



HOPE NOTES

November 2020

Hope Lutheran Church of Forest Hills

*Serving the Community
with Love*

*Hope is a congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America*

Worship Sundays 11:15 am
Taize Prayer Service 7:00 pm
(zoom)
first Friday of every month
(except June, July & August)

P.L.U.M. Pastoral Team

Rev. John Gropp - 412-680-7867
Rev. Brenda Henry – 412-390-8005
Rev. Dr. Paul Koch – 773-848-1470
Pastor Susan Devine – 412-496-4889
Vicar Mandy Gilberti - 814-241-8150

*Hope Lutheran Church
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Pittsburgh, PA 15221
412-242-4476*

*Hopeforesthills@aol.com
plumofpa.com*

Office Hours:
Mon.-Thurs. - 9 a.m.-noon
Susan Lescinsky, Secretary

Church Council:

Jane Cushion, President
Barb Kochuba, Vice President
Lynda Joyce, Secretary
Dave Hauser, Treasurer
Kathie Nelson, Member
Janet Moberg, Member
Pam Hall, Member
Kristina Fennell, Member
Bev Koch, Member

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Are you feeling a little overwhelmed?

Are you getting excited about the upcoming holiday season with all the decorations, bells, and whistles of Thanksgiving, Kwanza, Hanukkah, Christmas or the numerous family gatherings that are typical during this time of year, or does it just add to the headache of the uncertain future we are all facing? Are we immobilized from the weariness of it all?

As we walk through the ever-changing seasons on our way through mid-fall, we find ourselves approaching the church celebration we call All Saints Sunday. It is a Sunday during which we intentionally remember our friends, family, and loved ones who most often changed our lives forever and have joined the church triumphant. As we are compiling the list of those we have served and cared for in their final season in this life, I am ever mindful of their celebration of life. When I ask the family if there is a preferred scripture they would like included in this celebration, the 23rd Psalm is the leading choice.

Psalm 23 (slightly modified for the current times)

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, (coronavirus pandemic, physical distancing, face masks, white supremacy, Black Lives Matter, school closures, political upheaval, unemployment, judicial upheaval, health insurance, environmental concerns, pro-choice vs. pro-life, etc.) I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Most people find in these words that were first recorded some 3,000 years ago by a “called” shepherd, turned king named David, who in human terms is the forefather of our Lord Jesus, to be words of comfort and strength.

I believe this is just what we need today as we face our current time in our present-day valley. In times like these, we tend to forget that we have a God who is in charge. First allow me to rule out the obvious, for the most part we are all living in a bit of a fog. Check out the following tease and the One Minute version, but for a remarkably interesting description, read the full article at the website link noted below.

Covid and culture shock feel the same to your brain — and here's why

by EDITOR on AUGUST 25, 2020

by Peter Olson

We suspect you've been feeling it too. A frustrating sense of 'molasses' clogging your thoughts. A fatigue you just can't seem to shake. Feeling 'tired' or 'worn-out' as you search to journey through normal days that simply don't feel as normal as they should.

As we have both watched and experienced the events of 2020, something has seemed oddly familiar. Every part of life seems to have changed, nearly overnight. Stores are different. Work is different. Interactions with friends and with strangers – it's all different. Yet in a way this scene seems to be a re-run. Because, in a way, it is. This scene is familiar because it mirrors culture shock.

The One-Minute Version:

When someone moves to a completely new culture, many of the 'autopilots' your brain uses for thousands of small decisions every day become ineffective. In a similar way, your current environment has likely changed sufficiently enough that many of your own 'autopilots' are no longer working. When this happens, the next remaining option for your brain is to use a second decision-making process that requires far more effort and energy (glucose) to operate. Your body can only supply glucose to your brain at a certain rate – a rate far below what would be required to use this kind of thinking continually. Thus, additional thinking about routine matters has likely left you with a chronically depleted level of glucose in your brain. All to say: You are experiencing "culture shock".

For the full article please check out this website:

<https://www.alifeoverseas.com/covid-and-culture-shock-feel-the-same-to-your-brain-and-heres-why/>

This article might begin to explain the fog, but to help us with the decision making process during this cloudy and chaotic time, (yes, decisions still need to be made daily, hourly, and at a moment's notice), Christians are assured that God is clearly in charge

even if we are not privy to the end result. And as Christians, we are not called to sit idly by without putting our words into action. Remember, it is God's work; "our" hands. Our example is Christ who was motivated by compassion and justice, always taking the side of the oppressed and those who were disenfranchised. Let us be willing to move in that direction as well, despite the fog that immerses us in our current valley, as there is a difference between being a true follower of Christ and just being religious. To be a true follower of Christ requires risk and assurance that God is with us.

In Christ's service,

Pastor John Gropp

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 22, 2020 after worship

The annual congregation meeting to approve the budget will be after the service on Sunday, Nov. 22, approx 11:55 am. In addition to the budget, we will also be voting on whether to make our membership with P.L.U.M. permanent. Our previous vote was to join as a provisional member for the first year.

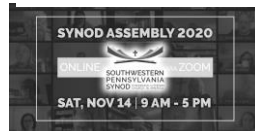
These two items will come from council as seconded motions.

Similar to our last congregational meeting, we will also be having it on Zoom for those who are not comfortable with returning to in-person services yet.

The call in line and on-line Zoom methods are the same as the PLUM Sunday 3pm worship services and Bible Studies: Zoom online:

<https://zoom.us/j/401596541>

Zoom by phone: (646) 876 9923 Meeting ID: 401 596 541



2020 SOUTHWESTERN PA SYNOD ASSEMBLY

November 14, 2020 via ZOOM

The 2020 Synod Assembly of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be held on Saturday, November 14, 2020 via ZOOM Meetings. This is a new format for the Assembly, and since they will be facilitating this assembly in an online format, it is important that EVERY voting member has access to an internet ready device (i.e. smart phone or tablet) for the purposes of voting as well as the ability to be either on a computer with an individual ZOOM account or the ability to be in a small group of people sharing one computer with a ZOOM account. Members are encouraged to prayerfully consider serving as lay voting members or to otherwise participate in the assembly. Each congregation may elect three voting members.



MAKE AN ADVENT WREATH FOR YOUR HOME!

~ a special ZOOM event on November 21, 2020 at 10 am ~

Let's begin a new tradition in our homes! The PLUM pastoral team welcomes you to a special ZOOM event on November 21, 2020 at 10 am. Vicar Mandy will lead a do-it-yourself class on

creating your own Advent wreath. There will be a demonstration of a wreath using fresh greens as well as an artificial wreath. You can be as creative as you wish!

Ideas for your wreath: Candles- It is up to you! They can be 3 purple or blue and one pink. You could also place a white Christ candle in the middle. They can be real flame candles or LED candles/tea lights. Don't forget candle holders!

Wreath Form- A wire frame form of any size can be purchased at any craft store. There are also advent wreath forms with candle holders already mounted inside. An artificial wreath that is already around your house is a great idea, just take the old decorations off to create a new look.

Greens- Any artificial pine bough, or ready-made wreath will work. If you have access to fresh pine branches, cut some of them into six to eight-inch pieces or some size that you can easily work with for your wreath form size. If you are working with loose pieces, don't forget to pick up some craft wire that bends easily to attach the greens onto the wreath form.

Decorations- Although the Advent wreaths that we see in church are usually plain, there is no reason why you cannot add small pinecones, a red bow, holly with berries, or even a dusting of glitter so that your Advent wreath shimmers!

*Think about where you will place your Advent wreath. Fresh greens will require a place that is a bit cooler in your house to remain as fresh as possible, also you may wish to use a plastic tablecloth under the wreath. If you are using real flame candles, be aware of curtains, pets, children and flammable greens, etc. Your Advent wreath should be in a space where it is a reminder of the season, as well as a place where prayer is offered. A small wreath in the middle of the kitchen table is a beautiful way for the whole family to celebrate the Advent Season!

Get all the items together to create your Advent Wreath and sign onto ZOOM on November 21 at 10 am.

Let's spend some time together as we prepare for the beautiful season of Advent!



PLUM
Thanksgiving
Eve Service
Wednesday,

November 25
~7:00 pm on Zoom~

Please join friends from PLUM for
Advent Family Bible Study
on Zoom

This study starts December 1, 2020



Tuesdays at 1 pm and Thursday evenings at 7 pm.

We will explore the meaning behind the four candles of the Advent Wreath...**HOPE FAITH JOY LOVE**

YOU are always welcome!



*** Rise Against Hunger**

ONLINE Auction *

Saturday, November 14th at 6:00 PM via Zoom.

As you know, fundraising efforts in 2020 have been challenging with our pandemic environment. However, our Christian mission continues as the needs of our world have not taken a pause for the pandemic. So, Christ Lutheran Church is going to try a new type of fundraiser to help with the Rise Against Hunger campaign and this new fundraiser is going to be a virtual auction.

What are we going to auction? Good question. We are planning to auction off prize baskets and other donated items. The goal is to put together some really nice prize baskets along with a side hustle: We are going to auction off 5 brown bags. One of those bags will have a \$100 gift card. The other 4 bags will have some other prize...but not a \$100 gift card. However, they will not be Zonks like on Let's Make a Deal...but something worth less than a \$100 gift card. The fun is when bidding on one of the bags, you will not know what it is and we will not reveal the bag contents until after all 5 have been auctioned off. Now doesn't that sound like fun? Yes, it does. And of course all proceeds will benefit Rise Against Hunger.

Would you like to help? We need folks to put together some prize baskets that we can auction off. You can get together with friends, your congregation, family members or yourself to put one of these baskets together. A theme for the basket is always fun and what we would need along with the donated basket is a list of the contents and an estimated retail value. We are asking that donations be sent to Christ Lutheran Church in Duquesne. Call Deann George (412-951-0466) to make an appointment to make sure someone is there. If that is problematic, just contact Deann and we will plan to socially distantly pick it up. Once we have all the donated prize baskets, we will post pictures online so that you know what you are bidding on. **We are asking that all the prize baskets be donated by Sunday, November 1st.** Questions or concerns please contact Deann at Christ Lutheran Church at christluthduq@gmail.com or 412-951-0466..... or myself at rgeorge@clearviewfcu.org or 412-334-5830.

Thank You!

Ray George

Christ Lutheran Church, Duquesne, PA

Continued Support Needed

We are especially grateful for those who have been able to continue sending or dropping off their donations. Your support of Hope's ongoing ministry is greatly appreciated and encouraged.

Thank you again!

Nov 1 All Saints
 11:15am Worship
 3:00pm Zoom Worship
 Turn Clocks back 1 hour
Nov 3
 Election Day
 1:00pm Zoom Study
Nov 5
 7:00pm Zoom Study
Nov 6
 7:00pm Taize Prayer
Nov 7
 Rise Against Hunger
 10-12 & 1-3
Nov 8
 11:15am Worship
 3:00pm Zoom Worship
Nov 9
 7:00pm Church Council
Nov 10
 1:00pm Zoom Study
Nov 11
 7:00pm PLUM Worship Com.
Nov 12
 7:00pm Zoom Study
 Dec Hope Notes deadline
Nov 14
 9am-5pm Synod Assembly
Nov 15
 11:15am Worship
 3:00pm Zoom Worship
Nov 17
 1:00pm Zoom Study
Nov 19
 7:00pm Zoom Study
Nov 21
 10am Advent Wreath
 Making Zoom
Nov 22 - Christ the King
 11:15am Worship
 * Congregational Meeting
 3:00pm Zoom Worship
Nov 24
 1:00pm Zoom Study
Nov 25
 7pm Zoom Thanksgiving
 Eve Service zoom
Nov 25
 THANKSGIVING DAY
Nov 29 ADVENT I
 11:15am Worship
 3:00pm Zoom Worship



For the third year in a row, PLUM will be working with the faith-based organization "Rise Against Hunger" to host a meal packaging event. We will coordinate an assembly-line packaging of highly nutritious dehydrated meals comprised of rice, soy, vegetables and 23 essential vitamins and minerals. Together we will package more than 10,152 meals!

Saturday, November 7 at Christ Lutheran Church

2 Sessions: 10 a.m. – Noon and 1 – 3 p.m.

25 people per session*

Social Distancing, Masks and Gloves required

Children age 5 and up are welcome with parental supervision

Our congregation is asked to make a minimum contribution of \$293 toward this ministry. To make a donation, please indicate "Rise Against Hunger" and the amount on your offering envelope. We are also planning a fun online auction fundraiser on November 14 to raise money for Rise Against Hunger.

G & J Dollars

G & D Dollars continue to be collected for Rise Against Hunger. Add your contribution to the marked jar in the Narthex.

NOVEMBER
Pocket Change
Pantry Network
of Eastern Suburbs



Taize Prayer

Friday, Nov. 6 at 7:00 pm

~zoom

Blessing of the Pets

Sunday, October 4,

For many years now, Hope has offered a Blessing of the Pets on the first Sunday of October and this year was no exception. Twenty-two dogs, one cat and one turtle were blessed. The majority in attendance were from the community at large. What a wonderful way to minister to our neighbors.



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PLUM's Pastoral Team is ready and waiting for a call from anyone in need of care or who would appreciate receiving Communion. Just give any one of them a call and they will be there for you.