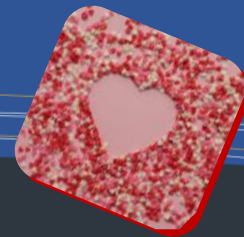


February 2025

Mt. Hope Lutheran Church



Words from Pastor Fran

Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. Philippians 4:6 (NET)

Here we are full speed ahead into 2025! There is much going on in the world and in our church and of course, some of it, sometimes too much of it, produces worry, anxiety, and stress. *Philippians* offers us perfect counsel...take it to the Lord in prayer.

I came across an article that I feel is good information for us to pray about as a faith community (*Five Reasons Why 2025 Will Be a Pivotal Year for Many Churches*). The information could certainly cause worry, anxiety, and stress; however, as we take it to the Lord in prayer, we know that He will guide and lead us. The following article is from a learning community that I am involved in, *Church Answers*, which was founded by Thom Rainer. Please read and let's talk about it!

Storm Clouds or New Opportunities? (Reprinted from Churchanswers.com)

There seems to be a convergence of issues that could have a profound effect on churches in 2025. Frankly, I could name at least a dozen issues, but these five seem to be the most likely. Their magnitude could be significant as well.



As I will note, these developments are not necessarily storm clouds. On the contrary, there are some potential God-given opportunities for wise church leaders to embrace.

1. Greater receptivity to the gospel by Gen Z. Those young adults and teenagers born between 1997 and 2012 comprise the group commonly known as Gen Z. Our research at Church Answers, as well as work done by Ryan Burge and others, at least implies that Gen Z is more receptive to the gospel. I cannot overstate how great this opportunity is. The words of Jesus in *Matthew 9:37-38* are still powerfully relevant today: *“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields’” (NLT).*
2. Approximately 15,000 churches in America will no longer be able to pay a full-time pastor. Of the 375,000 congregations in the U. S., we estimate that four percent of them will no longer have the funds to compensate a full-time pastor. This shift is enormous, and it might be more significant. Since over one-half of churches today do not have the budget to pay full-time pastors, we can easily see the part-time pastor model becoming the dominant model.
3. The term “bivocational pastor” begins to disappear. That term needs to go away because it is no longer relevant. “Bi” means “two,” and many part-time pastors have more than two jobs. The more accurate term is “co-vocational,” which is a broad term with many possible meanings. For example, I am friends with a person who serves as a pastor of two congregations while holding down a full-time job in the business world. He is actually closer to a modern-day manifestation of the circuit rider pastor who rode on horseback to serve different churches. Churches should prepare for this transition to the part-time pastor model. It is already the model in a majority of churches. It will soon become the dominant model.
4. The median time a church will have between pastors will be longer than 18 months. Indeed, a growing number of churches will do without a pastor for two years or more. The role of the interim pastor will be even

Continued on page 2

more critical in 2025. And frankly, denominations and networks must be prepared to resource co-vocational churches, circuit-rider churches, and interim churches to be relevant to the congregations they serve. The day of churches with a full-time pastor serving in traditional-model churches is going away soon.

5. About 15,000 churches will close. Many of these churches held on tenaciously, but the number of congregations facing imminent closure has grown. For the first time in modern church history, 15,000 of the churches will cease to exist in a period of one year. Notice that we are projecting that 15,000 churches will close and that 15,000 will move from full-time pastors to part-time pastors. Those 30,000 churches represent about one out of twelve existing churches. The change is dramatic.

This is a wonderful time to be the Church!!

Serving together,

Pastor Fran Green

WONDROUS LOVE

As I sit preparing to put my thoughts into words, it remains hard for me to believe that February is here, especially when I still see remnants of Christmas and the Epiphany around me. Accepting it once again brings bitter-sweet feelings to my heart and mind. Yes, it is the month of “*love*” as some refer to, but for me I am reminded of the death of both my mother, father, and a dearly loved uncle. On the other hand, it is the month my husband and I were joined in matrimony. What a joyous love-filled day that was. As a result, I decided to investigate this month a bit more, especially Valentine’s Day.

In skimming through the *Lutheran Service Book*, I found lists of names of saints to be remembered by us. And we do so, not for their own sake, but as the *LSB* states they are “examples of those in whom the saving work of Jesus has been made manifest.” Interestingly, the person listed on February 14 was Valentine.

Exploring further, I learned that Valentine was a martyr. The time was during the Roman Empire-- ---late third century— -when political instability, military turmoil, and widespread persecution of Christians existed. Because the emperor believed that unmarried men made better soldiers, he outlawed marriage for young men which obviously opposed Christian doctrine that valued matrimony.

According to belief, Valentine was a priest, moved by compassion and guided by his faith, chose to defy this decree. Once his actions were discovered, he was arrested and subjected to harsh Roman justice. While in prison, as the story goes, he befriended the jailer whose daughter was blind and miraculously restored her sight. Awaiting his execution on February 14 around 269 AD he is said to have written a farewell note to the jailer’s daughter signing it, “*from your Valentine*”, a phrase which has become known throughout the centuries.

All this led to the question, “*What is true love?*” So let me share this story that Pastor Mark Airey, Associate Pastor at Crown of Life here in Arizona, told during service.

Many years ago, there was a monk living at his monastery. He was charged on Sunday to preside over the worship service and speak about the true meaning of love. As he proceeded through the service it came time for him to present his sermon. Moving forward, he told the congregation that he was going to speak about love. In doing so, he took a candle, lit it, and without uttering a word began to shine it on the crucifix of Jesus on the cross, first on His nailed feet, then the wound in His side, then the nails in His wrists, and finally the crown of thorns. Completing all of this, he blew out the candle and ended the service.

Summing all of this up, I pose this question, “As believers and disciples of Jesus, how do we now reignite our passion of *true biblical love* by the actions, attitudes, and affection of our savior Jesus?”

Blessings,

Fran Wallin



Events, Activities & This-n-That

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Adult Bible Study

10:45am in the Library

Sunday School

10:45am—classroom

Mondays - GriefShare

GriefShare will start their next session on Feb. 17th. See the article on page 5 for more 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

There is usually a special **Children's Message** during the Sunday morning worship. Also on that day we 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

Take a moment to fill out the **March** birthday cards in the narthex. Write a little bible verse, add a birthday greeting and bless those at Mt. Hope who have birthdays in March. We're always one month ahead so when the new month begins, we can start distributing the greetings.



First Friday Book Club

FFBC will be Feb. 7th at 1:30pm @Marilyn's. Chris will bring a treat and our book is "**When Breath Becomes Air**" about a young neurosurgeon facing death. It is inspiring rather than depressing.

And I have copies of the March book, "**The Thursday Murder Club**." Let me know if you want a copy. This book is about a VERY SMART group of senior citizens who solve murders from their senior citizen facility. You will enjoy the puzzle. All are welcome. RSVP Marilyn. *Renata Melby*

Also Book Related

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.

2024 Contribution Statements

The 2024 contribution statements were mailed out in mid-January. If you did not receive yours, please contact the office and we can print another copy.

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 frawocor489@aol.com or by telephone at 952-707-1881. Fran W.

Fran Wallin

MEMBER UPDATES



Winter Address

Dave & Fran Wallin
12438 W. Toreador Dr. Sun
City West, AZ 85375
623-584-0102

Lorraine Wolden
13810 Community Dr.
Arbor Lane Bldg. #215
Burnsville, MN 55337

Cancelled Stamps Collection

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 from the envelope or postcard. Place your cut cancelled stamps in the labeled bin located on the shelf above the coat rack.

WOMEN OF HOPE

"Give thanks to the God of Heaven, for His steadfast love endures forever" Psalm 136:26

"If we love one another God abides in us and His love is made complete in us" 1 John 4:12



Happy Valentine's Day Everyone! Let us celebrate this month of Love as we recognize and respond to the love God has for us.

- ♥ The Women of Hope are in the midst of planning our annual **Valentine's Tea** on Saturday, February 8th at 10:00AM. We hope this will provide an opportunity for the ladies of Mt. Hope to bring a special friend or family member. Tickets will be available after Sunday services or at the Tea. *(See more info below)*
- ♥ You may have noticed the crib set up in the narthex for the **collection of baby items** for New Life Family Services. It will remain there until after the Valentine's Tea when the items will be presented to our main speaker from New Life Family Services.
- ♥ The Women of Hope continue to collect **Christian literature** for the International Christian Literature Distributors (ICLD). The basket for contributions is above the coat rack. Sunday School material, pastor guide books, devotionals and especially Bibles are requested and distributed internationally to missionaries and pastors. The collection will be distributed next in early spring.

The glory of God's Good News is that it does not differentiate. So by opening our hearts to others of all cultures, we can take a small step to celebrate that all-inclusive Love of God.

Valentine Tea - Saturday, Feb. 8th @ 10:00 a.m.

Tickets at \$10:00 for the event will be available, Sun. Jan. 26th, and Sun. Feb. 2nd.

The speaker for the Tea will be Jennifer Patrick, (daughter of Mt. Hope members, Steve & Kathy Sundseth). Jennifer has worked at New Life Family Services for 30+ years; for over 10 years, directly working with expectant parents through decision making and the adoption journey, and now has been the Director of Adoption for the past 19 years.

You may remember the donations we bring for our January baby shower are donated to New Life Family Services. (And if you're so led, feel free to bring a baby item to add to our crib that we will be presenting to New Life at the Tea.)

Jennifer states that they have a theme for this year; "Life begins with a "Flash of Light" at Conception" based on Ephesians 5:8, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light." At New Life Family Services they witness the Lord's light to help transform dark circumstances that may surround unexpected pregnancies. Praise God that mothers, fathers, families, and all of us can live as children of light.

New Life offers three primary programs: Adoption Services, Pregnancy Support, and Conquerors = Post-Abortion Healing. New Life Family Services has been serving Minnesota families as one of the most comprehensive, faith-based, non-profit organizations of its kind, providing professional life affirming care through their programs. It is through this care that they are seeing God change hearts, save lives, build families & restore hope. New Life is one the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive pregnancy centers in the nation.

*Join us for this very informative presentation. Invite your friends!
Lunch will follow the presentation.*



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 "Migration" on Feb. 2nd at Redemption Lutheran (927 E. Old Shakopee Rd). See you there!



- The featured items for February are "Birthday Bag Items" such as cake mixes, frosting, candles, small party favors, and birthday gift bags. By newsletter deadline no deliveries have been made in January, thus far.
- In 2024 VEAP has been able to distribute over 5 million pounds of food to our community, grant over \$750,000 to rental assistance to prevent evictions, and answer over 1,800 calls from neighbors seeking assistance. Your support has been instrumental in helping VEAP provide these essential resources to individuals and families in our community, who are facing food and housing insecurity. They are grateful for our continued partnership to meet these needs.

Karen Mueller, *Ministry Partner Rep.*



Our group continues to evolve as participants heal and find new lifepaths, and newly bereaved people join to begin their journeys. We were blessed to have Dana Anderson coordinating snacks and coffee for the past year and she is one who is making a new lifepath. Taking her place are Barb Goodman and Linda Nelson who are returning for another cycle of our program. We are again blessed to have Mary Beth Bloom as a fabulous co-leader.

If you know anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one, suggest that GriefShare could help them, and give them the website, griefshare.com. It doesn't matter how long ago the loss occurred, if they have not found closure, GriefShare may be able to help. We had one participant whose husband died 9 years ago, and although remarried, she needed help with some "loose ends".

We meet Mondays from 1 – 3 in the library, starting February 13 to end of May. Registration on the website is requested, as it helps us plan and ensure materials are ready. Thank you for supporting this vital ministry – many people are being helped.

Joy Schneider – lovemercy3@yahoo.com



Buy Nothing Free Market!!

Saturday, February 22nd 9:30-11:30

Bring your unwanted treasures such as clothing, toys, housewares, kitchen utensils, home decor, shoes, etc. Come look for a new treasure! Any items brought in will be the donors responsibility to take back if not gifted to a new owner at the event.

Any questions contact Jenn Schleifer: Schle464@gmail.com 952-406-0452



Memories of Home is a unique gift and home décor business that is an intentional beautiful blending of products.

Their faith-based merchandis is encouraging and uplifting to remind individuals of the much-needed message 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 Luth.)

Ph.: 612-799-6189 Website: memoriesofhomestore.com

February Celebrations!!

BIRTHDAYS

2/4 Zachary Vogland
2/4 Emily Lang
2/9 Kate McMullen
2/10 Candy Frein
2/11 Kevin Lang
2/12 Wyatt Vogland
2/13 Harriet Buelow
2/18 Todd Mack
2/20 Karen Mack
2/24 Steve Schmidt
2/26 Cathy Frank
2/28 Caleb Mack

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

2/1 Tracie Klug-Melbostad
2/3 Cory Blauvelt
2/3 James Froemming
2/9 Marilyn Nelson
2/14 Gene Roehrick
2/21 Hope Berg
2/23 Janice Elbert

ANNIVERSARIES

2/16 David & Fran Wallin – 46yr



Serving in February

Coffee/Treats & Clean up: Darlene Wendt

Kitchen: Karen Mack and Darlene Wendt

Receptions: Corinne Condon and Darlene Wendt

Altar: Corinne Condon

Elders: 2/2 - Steve S., 2/9 - Jerry L., 2/16 - Al J., 2/23 - Dave S.

Altar Flowers

Feb. 2 – (open)

Feb. 9 – Jerry & Harriet Buelow—in celebration of Harriet’s birthday birthdays

Feb. 16 – Corinne Condon—in memory of her Aunt Eunice Marose

Feb. 23 – (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 **2025 Altar Flower Sign Up Calendar** is posted 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 952-831-7428 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.

February 2025

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

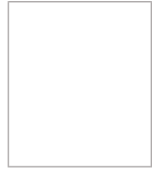
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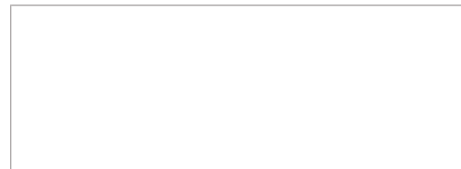
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 10:30am Teen Discipleship 11:00am New Blvr. Class
2 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm Centro Esp. Worship	3 10:00am IFC	4 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm Music Cls. 7:00pm YA Disc. 8:00pm AA	5 10:00am IFC 7:00pm Bible Study	6 7:00pm Bible Prep. Institute 7:00pm WorshipTm Rehearsal	7 10:00am IFC 1:30pm Book Club @ Marilyn's 6:30pm Leaders Discipleship	8 10:00am Women's Valentine's Tea 11:00am New Blvr. Class
9 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm Centro Esp. Worship	10 10:00am IFC	11 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm Music Cls. 7:00pm YA Disc. 8:00pm AA	12 10:00am IFC 7:00pm Bible Study	13 7:00pm Bible Prep. Institute 7:00pm WorshipTm Rehearsal	14 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Marriage Discipleship	15 10:30am Teen Discipleship 11:00am New Blvr. Class 4:00pm Memorial Jeffrey Schendel
16 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm Centro Esp. Worship	17 10:00am IFC	18 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm Music Cls. 7:00pm YA Disc. 8:00pm AA	19 10:00am IFC 7:00pm Bible Study	20 6:30pm Govern Bd 7:00pm Bible Prep. Institute 7:00pm WorshipTm Rehearsal Deadline for February News	21 10:00am IFC 6:30pm Leaders Discipleship	22 9:30am Buy Nothing Free Market 11:00am New Blvr. Class 5:00pm Women's Discipleship
23 9:30am Worship 10:45am Ed. Hour 1:00pm Centro Esp. Worship	24 10:00am IFC	25 2:00pm Tues@2 5:30pm Music Cls. 7:00pm YA Worship 8:00pm AA	26 10:00am IFC 7:00pm Prayer Service	27 7:00pm Bible Prep. Institute 7:00pm WorshipTm Rehearsal	28 10:00am IFC 9:00pm Vigil -6:00am	Mar 1
Note: Centro Esperanza MN activities are indicated by <i>ITALICS</i>						

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

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:



- **February** 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 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

**Mt. Hope's
2025 Governing Board**

Al Johnson

Bart Killam

David Schleifer

Fran Wallin

Ina Adams

Kathy Sundseth

Kirsten Buelow

Lloyd Quittschreiber

Pastor Fran Green

Vern Traetow