

December 2023



Mt. Hope Lutheran Church, Bloomington, MN

Words from Pastor Fran

Unto you is born a Savior; He is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

On Sunday, December 24, we will celebrate this incredible event once again under the theme *Rejoice Evermore*. The theme comes from *1 Thessalonians 5:16, Always be joyful. (NLT)*

The apostle Paul knew of the angel's announcement, *I bring you good news of great joy (Luke 2:10)*. That is why he is so bold to tell us to "Rejoice always!" This is the Good News for all the people.

Our Advent journey should always be both celebrating Christ's incarnation, His coming as the child born in Bethlehem, but also preparation and anticipation for His return, which is the focus of *1 Thessalonians*.

Advent is truly one of our greatest opportunities to share the One who changes everything. The One who came in love for all people. Jesus is the One who gives us Hope. Certainly, hope for today, but the ultimate hope, which will be realized at His second advent, His return to *make all things new*.

Christmas Eve is one of the best times to invite a friend or family member to join you in worship. Our world needs hope. Our world needs some joy, true joy that only Jesus can deliver because it is based on His love for all people. Please consider inviting someone to join you at one of our remaining advent services and on Christmas Eve when we will be filled with joy in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Advent services continue Wednesday evenings using a study based upon the cherished Advent hymn, "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending," authored by Dr. Reed Lessing and using Paul's very first letter, *1 Thessalonians*, with the main theme of Christ's Second Coming. I invite you to come, sit at the feet of the blessed apostle, as he points us to the sure and certain hope that Jesus will come again *with clouds descending!*

Here are the themes for each week on Wednesdays through December 20. Each week, we will gather at 6:30pm with a time of fellowship and treats provided by Kathy Sundseth (Thank you!).

November 29, Advent 1, *Our Two Minute Drill*

December 6, Advent 2, *Praying Like Paul*

December 13, Advent 3, *You've Got a Ticket to Ride!*

December 20, Advent 4, *Faithful Watching and Waiting*

Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve, *Rejoice Evermore*

(Christmas Caroling at 3:30pm in the sanctuary, followed by our worship service at 4:00pm.)

It is a great time to be at Mount Hope! *Where Guests become Friends and Friends become Family.*

Your Friend,

Pastor Fran Green

Activities and Events

Weekly Events

Sunday Adult Bible Study
10:45 am in the Sanctuary.

Sunday School
10:30-11:30 am continues each week through May.

1st Sunday of the Month
Children's Message during Church service.

GriefShare
Meets on Mondays from 2:00-4:00 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.

Our last date for the current session is Dec. 18th. We will start up again on Jan. 15th

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

Thursday Bible Study
---On hiatus until September 2024---

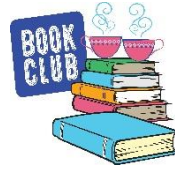
Collections

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.

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

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.

Book Club



December was our annual get together at Olive Garden. Looking ahead to January we will meet at Marilyn Nelson's on Friday, Jan.5th at 1:30pm to discuss Lowery's **THE GIVER**.

Because of the complicated history of the Holy Land we will attempt to read Mitchner's **THE SOURCE** for February. It follows the ownership of this small but important piece of land from cave men to the modern era. It is HUGE but hang in there!

Call Renata Melby at 952-881-7160, if you would like more information. And we are still open to suggestions for reads for 2024

2024 Offering Envelopes

Your 2024 offering envelopes will be available for you to pick up at church beginning Sunday, Dec. 10th.



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. The power of prayer is REAL. According to the Bible, the power of prayer is, quite simply, the power of

God, who hears and answers prayer. Consider the following: The Lord God Almighty can do all things; there is nothing impossible for Him (Luke 1:37). The Lord God Almighty invites His people to pray to Him. Prayer to God should be made persistently (Luke 18:1).

Portals of Prayer

The January-March edition is now available! There is also now a Digest-sized (think Readers Digest) available from CPH that we will begin offering starting with the **April-June** issue. A sample of that is at the News station for you to check out. You will also be able to indicate there if you'd be interested in that new size option so we get an idea of how many to order..



VEAP Update



A food and pantry delivery of 84lbs. was delivered to VEAP on November 20th along with a personal check. To date 425.8 pounds of food and personal items have been donated and delivered to VEAP in 2023. I will continue to deliver donations as they accumulate on the green VEAP shelf throughout the winter. *Karen Mueller, Ministry Partner Rep*

Mitten Tree

Our Mitten Tree is up again and praise to God, it is filling up with some wonderful items! It may look kind of full already, but don't let that keep you from adding something to it. There's always room for more! This will be up through the first weekend in January when the items will be taken to a local area organization (TBD) to distribute to those in need in the community.



Upcoming Services...As Advent Continues!



Advent services continue on Wednesday evenings using a study authored by Dr. Reed Lessing based upon the Advent hymn, "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending,".

Here are the themes for Wednesdays through the remainder of the Advent season:
December 13, Advent 3, *You've Got a Ticket to Ride!*
December 20, Advent 4, *Faithful Watching and Waiting*
(Join us after worship for some treats and fellowship!)

Christmas Eve Worship Service

Christmas Eve worship at Mt. Hope on Sunday, December 24th 2023 will be at 4:00 pm. And if you'd like to come a bit earlier at 3:30 we will be joining in some festive Christmas caroling! There will NOT be a morning service that day. There will also NOT be a Christmas Day service.

Holiday Hours

The office will be closed on Monday, December 25th and Monday, January 1st.. The Preschool and Child Center will be closed Friday, December 22nd thru Monday, January 1st. God bless you and your family on these special days.

New Staff Member

We have hired a new Administrative Assistant for the Church Office! He is Allen Petersen and he comes to us with 10+ years of church office experience. He currently is the Parish Administrator at our sister congregation, Berea Lutheran in Richfield where he has been for the past 6+ years. Before that he served at Mt. Zion Lutheran and Hope Lutheran, both formerly in South Minneapolis. He has been involved in the "Lutheran World" all his life having attended Trinity First Lutheran School and the original Minneapolis Lutheran High School. After 25 years in the printing industry he changed course and entered "church work" and has been enjoying it ever since!



He has been married to his wife, Joleen (who he met at co-ed volleyball that was held at their church...way back when!) for 35 years and they have three adult children; Emily, Eric and Hannah. He enjoys watching and cheering on the local sports teams and watching a variety of Food Network programming. And some of those Food Network shows even inspire him to try some new recipes every now and then!

He is looking forward to meeting more of the Mt. Hope members and working with and serving the congregation!



December is the month of Good News of Great Joy! We celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus! This is the best news of all for our sin-riddled world. However, I do have other good news to share with you.

The governing board agreed that I could look at opening a new Toddler Room in the fall of 2024. This room would care for and educate children ages 16 months – 33 months. I know there are lots of parents looking for care for this age and it is my hope that it will draw more families to our school. I am currently searching out grants to help us with the cost of start-up, but could really use your prayers that I find one. This would be very helpful! Until that time, we will rely on the once-a-month noisy offerings, donations from the congregation, and fundraising events.

Next, I have had the privilege of working with several Mount Hope congregational members this past month. These wonderful servants of Jesus have spent many hours helping me put together puzzles to check for missing pieces, sort geometric figures to figure out which sets go together, sort flannel board pieces to make some sense of what we have, clean and wash cupboards, toys and numerous buckets, work on our preschool library, and provide support in whatever way they can. I am extremely grateful for all they have done. Please join me in thanking Holly Traetow, Renata Melbe, Linda Carstens, Laurel Schaefer, Dave Wallin and Kathy Sundseth for their dedication and help with this huge project! I might have given up without their help. It is overwhelming!

Next, I want to thank Christina Brantner for instigating a fundraiser for the New Toddler Room! Christina CAME TO ME and asked if she could hold a bake sale the day of our Preschool Christmas Program. Of course, I happily and wholeheartedly said YES! Besides making lots of baked goods herself, she is also enlisting the help of Jen Schliefer and myself to bake Christmas Goodies for the sale. We hope all of you will support her efforts in this and join me in thanking her for her help. She amazes me with her never-ending energy and support of Mount Hope and its missions!

Other good news... Al Johnson has volunteered to look at building a toddler changing table and cubbies for our toddler room. His woodworking expertise is so appreciated! The cost of one of these tables runs about \$1,200.00 - \$1,500.00 and the cubbies cost another \$800.00 - \$900.00. If Al can build them for us, the cost for materials would not be nearly that high. He is definitely a blessing and we are so thankful for his willingness to look at it!

Someone whose work often goes unnoticed and underappreciated is the church's treasurer. Kirsten Buelow works very hard to make sure all the church and preschool bills are paid promptly, no small feat when we are not doing as well financially as we'd like to be. I am asking all of you to join me in thanking her for her dedication to our church and preschool as she navigates how to pay the bills every month. She has one of the hardest jobs in our church and I am very grateful that she keeps doing it month after month!

Last, but not least, I am very thankful that God sent Allen Petersen to our church as our new office administrator! I have worked with Allen in several other circumstances in the past and he has always been a friend and a blessing! I look forward to working with him at Mount Hope!

Praying that God will bless all of you during this Christmas Season and beyond! Richard and I are very thankful to be part of this amazing group of believers and servants of Jesus!

In His Love,

Wendy Ewald

The Gingerbread Bash

The Gingerbread Bash was held on Saturday, Dec. 2nd and was a fun event for all those who attended! Thanks to all those who helped put this on and we hope to do it again next Christmas!



Women of Hope

Harvest Bazaar 2023

Many thanks to all the Mt. Hope members and nonmembers who helped in so many ways. We welcomed many of our community neighbors and other friends in this annual event for an opportunity to shop for one of the delicious baked items including 515 pies, vendor products, and enjoy a good cup of coffee with a friend. The Lord blessed our efforts with a profit of over \$7800! And about \$5300 of that went to fund a number of causes: \$1700 to missions outside of Mt. Hope and about \$3600 to a number of designated projects here at Mt. Hope.

Women of Hope Christmas Reception

The Women of Hope invite you to a Christmas Reception after the worship service on **Sunday December 17**. Please join us for Christmas fellowship, homemade cookies, and a door prize.

Women of Hope Meeting

The next Women of Hope meeting will be held **Saturday January 13, 2024** at 10AM. All women of Mt. Hope are invited to come for Christian devotion, food, sharing information and inviting new ideas.

New Life Family Services

A collection for the New Life Family Services will be set up again after Christmas to be distributed in late January. Please start looking for baby items to be shared by this amazing ministry to new moms. Look for more information in the January Newsletter.

New Reading Material

Check out our station outside of the Fellowship Hall for the Winter editions of the **Lutheran Women's Quarterly** and the **LWML Women on a Mission** newsletter.

And on the other side of the Fellowship Hall entrance is the quarterly **Sagacity Newsletter of S.A.G.E.S.** (Saints Alive, Growing, Ever Serving) This is geared towards the "seasoned citizen" (men and women) and is filled with fun and inspirational stories, useful tidbits, and pieces by local and national LC-MS leaders. Pick up a copy!

December Celebrations!!

Birthdays

6 Linda Carstens
9 Ina Adams
14 Jack Rosner
14 Charolette Rosner
14 Penelope Rosner
16 Ed Borgen
19 Cory Blauvelt
21 Kari Peterson
23 David Wallin
24 Richard Ewald
26 Micah Hinz
30 Karen Mueller
30 Janice Elbert

Baptismal Birthdays

5 Valerie Killam
16 Colin Alt
18 Rose Kitt
24 Andrew Nazy
James Hampton
Jonathan Hampton

Anniversary

16 Pastor Ralph and Kathi Rokke-51 yrs
28 Matt and Candy Frein-32 yrs



Serving in December

Coffee & Coffee Clean up: Marcy Caspersen

Receptions: Linda Quittschreiber, Marcy Caspersen

Altar: Linda Carstens

Altar Flowers

December 3 - Gordy Moss – In memory of his wife, Ramona

December 10 - Jerry & Harriet Buelow – In celebration of their grandchildren,
Charlotte, Penelope and Jack's 8th birthday

December 17-Karen Mack – In thankfulness to God for sending His Son

December 24 – Fran Wallin – In thankfulness and well wishes to her husband, Dave, on his 76th birthday

December 31 – Jeff, Judy, Janet and family – In celebration of their mom, Karen Mueller's 85th birthday on Dec. 30th

Would you like to make a dedication or in memorial of someone special by signing up for Altar Flowers?

Altar flower arrangements are placed in front of the church to beautify the sanctuary every Sunday.

The **2024** 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 in the information hallway. Karen Mack's phone number is 952-831-7428 for any questions you may have.

December 2023

Where Guests become Friends and Friends become Family

Mount Hope Lutheran Church Preschool and Childcare

3601 W Old Shakopee Rd Bloomington MN 55431 952 888 5059

www.mthopelutheran.org

church@mthopelutheran.org



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10:00am IFC	2 10:00am 12:00pm Gingerbread Bash
3 9:30am Worship	4 10:00am IFC 2-4pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	5 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	6 10:00am IFC 6:30pm 2 nd Advent Service	7	8 10:00am IFC	9 10:00am Preschool Christmas Program
10 9:30am Worship 10:45am Education Hour	11 10:00am IFC 2-4pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	12 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	13 10:00am IFC 6:30pm 3 rd Advent Service	14	15 10:00am IFC	16
17 9:30am Worship 10:30am Christmas Reception - WofH 10:45am Education Hour	18 10:00am IFC 2-4pm GriefShare 5:00pm IFC	19 2:00pm Tues@2 8:00pm AA	20 10:00am IFC 6:30pm 4 th Advent Service	21 6:30pm Governing Board Meeting	22 PreSchool/ Child Care CLOSED	23
24 Christmas Eve NO AM Worship 3:30pm Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long 4:00pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26 8:00pm AA	27		29	30
	PreSchool/ Child Care CLOSED thru Jan.1st					
31 New Year's Eve 9:30am Worship						

*Deadline for submitting items for the January newsletter is **Tuesday, Dec. 26th**!*

Mt. Hope Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 1:00pm-5:00pm

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 am In-Person Worship

10:30 am Adult Bible Study

Services Online at:

www.mthopelutheran.org/sermons

Phone: 952-888-5059

E-mail: church@mthopelutheran.org

Website: www.mthopelutheran.org

YouTube Channel:

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Facebook: Mount Hope Lutheran Church,
Bloomington, MN

Mount Hope's Staff

Fran Green

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Wendy Ewald

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Hiring for

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Allen Petersen

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Address Service Requested

