



The Messenger of Hope

EASTER 2021

"The Messenger of Hope" is the newspaper of

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The purpose is to inform and encourage.

Do you have a testimony, a story, event or a recipe to share? Contributions are welcome and can be submitted at any time. Your submissions can be dropped off at the church or sent by email or regular mail.

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Pastor's Message

When word began to spread of Christ's resurrection (first, through women), many of Jesus' closest disciples (the Apostles, or "sent ones") had trouble believing it. Many hesitated to accept the news. They didn't dive into hope.

One of the many interesting things about the Gospel Narratives is this kind of "embarrassing testimony." Scholars point to this as evidence that what the Gospels say is true, since, especially at the time, people tended to be hyperbolic about their own contributions and accomplishments. Okay, that hasn't really changed all that much, but we see in the Gospels, from the Apostles who spread the news, that they continually mess up. Sure, there are many in the Gospels that outright reject or work against Jesus, but the Apostles are an even more persistent image for us of what *not* to do, while the Gospel push the focus to what Christ accomplishes.

We've been living in an altered state for over a year now. For many of us, our hopes have shrunk, along with expectations of things ever "soon" getting back to normal. It will take time. But there is hope on the horizon. Vaccines and warmer weather have us considering brighter, more vibrant days. Yet there's a temptation here to miss the point.

Easter shouldn't have us consider the new birth of Spring, with growing vegetation and birds and all that. All that stuff ought to remind us of Christ's resurrection, which has ushered in the resurrection of all things. And hope for loosened restrictions, and for a more important diminishing threat of Covid-19, should also not have us think of Easter. All that hopefulness ought to remind us of the Resurrection of Our Lord, and how, in him, we have a concrete hope of life everlasting that nothing in the world compares to. Even so, all those longings do coincide with what Christ has done for us through conquering the grave, as our longings speak not just of lost connection with each other, but lost connection with our Creator.

Getting back to that "embarrassing testimony," stuff, the writers of the

Gospels had the chance to “re-write” the story, to make themselves play a bigger role, or mess up less, or to clean up some of the confusing stuff Jesus did. But they didn’t. Instead, through direction and promptings of the Holy Spirit, we see a healthy view of the past that helps us evaluate the present and look to the future.

Hope Lutheran Church, coming out of the days of Covid-19, will never be the same again. Such is life. The good news is that it doesn’t need to be the same, and shouldn’t be (since much of what we do is tainted by sin, one way or another). God gives us the grace and provision to continue to learn and grow, finding the answer to Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s poignant question posed during World War II: “Who is Christ, *for us*, today?”

I encourage you all, while celebrating the Good News of Christ’s Resurrection, to reflect on this question, remembering that some things must die to bear fruit (John 12:24). But, more importantly, that our God is not God of the dead but of the living (Mark 12:27).

Grace, mercy, and peace,
Pastor Erik

Holy Week Service Schedule

Palm Sunday, 10:30 AM (In-person and over Zoom/Phone-in)

- **Holy Communion**

Wednesday, 7 PM (Zoom/Phone-in only)

- The mid-week services and study conclude

Holy Thursday, 7 PM (In-person and over Zoom/Phone-in)

- **Holy Communion**

Good Friday, 10:30 AM, (In-person and over Zoom/Phone-in)

Saturday Easter Vigil (*Individually or in groups at home in the evening)

Easter Sunday, 8 AM (In-person), 10:30 AM (In-person and over Zoom/Phone-in)

- **Holy Communion at both**

*****PRE-REGISTRATION CURRENTLY REQUIRED FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP*****

Please call Carol Schweder at 780-717-9876 to let her know that you’re planning to attend a service. This will allow us to set up the church to accommodate those that wish to attend, and have enough helpers.

Zoom Phone In/Live-Stream Services

To phone-in, dial: +1 587 328 1099

Meeting ID: 848 0586 1895

On your Computer, Laptop, Tablet, iPad, iPhone, Smartphone, or any other such device, go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84805861895>

Meeting ID: 848 0586 1895

Special Days for Our Church Family

Birthdays

April

- 1 - Carol Moeller
- Sidney Short
- 9 - Deanna Norton
- 10 - Darren Hodson
- 14 - Karleen Norton
- 22 - Jane Ingram
- David Hanasyk
- 24 - Michael Ferchoff
- 27 - Richard Baron

May

- 4 - Steven Elford
- 7 - Ruth Kiel
- Lidia Schowalter
- 10 - Bradley Hanasyk
- 13 - Myles Norton
- 14 - Anna Russell
- 15 - Tristen Norton
- 19 - Anna Elford
- 23 - Dave Norton
- 24 - Grace Breitzkreuz
- 28 - Florence Byttynen
- 29 - Lucyna Schowalter

Baptismal Anniversaries

April

- 15 - Susan Graham
- 22 - Christopher Hodson
- 23 - Gus Ferchoff
- 28 - Mattias Kroller

May

- 8 - Dorothy Moench
- 12 - Irma Ferchoff
- Richard Grynas
- 26 - Lori Hanasyk
- 28 - Richard Baron

*Here is an inspirational poem from Joyce Meyer, author and Bible teacher.
Thanks to Susan Graham for sharing it.*

Change your words, change your life

You are a special person and without you the world would be missing
Something wonderful.

You can do whatever you set your mind to do, as long as it is within God's will.

You are talented, gifted by God, and you are able to accomplish great things in your life.

You are amazing, unique, and you never need to compare yourself with anyone else.

Be the amazing person that you are.

God loves you unconditionally and that will never change.

Your future is so bright that you may need sunglasses to look at it

Church Council Highlights – March 15, 2021

Financial update – Council reviewed the monthly financial reports from January and February. General Offerings in January: \$5610.00 February: \$5005.00

Also of note: The federal government wage subsidy payment for 3 months was \$6802.44

We also had good news about the faith-based and cultural provincial grant we applied for, to assist with extra Covid technology costs for Zoom and cleaning. On March 3, 2021 we were informed that we will receive about 80% of our grant request from the Alberta government. We expect to have \$2285.00 deposited in our account soon. Both these government funds are in addition to our budgeted revenues for 2021.

Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday Plans

Zoom/phone-in **Lenten Evening worship and study** on Wednesdays during Lent, continue until **Mar 31th**, starting at 7:00 PM. We are studying Luther's Small Catechism. You can join anytime after 6:30 PM for a chat before the service begins.

Service times and options for Holy Week are published elsewhere in the newsletter and available on the church website. **Please call Carol at 780 717 9876 to register for any service during Holy Week including Easter Sunday.**

Arrangements can be made closer to Holy Week for **in-home Communion** if you are unable to attend a service in person. Please contact Pastor Erik.

Update on Appeal of Decision by Synod to exclude Hope from the ELCIC.

The Synod advised Hope and the ELCIC Court of Appeal that they would accept the offer for mediation to resolve the matter. Council voted to accept the offer and advise the Synod and The Court of Appeal. (That has already been done and we await word on how the process will unfold.)

Council passed a motion to Re-Open for in-person worship service beginning on Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021, based on current health orders published on the AHS website relating to Covid-19. Council will continue to review the decision depending on changes in Covid cases, and other related data and changes to AHS guidelines for Places of Worship. We will be following guidelines similar to the re-opening late last summer for worship services and all other activities taking place at the church.

No restrictions have been lifted for those who have received a vaccine.

Council also decided to postpone the AGM until June 2021. With current AHS guidelines, we hope to be able to meet in person then. There is still time for people to ponder and decide to serve on Council or in an appointed position. If you have any questions, please contact any of your Council members.

There were no reports from the Deacons, Elders, or Trustees in March.

The **next Council Meeting** will be April 19, 2021.

LCW and Quilting News

The ELW and Quilting groups are planning to continue to meet in late March and also in April. Suggested meeting times are:

Quilting on Wednesday, March 31 from 9:00 until about 3:00.

LCW Bible Study on Wednesday, April 14th at 1:30 p.m.

Quilting on Wednesday, April 28 from 9:00 until about 3:00.

Contact Anna Elford if you are interested in attending any upcoming Quilting or ELW Bible Studies. Anna can be reached at 780 466 5982.

On Eagle's Wings HOLY WEEK REFLECTIONS 2021

For those of you without Internet, we have included a booklet of Holy Week Reflections prepared by On Eagle's Wings, the ecumenical ministry that serves northern Canada.

For those of you with internet, if you wish to have some special Holy Week Reflections to read each day in Holy Week, please go to www.oneagleswingsnorth.com and type in holy-week-reflections 2021.

The angel said to the women,

“Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”

Matthew 28:5-6

“Christ is not gloriously transported from earth into heaven. He must instead go to the cross.

And precisely there, where the cross stands, the resurrection is near.

Precisely here, where all lose faith in God, where all despair about the power of God, God is fully there, and Christ is alive and near.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is on the Cross: Reflections on Lent and Easter*

“We have our hope set on the living God.” 1 Timothy 4:10



Archives Corner Hope Lutheran Church 1971-2021

From the Organizational Meeting of Hope Lutheran Church: December 13, 1970

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 p.m. by Pastor Busch as Chair and with Dr. Jacobson, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, in attendance. It began with the singing of the hymn "I Love the Kingdom Lord" and a reading from John 17: 13-26.

The background to the merger was outlined with the two congregations from Forest Heights and Good Shepherd and the choosing of a new name. The purpose of this meeting was to organize Hope Lutheran Church.

The Constitution and Bylaws were adopted with a number amendments that had been proposed in the constitution which had been printed and mailed out.

Over 200 names were read out of the charter membership of Hope Lutheran congregation. Among those names read were: Anderson, Byttnen, Delorme, Dmitri, Elford, Ferchoff, Hanasyk, Kiel, Moench, Pulyk, Schowalter, Sutherland and Woronka.

A 12-member Church Council was elected for one to three year terms. The congregation took on the responsibilities for all preceding congregations to keep records for births, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals and communion attendance. Plans were made for activities on "congregational nights".

Dr. Jacobsen chaired the meeting for the Call vote. Pastor R. J. Busch was elected to receive the first Call to Hope Lutheran Congregation. His salary was set at \$6200.00, with a car allowance of \$1200.00 and all utilities paid. It included 4 weeks' vacation.

The total budget approved was \$21,668.50 with the optional item of "secretarial help".

Pastor Busch expressed thanks to the Coordinating Committee and Church Council of the two congregations for the work they had done in preparing for the merger and for the peaceful manner in which they had proceeded.

The meeting adjourned with the singing of “Now Thank We All Our God” and a prayer from Dr. Jacobsen.

Following the meeting, the voting members present were given an opportunity to sign the Constitution. The document with those signatures is still kept in the Records Cabinet in the Pastor’s Office-- 50 years later.

Eternity for Today

The April – June 2021 issues are being delivered with this worship package.

If you did not get a copy, or you want an extra one, please contact Pastor Erik to pick the new issue up at the church or we can arrange to have it delivered.

It’s Hope’s 50th Anniversary in 2021 and we are still looking for volunteers to help with plans to celebrate this important milestone now that we are getting vaccinated and summer weather is around the corner. The celebration will likely be in the summer or early fall. We want this to be a coming together with a wonderful service of celebration and the joy of seeing old friends.

If you would like to be on the planning committee, please contact someone on Church Council or leave a message at the church.

The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”

Matthew 28:

Offering Envelopes for 2021

Please contact the church immediately if you did not yet get your Offering Envelopes for 2021.

Offerings while we are not able to gather or you are not able to attend:

The following options are available when you want to make an offering:

- *write a cheque and use your regular Offering Envelope and place it at the entrance to the sanctuary when you are at church*
- *write a cheque for your offering, put it in a regular envelope and mail it to the church. Please do not send cash in the mail.*
- *OR phone Richard Gynas at 780 450 0413 and he will arrange for pick up.*

Another option is **e-Transfers at Hope for your Offering:**

1. You need to have online banking.
2. Log into your account and find eTransfers
3. Make a new Contact with information for Hope Lutheran Church.
Email for our Treasurer is treasurer-hopelutheran@telus.net
4. Enter and confirm the amount you want to send. This goes to Autodeposit.
5. Your bank may require you to enter a brief security question
(Choose one that the treasurer will be able to answer.) Put in the answer to the question.
6. You may add a message about where you want your offerings to go such as “monthly offering” or a “designated fund”.

Questions? Please contact Richard Baron.

God on the Cross

“A king who dies on the cross must be the king of a rather strange kingdom.

Only those who understand the profound paradox of the cross

can also understand the whole meaning of Jesus’ assertion:

my kingdom is not of this world.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “Lectures to the Congregation in Barcelona”

The Place Where I Go - by Dorothy Lowrie

There is a place where I go
When my heart is breaking.
And at those times, I feel the closest I can be
On this earth, to Jesus.

In a cemetery, a life size statue,
of Jesus on the cross.
I catch my breath as I see His face,
A vision of pain and sacrifice.

And I stand at His feet,
As Mary surely did.
And I know my heart's sorrow and pain
Is nothing,
Compared to Jesus's suffering for me.

This place gives me so much -
Strength, hope and peace.
For Jesus surely died
To take away my sin and shame.

So my heart feels His healing touch,
As I walk away,
Knowing....
Jesus walks beside me.

Thoughts about Prayer

Prayer is surprisingly powerful.
Always pray without ceasing.
Aim small.
Ask big.
Avoid giving up.

*Blessings to you, on this wonderful day.
From Susan Graham*

“Be glad. Celebrate! Lose your mindless fear, and take courage today. No, don’t ever be afraid, no matter what’s happened to you before. That’s right, don’t be afraid, no matter what you may see coming. Take courage because Christ was crucified for you.” – Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is on the Cross: Reflections on Lent and Easter*

EASTER STORY COOKIES RECIPE WITH BIBLE VERSES

PREP TIME: 30 minutes | COOK TIME: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

• COOKIES:

- 1 cup pecans
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 3 egg whites (use large eggs)
- pinch of salt
- 1 cup sugar

• SUPPLIES

- re-sealable bag
- wooden spoon or rolling pin
- tape
- Bible
- 2 cookie sheets
- parchment paper
- teaspoon
- mixer and bowl

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees.
2. Place pecans in bag and let the children beat them with the wooden spoon to break them into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.
3. Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 teaspoon vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross he was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.
4. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10: 10-11.
5. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.
6. So far the ingredients are not very appetizing, are they? Now add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Psalms 34:8 and John 3:16.
7. Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.
8. Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto lined cookie sheets. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.
9. Put the cookies in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. (If you have a gas oven leave on for 8-10 min, then turn off.) Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door closed. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.
10. Go to bed! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight, however, Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 & 22.
11. On Easter morning open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

Thanks to Carol Moeller for submitting this recipe.