

# Hope Highlights

A publication of Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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### Why Do You Stand Here Looking Up?

*“Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.” Acts 1:10-11*

It's a rather strange question to ask: *“Why do you stand there looking up into the sky?”* Jesus had just told His disciples He had work for them to do. He commanded them to be His witnesses in Jerusalem and going to the ends of the earth. In view of this commission, the question of the angels is appropriate. Why are you standing there looking up into the sky? It is really more than a question; is a word of admonition and encouragement. And it is a word that needs to be spoken to the church in our day. “Believer, why are you just standing there looking up?”

So, why do we? Is it because we don't want to look closely around us? For if we do, we may see the tremendous needs of people young and old. Men, women and children everywhere need the very things which Christ our Lord and Savior has brought. The church is to be a witness to Jesus Christ. You and I as the people of God have a life-transforming treasure to be shared with a lost world. God's gift of salvation is precisely that, a gift we are called upon to proclaim and share with others. So, now do you and I hear that burning question addressed to each of us? We are called and commissioned by virtue of our baptism to be the Savior's witnesses and to take the salvation of God into the world. So, why do we stand around and look up into the sky?

If we are honest with ourselves, we have to admit that we are complacent, indifferent, often apprehensive, even fearful. We are sure of our relationship to God. We say we have faith. We are believers. Therefore the matter is settled. All we have to do is occasionally to come to worship and look up into the sky. But today we hear that question and it becomes the judgment of God upon our self-centered complacency and calls us to look around us.

When the early Christians carried this message of God's redeeming love for people into the world, it demonstrated that message both in word and deed. It wasn't just idle talk. It was an active channel for the kind of love that God is. These early Christians believed they had a treasure to share, and they shared it with joy, excitement and blessing.

You and I have a rich treasure. God has abundantly blessed us with more than we can possibly use. The task of the church today is the same task it faced when Jesus spoke to His disciples. We are to be His witnesses. We need to go across the tracks and down the road and around the world and start being the church of Jesus Christ. You and I are the channels through which can flow the richness and goodness of God's treasures, both of creation and redemption.

We tend to look around us and quickly feel overwhelmed by the needs of others. But there must be a beginning – there needs to be concrete steps we can begin with. Why not start with those who are nearest and dearest to us. Many families today are in crisis. To prepare our children and grandchildren to live in a pagan world of chaos and strife, we must set examples of Christian care and commitment to Jesus Christ. Otherwise our kids see an emptiness in our words and in our lives and, as a result, repudiate our Christian lifestyle, values and worldview. Let God's goodness and the riches of His Word and God-pleasing values flow through us to others.

It is finally a question of faith. Do we believe? Do we believe that Jesus Christ is the One who came as a child and was laid in a manger . . . the One who came and died on a cross . . . that He has risen from the dead and now lives and reigns through all eternity . . . that He is the ascended Lord who is with us always? If we do, then we will be a channel through which the treasures of God make it to the starving, empty, hopeless lives of other people. May God use you in the time that you still have. May He take our eyes off the empty skies to the task and the opportunities that lie before us as His redeemed people.

Pastor Albert



### *An Ascension Day Prayer*

Ascended Lord, we adore You! Once You lived a human life subject to the limitations of time; now You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Once You were limited to one particular place; now You are present wherever people turn to You. Once only those who met You face to face knew You; now Your divine love extends through all the world. Jesus Christ, ascended Lord of time and space, love as wide as life, we adore and worship You. Amen.



*Gracious God, You love us and care for us in all our needs. We give You thanks for our mothers who have given us life and nurtured us through all the years. Thank You that You fill a mother's heart with love, that You have instilled in her very being the need to nurture and protect her children, guiding her children to be all that You have created them to be. Thank You for Christian mothers who have instilled in us our faith,*

*helping us to know You and our Savior, Jesus Christ, and Your ways; mothers who taught through word and example how to love and how to sacrifice for others; mothers who taught us it is OK to cry and to always be honest, trustworthy and truthful. Grant that we may honor them; and as the years pass, to care for them with a spirit of profound respect and deepest gratitude. Then at the last, gently and lovingly take them all the way home, to be with You forever. In Your precious and powerful name we pray. Amen.*

*A Special Thank You* to everyone who worked so diligently to make our observance of the Lenten season and our celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord most meaningful and inspiring. Our attendance at our midweek Lenten services, Good Friday Tenebrae, and Easter Sunday festival service was much improved from last year. Most of the people who participated in the midweek services also participated in the Bible study that followed. Our Easter Sunday brunch was enjoyed by everyone who stayed for great food and fellowship. God bless you one and all!



Beginning Memorial Day weekend, we would like to activate our Greeter Ministry. We are looking for one or two individuals each Sunday who would be willing to serve as *greeters*. Greeters welcome worshipers as they enter our church building, answer any questions they might have, and make them feel at home. We ask that you would be at your post by 9:10 AM. We will set up a rotation schedule, and you would serve at your convenience. If interested, speak with Pastor A.

### **May Birthdays & Wedding Anniversaries**

#### **Birthdays . . .**

- 3 Lynn Kahlenberg
- 5 Tina Beer
- 10 Erin Bramstadt
- 15 Laurie Johnson
- 16 Robyn Perlewitz
- 17 Nancy Lapp
- 18 Paul Schultz
- 26 Florence Ninko

#### **Anniversaries . . .**

- 28 Carl & Jane Knoll



**The Rite of Confirmation** will take place in our worship service on Sunday, May 22. Our confirmands are:

- + **Jacob Beer**
- + **Madeleine Mezhodi**

Please remember our confirmands in your prayers that God will continue to guide them and richly bless their lives and that they will remain faithful to their Confirmation vows.

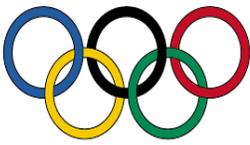
**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY - Weekday School** classes will conclude on **Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>**. Confirmation class will continue to meet through May. We thank the parents of our students for their cooperation and faithfulness in getting their children to class. Classes will resume in September. Thank you students, parents, and teachers for another great year studying God's Word together and growing in our relationship to our Savior, Jesus Christ! God bless you all!



**TUESDAY EVENING SUMMER BIBLE STUDY** will begin on **May 17<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM.** Join us in our study of the Gospel according to St. John. Those participating are asked to have the first lesson completed for the first class session. You may pick up a copy of the study guide from the church office. Mrs. Jane Reilley will again be our Bible study leader. Everyone is most welcome to participate!

### **Welcome to Our New Members**

Allouette Gregory    Jill James    Diana Lockett    Bill & Ellen Minchk



On Sunday, May 29, Olympic bronze medal winner, Ethan Cepuran and his family will be worshipping with us. Ethan participated in the winter Olympics in Beijing in long-track speed skating. Ethan's mother, Marilyn, will also be our guest soloist that morning. The Cepuran's worship with us while spending time with family members, Ellen and Bill Minchk.

### **GIFTS RECEIVED DURING APRIL . . . We express our heartfelt appreciation to . . .**

- Ron Francis – Organ Fund
- David & Marcia Gunderson – Organ Fund
- Ron & Betty Ramesh – Organ Fund
- Tom & Darleen Behling – Organ Fund
- Mrs. Janice Bathke – a gift through Thrivent Choice
- Harold Pagel – a gift through Thrivent Choice
- Jerome & Barbara Daanen – a gift through Thrivent Choice
- Dave Steffen – Organ Fund
- Paul & Marsha Rosenberg – Organ Fund
- Jim & Vicky Holbrook – Organ Fund
- Bill & Ellen Minchk – Organ Fund
- Patrick & Debbie Streff – Organ Fund
- Dale & Jane Reilley – Organ Fund
- Gene & Joan Hojan – Organ Fund

**Headwaters Food Pantry** – During the month of May, *the Women of Hope* will be collecting dish soap and toilet tissue. Donations of non-perishable food items, personal hygiene items, and cleaning supplies are always welcome. A collection basket is located in the Narthex for your donations. The loose plate offering the first Sunday of each month also goes to the support of the pantry. For further information about the food pantry or to volunteer, speak



**Food  
Pantry  
Ministry**

with Cheryl & Gary Chapman or Paul Scheffel. Thank you for your continued generous support of the food pantry!

**AmazonSmile** offers a simple way for you to support Hope Lutheran every time you shop, at no cost to you. **AmazonSmile** is available at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. When you shop **AmazonSmile**, you'll find the exact same prices, selection and shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that **AmazonSmile** will donate 0.5 % of your eligible purchases to Hope if you choose Hope as your charitable organization (search for: Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church Land Olakes WI). There is no cost to you for participating. Any questions, check with Nancy Vogt, our church office secretary.

**Orphan Grain Train Donations for Ukraine** – Thank you to all who contributed to the generous outpouring of blankets, quilts, clothing, personal care items, etc., for the people of war-torn Ukraine. These items were delivered to the Orphan Grain Train collection center in Westfield, thanks to Pastor Sheffler, of St. Paul, Iron River. Your kindness will be a wonderful blessing to many!



With great delight, we give thanks for 175 years of fellowship and faithful confession in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Our Synod exists to proclaim only Jesus – and not ourselves – as Lord. Our worship and the Church Year likewise are ordered to proclaim Jesus, that by believing we may have life in His name and no other. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod believes, teaches and confesses faith in Jesus Christ as taught in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. For 175 years, the Holy Spirit has kept us in the one true faith and still continues to gather sinners into the

Holy Christian Church by grace through faith – all on account of Christ. As we give thanks for our Synod's founding on April 26, 1847, we rejoice to celebrate this milestone and rejoice in the 175<sup>th</sup>-anniversary theme, "*Only Jesus: No Other Name*," based on Acts 4:12. Until Jesus comes, the LCMS will continue to trust in, teach and preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified and risen. We here at Hope will celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Synod in a number of different ways. Once our new organ is installed and our organists comfortable with it, we will have a 175<sup>th</sup> festival worship service. In addition, we will offer a special Bible study, learn some of the interesting and unique history of Synod through presentations and a bulletin insert series of notable individuals who by God's grace had a significant part in our history.

**Independence Day Parade** – Hope will again have a float in the Land O' Lakes parade. The theme of the float is "*Jesus is the Light of the World*." We have received a Thrivent grant to help pay for some of the decorations for the float. Glow sticks that have Hope's address, website, and worship times attached to them will be given out along the parade route. Volunteers are needed to walk with the float in the parade and hand out the Glow Sticks to spectators. The parade route is about 1 ½ miles. If you are able to join in the fun, please contact Jim or Vicky Holbrook at 906-544-2099.

**Roadside Cleanup** – Hope Lutheran is a participant in Michigan's Roadside Clean Up Program. Volunteers pick up litter and debris on the two mile stretch north of church along Hwy 45. The Spring

Roadside cleanup is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**. Any one wanting to participate should meet at church at 9:00 AM that morning. Questions can be directed to Jim Holbrook at # 906-544-2099.

Please remember our persecuted brothers and sisters in your daily prayers.



### **Organ Update**

Construction of the new organ is underway by the Allen Organ Company with a tentative delivery date sometime in May. To date, Hope has received \$26,786.00 in donations toward the total cost of the project which is \$68,000. Once installed our organists, and Jolene Albert and Nancy Vogt have some time to learn all the organ's capabilities, a special dedication service will take place. Stay "*tuned*" for more information! Thank you for your continued support!

### **"Mom, Are You Worrying?"**

"Mom, are you worrying?" Mrs. Casey was startled by this unexpected question. Standing in the doorway to the living room was five-year-old Billy, clad in his pajamas and wearing a look on his face as though he hadn't a friend in the world.

She had put Billy to bed more than an hour ago and thought that he had long since drifted off to sleep. But there he was in the doorway, wide awake and evidently troubled, eager to have an answer to his question, "Mom, are you worrying?"

At a loss at first to explain what the boy meant by his unusual question, she was soon to find out what was troubling his little heart. When she had put him to bed earlier that evening, he had confided to her one of In true mother fashion she had assured him that everything would be all right. And as she tucked him in and kissed him good night, she had said, "Now, you just go to sleep – *and let Mom worry about that.*"

An hour had passed, and the little boy wasn't sure that his mother was keeping her promise. Was she *really* "worrying about that?" Might she have forgotten? He had to make sure. And so at length he crawled out of bed, went slowly down the stairs, peeked into the living room, and asked timidly, "Mom, are you worrying?"

You and I may smile at little Billy, but aren't we all very much like him? The Bible invites us again and again to cast all cares, our worries and anxieties upon the Lord. Our good and gracious heavenly Father assures us that He will "*care for us*" (I Peter 5:7).

It is because we are skeptical children that we often find it impossible to take God at His Word, How many times have we stayed awake at night because we weren't sure that God would keep His promises to care for us – tonight, tomorrow and always?

Let's never forget that God's "good night" to the praying believer is very similar to that of Billy's mother and God says to us, "Now you just go to sleep – and let Me worry about those problems." So to you Moms and Dads and all who are burdened with concerns, give your worries, your heartaches, your problems to God. Since He neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121:4), He is going to be up all night anyway – watching tenderly and protectively over you. (Submitted)

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.”* Proverbs 3:5-6