:00pm <i>GriefShare</i>	20 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm <i>Music Cls.</i> 7:00pm <i>YA Disc.</i> 8:00pm AA <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Deadline for February News</div>	21 10:00am IFC 7:00pm <i>Bible Study</i>	22 7:00pm <i>Bible Prep. Institute</i> 7:00pm <i>Worship Tm Rehearsal</i>	23 10:00am IFC 10:00am <i>PrayerTime</i>	24
25 9:30am Worship 10:30am Voter's Meeting Ed. Hour follows 1:00pm <i>Centro Esp. Worship</i>	26 10:00am IFC 1:00pm <i>GriefShare</i>	27 2:00pm Tues@2 7:00pm <i>Yth Worship</i> 8:00pm AA	28 10:00am IFC 6:30-8:3-pm <i>Gathered Table Pick-up</i> 7:00pm <i>Bible Study</i>	29 7:00pm <i>Bible Prep. Institute</i> 7:00pm <i>Worship Tm Rehearsal</i>	30 10:00am IFC 10:00am <i>PrayerTime</i>	31 7:00pm Women's Discipleship
Note: Centro Esperanza MN activities are indicated by <i>ITALICS</i>						

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



Address Service Requested



This is a monthly publication of Mt. Hope Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Bloomington, MN. Any submissions for the newsletter need to be into the office by the 20th of the month. Publication is generally around the 25th, with the goal of being sent out/available to members by the end of the prior month. It is also available for viewing/download from our website.

Other reading material currently available at the church:



- **January** MN South District News
- **Jan-Mar** Portals of Prayer
- **Jan/Feb/Mar** Sagacity Senior News
- **Winter** Lutheran Women's Quarterly
- **Winter** LWML MN South news
- **...and more!**

Sunday Morning Schedule

9:30 am In-Person Worship

10:45 am Adult Bible Study, Sunday School (Sep-May)

Services Online at:

YouTube Channel: Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Facebook: Mount Hope Lutheran Ch, Bloomington, MN

Mount Hope's Staff

Fran Green *Pastor*
pastor@mthopelutheran.org

Katrina Wessel *Music Director*
music@mthopelutheran.org

Allen Petersen *Administrative Assistant*
church@mthopelutheran.org

Sam Killam *Custodian*
skillam06@yahoo.com

The staff wishes to extend thanks to those members who remembered us at Christmas. We are privileged to serve and be a part of the Mt. Hope family!