September Whispers 2026

Hope United Church of Christ

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Dear Friends and Family of Hope Church,

I've shared some of this before, but I want to expand on it, because one of the joys of reading Scripture is noticing the many names and titles by which God reveals Himself. These names are not random; each one teaches us something about His character. We might ask, "Why study the names of God? Isn't 'God' enough?" Yet the English word "god" is generic and used by many religions to refer to many deities. The biblical names of YHVH Elohim (aka, YHWH or even Yahweh) — the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — ensure that we are addressing the one true God and not an imagined or false deity. His names help us know Him more deeply.

The Power of Calling on YHVH

The prophet Elijah understood this well. In his day, Israel was filled with confusion and idolatry. Four hundred fifty prophets followed Baal, whose name simply means "lord" or "master," but who was no god at all. Elijah challenged them to a dramatic test: they would call on Baal, and he would call on YHVH. "The god who answers by fire — He is God," Elijah declared (1 Kings 18:24).

The prophets of Baal cried out loudly, danced, and even cut themselves, but nothing happened. Their god could not respond. Elijah, however, knew the God he worshiped. To remove any suspicion of trickery, he drenched the sacrifice and the altar with water until it filled a trench around it. Then he prayed simply and humbly: "O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel…" (1 Kings 18:36–37).

God answered with overwhelming fire that consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the soil, and even the water. The people fell on their faces, recognizing that YHVH Elohim alone is God. Elijah's story shows that calling on God by His name is not a ritual — it is an act of faith in the God who truly hears and acts.

YHVH Yireh — The Lord Will Provide

One of the most cherished names of God is YHVH Yireh, often rendered "The Lord Will Provide." It comes from Abraham's experience on Mount Moriah. When God asked him to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham obeyed, trusting God's goodness even when he could not see the outcome. At the last moment, God stopped him and provided a ram caught in the thicket. Abraham named the place YHVH Yireh (Genesis 22:14).

The name literally means "The Lord will see," and by extension, "The Lord will see to it." God sees our needs before we do and provides in His perfect timing. Some see in Abraham's words a prophetic glimpse of the final Lamb God would provide — Yeshua, the Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Whenever we face need, uncertainty, or lack, we can call on YHVH Yireh, confident that He sees and provides.

YHVH Shalom — The Lord Is Peace

Another name rich with meaning is YHVH Shalom, "The Lord is Peace." It appears in the book of Judges during a dark time when Israel was oppressed by the Midianites. Gideon, hiding in fear, encountered the angel of the Lord and thought he would die. But God reassured him: "Peace! Do not be afraid." In response, Gideon built an altar and named it YHVH Shalom (Judges 6:23–24).

Peace — shalom — is more than the absence of conflict. It is wholeness, well-being, and rest in God's presence. In a world filled with anxiety, fear, and turmoil, we long for this peace. Scripture tells us that one of the names of the Messiah is *Sar Shalom*, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Yeshua promised His followers a peace unlike anything the world can give: "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

Paul describes how we experience this peace: by bringing everything to God in prayer, with thanksgiving. Then "the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yeshua" (Philippians 4:6–7). When life overwhelms us, we can call on YHVH Shalom, knowing He is the source of true peace.

YHVH Tz'va'ot — The Lord of Hosts

The most frequently used compound name of God in Scripture is YHVH Tz'va'ot — "The Lord of Hosts," or "The LORD of Heaven's Armies." It appears over 270 times. The word *tzavah* means "army," and this name portrays God as the Commander of the most powerful army in existence.

Hannah invoked this name when she was deeply distressed. Unable to bear children and tormented by her rival, she cried out to YHVH Tz'va'ot for help (1 Samuel 1:11). God heard her prayer and gave her a son, Samuel, who would become one of Israel's greatest prophets.

David also understood the power of this name. When he faced Goliath, he did not rely on weapons or strength. He declared, "I come to you in the name of YHVH Tz'va'ot, the God of the armies of Israel" (1 Samuel 17:45). The battle belonged to the Lord, and He gave victory.

Whenever we face battles too big for us — spiritual, emotional, or physical — we can call on YHVH Tz'va'ot. He fights for His people, and His victory is certain.

Why God's Names Matter

God's names are not mere labels; they are revelations of His nature. Through them we learn that He is our Provider, our Peace, and our Warrior. The same God who acted in ancient times acts today. He sees us, provides for us, fights for us, and gives us peace.

Many place their trust in human strength, resources, or institutions. But Scripture reminds us: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of YHVH our God" (Psalm 20:7).

May we continually call on His name, trust in His character, and rest in His faithfulness.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Gene

LOOKING AHEAD

Are You Ready To Get Back In The Swing Of Things? Labor Day is here. School is starting. And things are going to quickly pick up at Hope as well.

Sunday school resumes on September 13 for children up through 8th grade, with one important change: classes will now meet at **10:00 am**, just before our **10:15 am** worship service. Sunday school will still run for a half hour. With this change children will join the congregation for the children's message and then remain for the remainder of the service. This new schedule allows our teachers to be present for most of worship, while still giving our kids meaningful time together. For little ones who may find the full service challenging, the cry room will be available.

Also on **Sunday, September 13** (note the new date), **Youth Group resumes**. Our fall kick off will be a pizza party with games for **YOUth** at the church, 6:00pm. This isn't just any normal pizza party, we'll be making the pizzas yourself and some of the games will determine the exact pizza we'll be making and eating. You can expect four things out of youth group this year: Faith, Food, Fun, and Fellowship. So, come expecting a good time as we grow in faith together and relationship with one another. Also, be sure to bring a friend. Youth Group is one of those activities where the more the merrier; so, your friends are always welcome. If YOUth are Middle School or High School this is for you; and if you've got a little brother or sister who just misses the cut-off by one year and you're cool with bringing them, we're cool with having them, too.

Looking further ahead to the **first Sunday of October**, we will join with Christians around the globe to celebrate **World Communion Sunday**. World Communion Sunday emphasizes both the global and ecumenical nature of Christ's Church with hundreds of denominations, millions of congregations, and billions of Christians around the globe all joining together in sharing the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ on this day. So, Hope Church, too, will be celebrating on Sunday, October 4 (our customary communion Sunday) with a special nod to it being World Communion Sunday. We invite you, as last year, to bring flags from other countries that we might display them in the sanctuary indicating the global nature of the body of Christ.

Sunday, October 18, we'll celebrate **Hope Church Homecoming** — a day to welcome back friends, family, and former members who still hold this congregation close to their hearts. The date lines up beautifully with the Weyauwega-Fremont High School Homecoming weekend, when many people return to town for the game on Friday and the dance on Saturday. It's the perfect moment to say, "Come join us at Hope while you're here."

Homecoming isn't only for those who moved away. It's also a wonderful opportunity to reach out to folks who still live nearby but haven't been around for a while. Some stepped back during the summer, some got busy, some simply drifted — and Homecoming gives us a gracious, joyful reason to say, "We'd love to see you again."

Inviting someone back to church can feel simple, but it's also deeply meaningful. A warm, personal invitation — not just "You should come," but "I'd love to sit with you on Homecoming Sunday" — is often all it takes to help someone reconnect with a community they've missed more than they admit.

As we prepare, I want to encourage our committees — Christian Education, Circle of Hope, Social Concerns, Stewardship, Worship and the Church Council — to think creatively about how we can make the day welcoming and fun. There are plenty of ways to add a little celebration:

- Recognize the person who traveled the farthest to be here
- Celebrate the largest family group attending together
- Offer a small "Welcome Home" token or keepsake
- Create a Homecoming photo board or memory wall
- Invite people to share a favorite Hope Church memory
- Organize a simple after-church fellowship event

These are just suggested starting points — the real creativity will come from and need to be fleshed out by you. Let's make Homecoming Sunday a day filled with warmth, laughter, reconnection, and the joy of seeing familiar faces return to a familiar place. Hope Church has always been a community where people find belonging. Homecoming is our chance to celebrate that gift and extend it again.

Hope Happenings

Debbie Mader, Worship Committee

As summer winds down and we look forward to celebrating Labor Day, I found some concepts (with the help of Gemini/AI) that we can reflect on as Christians:

- **Work as a Divine Call:** Pastor Gene reminds us that God's story began with Adam and Eve in the garden, not simply to exist, but to "work in the garden and tend it". Labor Day serves as an annual reminder that our careers and daily tasks are gifts from God, entrusted to us to be maximized for His kingdom.
- **Stewardship Beyond the Paycheck:** Often, Labor Day focuses on the economic value of work. However, the Christian perspective shifts the focus to "authentic stewardship," which involves managing not just our financial resources, but our talents, time, and relationships. It encourages us to ask how we are investing our "moments of grace" and "ounces of love" into the lives of others, rather than viewing work solely as a means of personal success.
- **A Season of New Beginnings:** In the church, Labor Day marks the transition into fall programming, such as the restart of Sunday school and youth groups. This transition period is an ideal time to reflect on our "calling" for the coming season—to see our upcoming fall responsibilities not as burdens, but as opportunities to act as faithful stewards of the gospel and our community.
- **The Cross as the Standard:** Just as we might reflect on our work life this Labor Day, the newsletter suggests that our response to all of life's gifts—our labor included—should be rooted in the cross. Because Christ gave all, our daily labor becomes an act of responding to that generosity, turning even our mundane work into a "kingdom return".

The Worship Committee will be meeting on Tuesday, September 8th at 5:30 p.m. Some of the things we'll be discussing are utilizing the new A/V system, World Communion Sunday 10/4, Homecoming weekend, All Saints Day, and a possible Blessing of Pets service. As always, we welcome any ideas or input you may have. Feel free to attend the meeting or send me an email: dmader30@gmail.com.

September 6th - *Communion, free blood pressure check after the service (see Dick Tellock)*

Liturgist: Flower Ramsey

Usher: Katrina Dering, Dennis Vogt

September 13th - *First day of Sunday School, which starts at 10:00 am*

Liturgist: Andrea Neault

Usher: Gordie Vong

September 20th

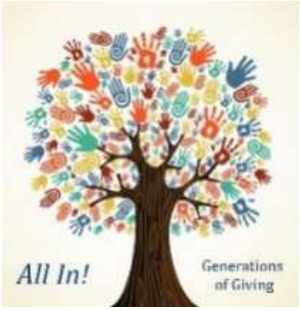
Liturgist: Katrina Dering

Usher: Ben Bodoh

September 27th

Liturgist: Sam Bailey

Usher: Dennis Vogt



STEWARDSHIP

Our New Church Directories are DONE~ If you have not received your copy, stop by the church during office hours to pick up your copy or grab one on Sunday after worship.

CIRCLE OF HOPE

Join us for stitches, stories, and smiles!

Do you own a scissors? Know how to tie a knot? Join us for our Quilting Bee!

Please bring a dish to pass.

Sept 10th & 12th-- 9am - ?

We would love to have you!!

THINKING AHEAD--We are hoping to host Thanksgiving Dinner this year! **Would you like to take the lead??** Depending on the response we receive, will determine if we are able to host one this year. Please consider lending us your time & talent!

AV Project Update

Dear Hope Church Family,

We are incredibly close to completing our goal, and we want to share a quick update on our progress toward upgrading our church audio/visual system.

Thanks to your exceptional generosity and shared vision, we are on the verge of completely funding this much-needed project. The Church Council and the A/V Fundraising Committee want to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has already contributed.

Here is exactly where our campaign stands today:

- **Total Project Goal:** $63,000
- **Total Received to Date:** $59,140
- **Remaining Balance Needed:** $3,860

We are just **$3,860 away** from fully funding these vital upgrades to our worship and community outreach technology.

If you have been waiting for the right moment to participate, we invite you to join us in this final stretch.

How You Can Help Us Reach the Finish Line:

- **Online:** Make a fast, secure donation on our giving page at https://campaigns.tithely.com/70816-hope-united-church-of-christ/copy-of-audio-visual-equipment-2026.
- **In Person:** Drop your gift in the offering basket during any Sunday service.
- **By Mail:** Send a check to Hope Church, 8950 Alpine Rd, Fremont, WI 54940 (please note "A/V Fund" on the memo line).

Thank you again for your continued support, prayers, and commitment to the future of Hope Church. Together, we can complete this project and enhance our worship experience for years to come.

With gratitude,
The A/V Fundraising Committee

BY THE NUMBERS

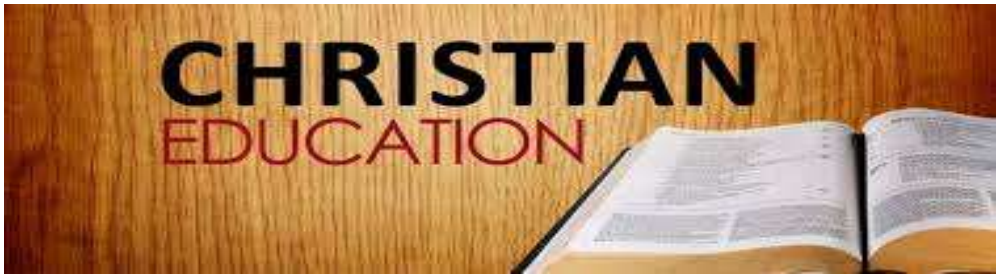
	Income	Expenses	Avg. Attendance Mthly
Beginning Balance	$155,752.43	$160,560.66	
January	$ 7,037.88	$13,292.17	49
February	$23,706.33	$12,452.81	51
March	$7,750.12	$12,127.30	44
April	$11,373.10	$ 8,883.62	53
May	$7,011.63	$20,446.71	57
June	$7186.00	$16,423.00	41
July	$5,338.00	$17,788.00	52
TOTALS:	$225,155.49	$101,413.64	

Birthdays

Roger Arndt	9/01
Allison Gleisner	9/01
Richard Mathwig	9/03
Lori Hahn	9/04
Arthur Tellock	9/05
Richard Tellock	9/05
Rita Fleming	9/12
Richard Kalbus	9/16
Jessica Arndt	9/17
Steven Schmidt	9/19
Patricia Schmidt	9/21
Darlene Schmidt	9/22
Brayden Arndt	9/25
Jeff Zwiers	9/28

Anniversaries

Ben & Lori Bodoh	9/02	22 yrs
Tom & Kelly Mathwig	9/10	32 yrs
John & Cindy Kohl	9/18	44 yrs
Ron & Debbie Mader	9/19	17 yrs
Todd & Allison Gleisner	9/20	18 yrs
Ben & CJ Selsing	9/28	13 yrs



Welcome Back!!!

1st day of Sunday School – **Sept 13th**!!

PIZZA PARTY!!!

Come have some pizza & fun!

Sept 13th @ 6:00 pm

(Grades 6-12)

YOUTH GROUP

Weymont Food Pantry Donation List

Canned Chicken/Canned Tuna

Pork & Beans or Baked Beans

Pasta Meals (SpaghettiOs, Ravioli, etc.)

Hamburger Helper-type Meals

Spaghetti Sauce and Sloppy Joe Sauce

Lunch Soups (Such as Progresso, Campbell's Chunky, Chicken Noodle, etc.)

Saltine Crackers

Canned Vegetables (Especially Kernel Corn and Cut Green Beans)

Canned Fruit (Especially Pineapple, Mandarin Oranges, and Cranberry Sauce)

Pasta (Elbow, Shells, Spaghetti, Egg Noodles, etc.)

Macaroni & Cheese

Knorr Pasta/Rice Sides

Instant White Rice (Minute Rice or generic brands)

Chicken and Turkey Stuffing

Bisquick, Jiffy, or other Baking Mixes

Cake, Brownie, Muffin, and Cookie Mixes

Jell-O and Instant Pudding (Regular and Sugar Free)

Please note that when selecting items from your home pantry, pay special attention to the EXPIRATION/BEST BY dates on each item. We want the food that we provide to be healthy and nutritious for the people that we serve.

In addition to the above listed food items, we are in need of personal products such as Toilet Paper, Bar Soap, Shampoo, Body Wash, and Toothpaste. We are always in need of brown paper bags and plastic grocery bags.

Monetary donations are always appreciated to help defer operational costs and to help in the purchase of needed shelving and refrigeration equipment. Checks can be made out to the WEYMONT FOOD PANTRY. All of your donations are greatly appreciated!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Weymont Food Drive starts	2	3	4	5
6 Family Worship 10:15	7	8 Bible Study 4-5 pm Worship Committee Mtg 5:30	9	10 Quilting Bee 9am-?	11	12 Quilting Bee 9am-?
13 1st day of Sunday School 10:00 Family Worship 10:15 Youth Group Pizza Party 6:00pm (Grades 6-12)	14 Council Mtg 6:30pm	15 Bible Study 4-5 pm	16	17	18	19
20 Family Worship 10:15	21	22 Bible Study 4-5 pm	23	24	25	26
27 Family Worship 10:15	28	29 Bible Study 4-5 pm	30			