

Life @ Hope

Hope Lutheran Church: a Community of Faith in the Heart of Fond du Lac

“So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another.” — Ephesians 4:25

It's a simple but reliable principle of human life: how people talk reveals a lot about who they are.

Imagine a person comes up to you and says this: “I was out driving the other day when I had a punctured tyre. I pulled off to the verge and opened the boot. There was no spare. So, I opened the bonnet. Fortunately, a lorry driver saw the raised bonnet and stopped to help me out.”

Anyone who follows that has likely spent some time in the British Isles. Winston Churchill once said the English and Americans are “two great peoples divided by a common language,” and this is a case in point.

Want an American translation? “I was out driving the other day when I had a flat tire. I pulled off to the shoulder and opened the trunk. There was no spare. So, I opened the hood. Fortunately, a truck driver saw the raised hood and stopped to help me out.”

The way we talk can also reveal something about how committed we are to being Christian. It has nothing to do with accent, or vocabulary or grammar. It has everything to do with how we use this God-given gift of speech.

Do our words hurt, or do they heal? Do they work in service to truth or falsehood? Do our words build up, or do they tear down?

Such are the concerns we read about in Ephesians, chapters 4 and 5. It's a collection of miscellaneous ethical advice and many of these instructions can help us understand how Christians should talk to one another ... and to others.

Put Away Falsehood

Let's see what the Scriptures say: *“Putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another” (4:25).*

That one sounds like a no-brainer. Christians are supposed to speak the truth. Everybody knows that! We like to imagine ourselves as fundamentally trustworthy people.

But not so fast. Sometimes we're led to ask the question Pontius Pilate famously asked: “What is truth?”

What about the infamous “little white lies” we tell, intended to not hurt another person's feelings? What about when the dental hygienist asks whether we really do floss twice a day? What about the expenses we deduct on our tax returns?

Telling the truth isn't always so straightforward and simple, is it?

Think about some examples of things we say or do that we quickly follow with explanations:

- I'm only human.
- Everybody does it.
- I did what I had to do.
- It's only business.
- If I don't do it, somebody else will.
- It's a victimless crime.
- I was only following orders.
- Nobody's perfect.

If we ever find ourselves advancing rationalizations such as these, we're already in deep water. Speaking the truth, always and everywhere, is one of the most important ways to talk like a Christian. The only problem is, we fail that simple test almost every day.

Can any of us ever aspire to perfect truthfulness? It's part and parcel of our sinful nature to bend the truth from time to time. Maybe the best we can hope for in this life is that those little ethical alarms keep going off, so we can hear them and keep that goal of truthfulness ever before us.

Be Angry, But Do Not Sin

Here's something else chapter 4 says about how to talk like a Christian: *“Be angry but do not sin; do not let*

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the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil."

Wow. That verse makes you sit up and take notice, doesn't it? "Be angry but do not sin." And this is the Bible speaking? Yes, that's exactly what it says.

The reason that statement sounds so strange is that most of us have been taught that anger is always un-Christian and ought to be avoided. Many of us have been taught that the most important characteristic of a Christian is to be *nice* — to not make waves, to smile a lot, to be soft-spoken, and — truth be told — to be a doormat.

Here's a little secret, just between us. The Bible *does* consider it normal for Christians to get angry. Nowhere, in all the many ethical instructions Jesus gives to his disciples, will you find the command to be "nice".

Even Jesus himself got angry. There are more than a few Bible passages where he does. Take Mark 3:1-5, for example. Mark reports how Jesus gets angry at the Pharisees: "He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart."

And why? Because the Pharisees have been objecting to Jesus' plan to heal a man's withered hand on the Sabbath.

An even better-known example is Jesus' cleansing of the temple. He strides through the temple courtyard, overturning the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sell sacrificial doves. In Mark's version of the story, Jesus cries out, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers" (Mark 11:17). Them's fightin' words.

In John's version of the story, Jesus is cracking a whip made of cords. Nothing especially nice about that!

The difference in both these cases — compared to the situations in which we typically feel our anger boiling over — lies in the reasons for the anger. Most of the time, when we find ourselves raising our voices and getting red in the face, it's because we feel personally injured or abused in some way. Somebody just squeezed into the parking place ahead of us. A co-worker just fired off a flaming e-mail. The person ahead of us in the express line has 16 items in the cart. We feel injured, so we respond by getting angry.

Whenever the Bible speaks approvingly of anger, the object of the anger is not our own precious sense of injury, but rather injury or injustice *inflicted on another person*. When Jesus gets mad at the Pharisees, it's because that poor man with the withered hand may not get healed. When he swings that whip of cords in the temple courtyard, it's on behalf of all the poor, devout pilgrims who are getting swindled by a corrupt system.

A Christian could be forgiven for swinging a whip of cords in response to situations like these!

The letter to the Ephesians moves on to supply some practical advice on how to manage anger, righteous or otherwise. "Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (4:26). Don't hang on to it obsessively. That's good advice for a marriage, as well as a social reform movement.

Those who live their lives driven by anger eventually pay a bitter personal price, as Frederick Buechner points out in this oft-quoted passage from his book, *Wishful Thinking*:

"Of the seven deadly sins, anger is possibly the most fun. To lick your wounds, to smack your lips over grievances long past, to roll over your tongue the prospect of bitter confrontations still to come, to savor to the last toothsome morsel both the pain you are given and the pain you are giving back — in many ways it is a feast fit for a king. The chief drawback is that what you are wolfing down is yourself. The skeleton at the feast is you." [Harper & Row, 1973, 2.]

If we don't let the sun go down on our anger — if we make sure there are intervals of rest and peace, even in the midst of a protracted campaign for social justice — we'll find we do have the staying power to stick with the cause for the long term.

Be Kind

The antithesis of all this is found in another list in Ephesians: "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you" (4:32). Now that's the sort of talk Christians should truly engage in! Positive, upbuilding talk is a counterweight to the anger, slander and all the rest. It's the "Thou shalt" to balance off the "Thou shalt nots" of the previous verses. Kindness, tenderheartedness (literally, compassion), forgiveness: such are the building blocks of true Christian conversation.

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The Golden Rule

"I keep the Golden Rule" I overheard someone say one morning when I was out to breakfast. "Although I don't go to church."

What would you say to a person like that? How would you respond to that? You might think that a person keeping the Golden Rule is following the teachings of Christ. He must be a Christian. After all, he keeps the "Golden Rule".

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus answered this way: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matthew 22:34-38, NIV).

The most important, and greatest commandment is to love God with everything you have. To revere, serve, honor, and worship Him! Learn all you can about Him and teach your children about Him. If you hear someone use His name in vain, you are offended. When you think about this, it is a tall order!

The Pharisees of Jesus' day thought they were pretty good at loving God, but they completely left out the idea of loving other people. So, Jesus didn't stop there. "And the second is like it," He continued. "Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:39-40 NIV).

The Golden Rule — "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" — This, in simplest terms, tells us how to follow Jesus' second most important commandment. This is the commandment the person at breakfast was focused on. I am sure that there are so-called Christians who said they love God, but their

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This is not weakness. It's not cloying niceness. It's not being a doormat. Rather, filling our mouths with positive, affirming talk is a strong and grateful response to the forgiveness and grace we have ourselves received from Jesus Christ.

They say talk is cheap. Not this kind of talk, though. Kind, compassionate, caring discourse is the rarest of commodities amidst the sound and fury of soul-

words and actions show they only care about themselves. Much less actually love other people.

Something to think about: can a person be a good Christian if he does not follow Jesus' most important commandment, to love God? I don't think so. It's like saying, "I'm a good employee. I work four hours a day," when your boss expects you to work eight hours. So realistically, you can't be a Christian if you don't love God the way He commanded us.

Making a commitment to follow Christ is just that, a commitment based on faith that He is the divine Son of God and that He was raised from the dead for each of us.

Let's review, does keeping the Golden Rule make you a Christian? No, not in itself, no more than owning a fishing boat makes you a fisherman. You must love God, too.

The best thing you can do is to learn all you can about Jesus. As you learn to follow Jesus with your heart and soul, you'll be keeping the first and most important commandment, to love God with all your heart, soul and mind.

You don't want to be that person that stands before God on judgment day and says, "But I followed the Golden Rule." You might just hear God say, "Couldn't you give me some love?"

Stay focused on The First and Greatest Commandment, but don't forget The Golden Rule either!

Until next time,
Deacon, Bob Mengert



destroying hate speech all around us. It's the type of speech Christ calls us to utter. It's how to talk like a Christian.

Pastor
Phillip M. Enderle





Music Ministry

Fall Music Groups

All of our music groups will be back in action this fall. We invite you to become a member of our music ministry. Hope music ministries include: Adult Handbell Choir, Adult Choir, Adult Worship Team, Youth Worship Team, Brass Ensemble and Men's Choir.

A sign-up poster for the various choirs and music groups will be set up in the entrance to the Fellowship Hall this month. Please call Ken Hill, 922-4577 or 539-3977, if you are interested in any of these groups.

Oktoberfest 2022

Oktoberfest is back! As our congregation prepares to celebrate its 75th anniversary next year, we would like to include the Oktoberfest in the list of special activities. A couple of changes: we would like to hold this event on church premises next summer (September or October) thereby lowering the cost and making the



Oktoberfest more affordable. We are forming a planning/action committee and need help in the areas of food, beverages, entertainment, outdoor shelter and publicity. Please help us to organize this great congregational event! Call Ken at 539-3977.

SCRIP Gift Cards

The Board of Music is selling SCRIP gift cards for your favorite stores. SCRIP is a great fundraiser, because it costs the purchaser nothing extra, but promotes important music projects here at Hope!

Three ways to buy SCRIP:

- Sold in the hallway between services on Sundays.
- If nobody is selling at the SCRIP table, you can still fill out an order form and leave it and a check in an envelope at the table. We'll get your order to you within two weeks.
- Go to Hope's website, print off and fill out form and leave form and check at table in hallway.

Heritage of Lutheran Music

Heritage of Lutheran Music embracing and cherishing the highest quality of music of the Church that has come down to us through the ages. The hymns and liturgy we use in our worship services comes from 3,000 years of God's people praising Him through the gift of music.

Listed below are some hymns and texts of music from the Reformation era: 1500–1700 A.D. Of the three major reformers—Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli—Luther held music in the worship service in the highest regard: "I would certainly like to praise music with all my heart as the excellent gift of God which it is and to commend it to everyone...next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise."

Luther wrote two masses, one in Latin, one in German, and wrote many hymns for congregational singing. It was Luther's aim that the congregation should be singing throughout the worship service both in hymns and liturgy.

Once He Came in Blessing #333	O Lord, How Shall I Meet You #334	Lift Up Your Heads Ye Mighty Gates #340	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God #656
Johann Horn 1490-1547	Paul Gerhardt 1607-1676	Georg Weissel 1590-1635	Martin Luther 1483-1546



Ken Hill , Minister of Music
922-5130 church; 922-4577 home
539-3977 cell; khill@lifeathope.org

HOPE LUTHERAN KIDS

Middle and high school students and leaders recently returned from Week of Hope in Nashville, Tennessee, a community service mission trip for youth! Students came alongside seasoned local ministries and nonprofits to make a lasting difference through meaningful community service. They learned Christ-like empathy and compassion for others as they met the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of disadvantaged children, youth, and adults. As students served in the name of Jesus, they developed friendships with the people they served, with other teams, with our own Student Ministry, and, most importantly, with Jesus.

Half of our group served at Centennial Adultcare Center. Centennial is an organization of trained professionals dedicated to providing members with a



high quality, innovative, and comprehensive program of social and therapeutic services in a safe and caring environment. While the other half of our group served at Preston Taylor Ministries. PTM empowers children and youth to discover and live their God-inspired dreams, develop a love for learning, and build joy-filled friendships that glorify Christ Jesus. Our goal was to meet the tangible needs in Nashville community, and by the grace of God, we did just that!

“Move Up Sunday”

Join us for “Move Up Sunday” on September 12, at 9:10 a.m. where kids “move up” and experience the first day of their new Hope Lutheran Kids Sunday School, Catechism, or High School Ministry class! This school year we are unveiling new programs such as 252 Kids and XP3 Student Ministry, which are elementary and high school aged programs and new experiences for Catechism students. Registration forms are located in the hallway just outside the Fellowship Hall or online at lifeathope.org. Please speak to Director of Youth & Education, Alex Cargin, if you have any questions.

Sunday School:

This fall, Hope Lutheran Kids is launching 252 Kids Sunday School! 252 Kids is a large group/small group program for children in grades 4K-5. 252 Kids places a high emphasis on teaching children how to live. To do this, Bible stories are clustered around monthly “Life Apps”. Everything taught is based on one of three basic, but powerful, truths modeled by Jesus in Luke 2:52:

1. I need to make the wise choice (wisdom)
2. I can trust God no matter what (faith)
3. I should treat others the way I want to be treated (friendship)



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252 Kids Sunday School exudes fun and will work hard to ensure that everything is engaging and relevant!

Events: LCC Comfort Canines, Operation Christmas Child, “Monumental” VBS, and more!

Catechism:

At Hope Lutheran Church we believe most children are ready to take ownership of their faith by the time they reach high school. By this age students are able to:

- Understand Biblical truths for themselves
- Learn Lutheran teachings
- Stand up publicly to say, “This is what I believe”

How to confirm your faith:

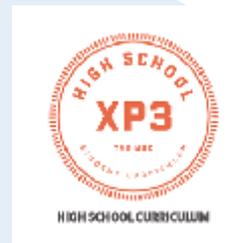
Attend three years of class, attend worship regularly, and serve in your community. Each week’s lesson includes a take-home “Parent Cue” card. This card allows students to discuss and wrestle with a faith related topic with their parents each week. Statistics show that parents are a child’s number one spiritual mentor. As a church, Hope wants to partner with parents as they walk on this journey of faith discovery with their child. We encourage parents and students to seriously discuss if the student is ready to take the first step of confirming this faith as their own. When the student decides they are ready for that step, they are invited to participate in the Rite of Confirmation during a designated worship service.

Events: Student Nights, Year 3 Catechism Retreat, and more!

High School Ministry:

This fall, Hope Lutheran Kids is launching XP3 Student Ministry. XP3 Student Ministry is a High School ministry that connects students with caring leaders in order to help them:

- Experience wonder for who God is
- Discover who He created them to be
- Develop passion for loving others



Our ministry is anchored to the Gospel of Jesus. Jesus prioritized what was most important in life when He said: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself.”* That’s why at XP3 Student Ministry we want every student to trust in Jesus in a way that transforms how they love God, themselves, and the world around them.

Events: Student Nights, fellowship Sundays, National Youth Gathering, and more!



Alex Cargin
Director of Youth &
Education
acargin@lifeathope.org

Welcome Ashley Carus



Ashley Carus is serving Hope as our new 4K teacher. In addition, she will serve as our Sunday School Facilitator. In this new position at Hope, she will serve as another point of contact between parents and teachers during Sunday School time.

College Students

College Students, don’t eat just Ramen noodles this year, the Pantry of Hope is here for you. We can make up food boxes for you to take along to college AND you can stop by the pantry anytime you are in need. We have a large selection of many of your favorite college entrees and we also have Ramen... if that’s what you desire. We are happy to fill requests. Just don’t go hungry this year, HOPE is here for you!! Contact Sandy Barber 920-948-1663 or msbarber25@hotmail.com.

Fall Bible Class Schedule

Sunday Morning:

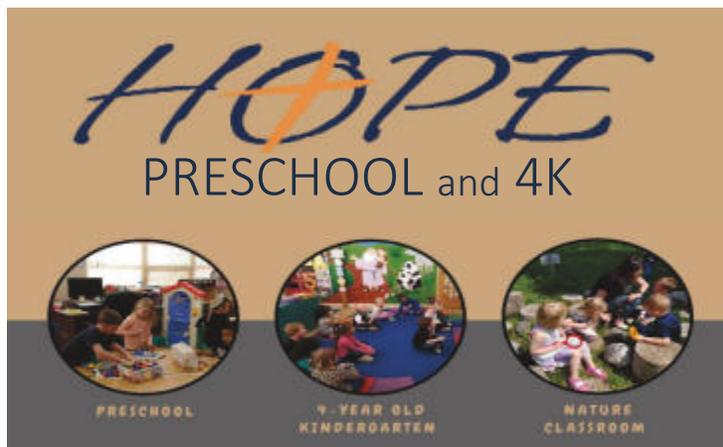
Sunday Morning Bible Class will resume on September 12 at 9:15 a.m. with a walk through the book of Hebrews. The class will meet in H-102, in the office complex. Pastor will lead the study. (No Bible Class on the 26th—Church Picnic).

Monday Morning Women:

Monday Women's Bible Class resumes on September 13 at 10:00 a.m. in the Office Conference Room. Our study will be *God's Unbreakable Promises* from Right Now Media led by Jennie Allen. How can you trust that God is good? With the Bible at our fingertips, we have a story of God's faithfulness right in front of us to show us one example after another of who God is. Please join us!

Tuesday Morning:

Tuesday Morning Bible Class will resume on September 21, at 10:00 a.m. The topic planned is Christian Fundamentals. Pastor will lead this study.



Enroll Today!

We have openings
in both our Preschool and 4K programs

3-year-old Preschool

2-day class

Tuesday/Thursday – 9:00-11:30 a.m.

4-year-old Kindergarten

5-day class – AM – 8:20-11:00 a.m.*

5-day class – PM – 12:30-3:10 p.m.*

*Optional Christian Education offered daily
(15 minutes) at the end of each 4K session

Contact Bob Mengert for more information or to enroll at bmengert@lifeathope.org.

Deacon/Preschool Director, Bob Mengert

Hope Happenings

High School students
updating Sunday School spaces



High school students attended Lifest 2021



Set aside Sunday, September 26, for a church picnic. Outside worship service at 10:40 a.m. Food and drink served from 12:00-1:00 p.m. with freewill donation. Only two services that weekend: Saturday at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday outdoors at 10:40 a.m.

Ladies Guild

Welcome back ladies! We will be holding our Thursday, September 9, meeting at 10:00 a.m. in the H-102 classroom as we are not having a potluck. We have five ladies attending the LWML SWD Fall Retreat in Oshkosh on September 18.

Women On Their Own

WOTO (Women on Their Own) will meet for an 11:30 a.m. lunch on Thursday, September 16, at Red Cabin at Green Acres. It is wonderful to have this group together again and enjoying laughs and fellowship. Please make your reservation with Sylvia Dittman (email: syl63@charter.net; call: 920-921-2237 or text: 920-979-8465).



Sweet Hour of Prayer

Sweet Hour of Prayer will start up on Monday, September 13 at 11:00 a.m. in the Office Conference Room. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month. Come join us!



An Opportunity to Serve

When you hear the word *Stewardship*, what's the first thing that comes to mind? I suspect, in most cases, it would be *money*. While giving offerings to God from our income is an important part of *Stewardship* and God has much to say about that, it is only one part.

Another very important part of *Stewardship* is service. We were created by God to serve and there are many opportunities to do that in the church, the community and the world. How we choose to offer our God-given gifts of time, talent and treasure, is largely a matter of the heart. I'm sure you've heard of someone being described as "having the heart of a servant" because of their willingness to give of themselves wherever there's a need.

This is the time of year when we especially want to remind you of the opportunity you have to serve on one of our nine boards. They are a necessary part of how we operate our church but some of them have been working with reduced numbers which, at times, can make carrying out their responsibilities a little more challenging than it ought to be.

A question often asked is "What do boards do?" There isn't room to go into that here but we'll have information available at church services and the church office that will include board job descriptions along with Board Chair contact info. We encourage you to pick up this info, if needed, and prayerfully consider serving in this special way.

Thank you for your consideration and thanks to all board members, past and present, for your willingness to serve. May God continue to bless your efforts on our behalf.



Prayer Chain

Hope has an active Prayer Chain. All prayers are confidential and may be submitted anonymously. Fill out a request card in the pew or call Darlene Engle at 923-5314.

September 2021 - Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 11:00 Exercise	3 Church Office Closed	4 5:30 Traditional Service w/HC
			<i>NewsLetter</i> DEADLine			
5 8:00 Traditional Service w/HC 10:40 Blended Service w/HC	6 Church Office Closed 	7 11:00 Exercise 5:30 Brd Elders 6:00 Brd Finance 6:30 Brd Trustees	8	9 10:00 Ladies Guild	10	11 5:30 Traditional Service
12 8:00 Traditional Service 9:10 Catechism 9:10 HS Ministry 9:10 Sunday School 9:15 Adult BC 10:40 Blended Service	13 10:00 Women's BC 11:00 Sweet Hour of Prayer	14 11:00 Exercise 7:00 Church Council	15	16 11:00 Exercise 11:30 WOTO-Red Cabin	17 Church Office Closed	18 5:30 Traditional Service w/HC
19 8:00 Traditional Service w/HC 9:10 Catechism 9:10 HS Ministry 9:10 Sunday School 9:15 Adult BC 10:40 Blended Service w/HC	20 10:00 Women's BC	21 10:00 Adult BC 11:00 Exercise 6:00 Brd Youth	22 6:30 Adult Choir	23 11:00 Exercise	24	25 5:30 Traditional Service
26 10:40 Outdoor Service 11:45 Church Picnic	27 10:00 Women's BC 11:00 Sweet Hour of Prayer	28 10:00 Adult BC 11:00 Exercise 6:30 Brd Education	29 6:30 Adult Choir	30 11:00 Exercise		

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Ken Hill, Minister of Music
Alex Cargin, Director of Youth and Education
Bob Mengert, Deacon/Preschool Director
Rick Mackie, Director of Social Media and
Communications
Marci Scharf, Office Manager
Ashley Carus, 4K Teacher/Sunday School
Facilitator
Stephanie Neff, Preschool Teacher
Les Mier, Maintenance
Nadine Arndt, Custodial
Linda Lefeber, Custodial
Dan Joseph, Church Council President
Dan Schneider, Church Council Vice President
Jill Harmsen, Church Council Secretary



Traditional Services

- Saturday 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday 8:00 a.m.

Blended Service

- Sunday 10:40 a.m.