

August Whispers 2025

Hope United Church of Christ



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Hope Happenings

Debbie Mader, Worship Committee

Council president Ron Kramer reported on results of the survey responses that were submitted by approximately 45 members. The starting time for services was a close split. It will continue to be at 10:15.

There was some interest in adding an additional service. The Council will be looking into this further and is asking for any additional input (day of week, time, style of worship.)

There was also some interest in a contemporary style of worship. Kelly Mathwig is looking into ways to introduce more contemporary music into our services starting in September.

Have you missed the Praise Choir? Summer is a busy time for many. This choir has been paused until more of our members are hopefully able to participate in the fall. Please reach out to me or Becky Ramsey if you are interested.

Ron Kramer also announced that Hope UCC yard signs are now available. Please see a Council member if you are interested in displaying one at your home. It can be kept as long as you'd like and then returned to church for someone else to display.

Finally, September 14th will be a "Bring a Friend/Fill the Pews" service followed by a picnic. Please contact me or any of the Worship Committee members with your thoughts on what you would like to see/hear at this special event. As Pastor Gene preaches, "Love God, love your neighbor, and introduce them to each other!"

August 3rd -

Communion served

Liturgist: Katrina Dering

Ushers: Ron Kramer, Lori Hahn

August 10th -

Liturgist: Kerry Jones

Usher: Jan Lamers

August 17th -

Liturgist: Gary Zuehlke

Usher: Ben Bodoh

August 24th -

Liturgist: Kris Steiger

Usher: Lori Hahn

August 31st -

Liturgist: Brooke Kramer

Usher: Jan Lamers



Bible Study - Tuesdays from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m



Dear Hope Church Family and Friends,

Greetings! I pray this letter finds you well and experiencing God's blessings in your life.

I know that I am feeling blessed. My family and I have now been here at Hope for a few months and we are settling in well. My wife,

Becky, has found that there are folks in Appleton who appreciate her ability to plait hair and she frequently gets called to do a little of that sort of work. Our daughter, Flower, made a very smooth adjustment to school in Fremont and now is enjoying a summer with many trips to the library for books to read. For myself, I have enjoyed once again living where we actually have 4 seasons.

Of course, if you have been in worship recently, you've already heard much of our story. If you haven't (it's at 10:15am), I look forward to a time when we might get acquainted and hear each other's stories, for that's something I have also really enjoyed since arriving at Hope – I like the chance to get to know people not only in worship but running into each other at community events or setting time aside to chat during brief visits in each other's homes or the church office. Christ intended his Church to be a welcoming community where people could find love and support as we navigate the realities of life and our faith -- often joyous, sometimes taxing -- and if we are to do that we have to be intentional about building and participating in that community.

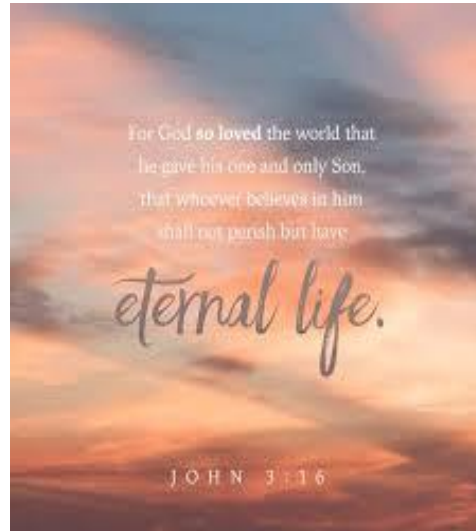
Now, I must confess, as much as I like getting to know people, I'm not nearly as good at it as I would like to be. It often takes me a good half-dozen (or more) one-on-one encounters before I'm able to put names and faces together, and to know your story takes even longer. Forgive me, please, for being a work still in progress in that regard. That's actually one of the many reasons for me asking for the opportunity to call on members of the congregation. So, if we haven't touched based yet, please, do stop by. Introduce yourself to me in worship. Drop in to the office, even unannounced. Invite me over to your house or to meet somewhere. You pick what works best for you. But, let's not let the summer go by without getting better acquainted. I want to hear about what God is doing in your life and how we, the church, can aid you in your spiritual journey.

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Gene

920-446-2952 (office) and 765-505-1866 (cell)

Iva Fischer
March 12, 1933 – July 8, 2025
and
Carol Lanzerotti
December 13, 1925 – July 9, 2025



Becky and I want to thank all who joined us for our cookout in July. We have been so warmly welcomed here that we cherished the opportunity to give back a little bit. We hope you enjoyed the evening, as we did. For those of you who missed it, we still have a little bit of matoke leftover. While Pastor Gene finds it an acquired taste, it was good to see a few folks here realize African food can be pretty tasty.

For those of you up for a bit more exploration of all things African, Becky plans to return to our home in Uganda for a couple of weeks in November. She was instrumental in starting an event called “Worship on the Mountain” and with its growing popularity, wants to be able to continue to participate in it. Becky invites you to join her. You can stay at our house on the “mountain” to join in the worship festival we host there and also use it as a base to explore other things from participating in the many different mission projects we are engage in to sightseeing in Uganda’s national parks. You not only get to travel, but will have your own built-in tour guide to keep you safe and point you in the right direction – and, yes, most people in Uganda speak English; it’s the common language spoken for government and business, even if not typically used at home. If you would like more information, give Becky a call at 920-404-7527.

5 Practices of Fruitful Congregations: Radical Hospitality

I have been sharing with you information regarding the “Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations.” Robert Schanse observed these as he visited congregations he was responsible for overseeing as the United Methodist bishop for Missouri. There isn’t anything magical about them, just traits that Bishop Schanse observed were found in every congregation that was bearing fruit in its ministry. The other thing he observed was that if a church that didn’t practice these traits began to intentionally do so, they also became fruitful and often began to grow. So, let’s continue to take a closer look at these 5 Practices of Fruitful Congregations, focusing on Radical Hospitality.

Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice Radical Hospitality.

We have all had the experience of walking into a store to buy something and getting the feeling they didn’t care whether we were there or not. On the other hand, we have also had the occasion where we unexpectedly arrived at someone’s home, and they welcomed us as if we were some long-lost friend miraculously returned to them after years of absence. Hospitality is about more than just being friendly. Hospitality says to a new face, you’re more than just a visitor here; you’re our guest. We welcome you because we love you as Christ has loved us. This is important, because the motivation for our hospitality has to be genuine. We must welcome individuals not as a means to some other end (like making a sale in a store), but because we are truly glad to see them. We are welcoming people into our lives, our community just as Jesus welcomed us into his. So, we rejoice in this opportunity to welcome someone new to our faith community because we are celebrating the opportunity of sharing the Jesus we know and love with another person, who we know is also known and loved by Jesus -- whether or not that person knows it themselves yet.

We will show that our love is genuine by making room for others, supporting and nurturing them according to what they need in order to grow in the faith journey that led them to us. This means that our expression of hospitality is not about us, but about them. As a child, I went to 8 different schools in 12 years. One thing I learned is that when it comes to the small rural schools I mostly attended, we talked about being friendly a lot more than we really were, and you had better learn to fit in quickly because nobody is going to change who they are for you. This is the opposite of what Paul teaches to the church: “I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22). Radical hospitality begins, like Jesus did, by meeting people where they are and welcoming them, loving them, as they are.

Further, meeting people where they are, also means we won’t wait for people to come to us, but are outgoing. “Outgoing” -- as in, going outside of our own comfort zone, going out to where other people are, even going outside of the four walls of our church building to welcome people into our church community. “Hospitality” means we will actively invite others and support newcomers into our part of the family of God, and “Radical” means that we won’t stop after our first initial efforts and warm greetings; we will go the proverbial “second mile” and think outside the box in finding ways to welcome people into Christ’s presence.

Circle of Hope

Barb Hahn

Several senior members of the Circle of Hope are concerned about the viability of the group going forward. Some of us are getting old and not many young people are coming to meetings or volunteering for coordinating events such as the spaghetti dinner, pie social, etc. Perhaps we should re-consider the events we hold and open it up to the Circle of Hope for new ideas.

I believe Kerry will agree to be the chairperson for another year.

Edna has been secretary for two years and has decided to step down.

Barb has been treasurer for four years and has decided to step down at the end of this year.

We have found that when we ask for help, we have a great response; a lot of people are willing to assist. We need a few more people to take responsibility for planning and the execution of events as a whole.

The way Bob DeWitt jumped in to head up and coordinate our Food Pantry Project is the kind of action we need from others. Bob is doing an awesome job of keeping the need for donations for the food pantry in the forefront and delivering the donations. Perhaps we can make a list of things we want to do for the upcoming year, and someone could volunteer to be in charge of making each one happen.

Here is a list of the things the Circle of Hope do and some of the things they have done in the past.

We are responsible for collecting the donations from snack & chat and using that money to buy coffee, cream, paper products, juice. The only thing we don't buy is toilet paper. We also receive the donations from funeral luncheons and help with the luncheons in any way we can.

January – We start collecting cans of soup for the Weymont Food Pantry.

February – After the Super Bowl, we match the cans of soup that were donated.

March – Fill the grocery cart for Easter for the Food Pantry. In the past we have sponsored an Easter breakfast after the sunrise service.

April or May – We have our annual Spaghetti Luncheon and Basket Sale

June – We have our Pie Social in conjunction with the Chicken Bar-B-Q in Fremont at the village hall.

September is our month to collect for the Food Pantry. We also have our quilting bee for two days.

November – We sponsored “Hugs from Hope” at the Christmas parade in Fremont.

December – Fill gift bags for the shut-ins and donate our money.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, September 8 at 9:15 a.m. Please join us!

BY THE NUMBERS

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Attendance Monthly Average</u>
January	\$ 8543.97	\$ 5839.22	50
February	\$ 7426.45	\$11186.30	59
March	\$13958.67	\$ 9865.19	50
April	\$16935.87	\$21885.70	59
May	\$15183.15	\$12141.06	60
June	\$10601.60	\$10654.98	49



August Birthdays

08/01 Michael Hosket
 08/02 Edna Welch
 08/04 Kathryn Forrest
 08/05 Jackie Wilson
 08/06 Ayla Neault, Dewey Tangwell
 08/07 Eric Lind
 08/09 Sandra Lind
 08/12 Brooke Kramer
 08/17 Keith Hahn
 08/18 Ron Mader, Kerry Welch-Jones
 08/22 Katie Gerrits
 08/24 Madeleine Lemke
 08/25 Ron Gehrke
 08/29 Doug DeZurik-Otto
 08/31 Ron Kramer



August Anniversaries

08/07/2012 Jeff & Cynthia Glomstead
 08/14/1970 David & Darlene Schmidt
 08/24/1968 Marlyn & Katherine Hahn
 08/26/1976 Dick & Rosie Tellock

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1 Church Office Closed	2
3 9:30 Snack n Chat 10:15 Worship	4	5 4 – 5 p.m. Bible Study	6 Church Office 9:30 – 2:30	7	8 Church Office Closed	9
10 9:30 Snack n Chat 10:15 Worship	11 6:30 p.m. Council Meeting	12 4 – 5 p.m. Bible Study	13 Church Office 9:30 – noon	14	15 Church Office 9:30 - noon	16
17 9:30 Snack n Chat 10:15 Worship	18	19 4 – 5 p.m. Bible Study	20 Church Office 9:30 – noon Whispers Deadline	21	22 Church Office 9:30 - noon	23
24 9:30 Snack n Chat 10:15 Worship	25	26 4 – 5 p.m. Bible Study	27 Church Office 9:30 - noon	28	29 Church Office 9:30 - noon	30
31 9:30 Snack n Chat 10:15 Worship						