



HOPE NOTES

April/May 2022

Hope Lutheran Church of Forest Hills

*Serving the Community
with Love*

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

Sunday Worship 11:15 am
& 3:00 pm on zoom

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

Hope Lutheran Church

353 Ridge Avenue
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
Kathie Nelson, Secretary
Dave Hauser, Treasurer
Bev Koch, Vice Treasurer
Lynda Joyce, Member
Janet Moberg, Member
Pam Hall, Member
Kristina Fennell, Member

Dear Partners in ministry,

I'm thrilled to take this opportunity to publicly announce that our newly called pastor, the Rev. Alexander Sumo, will officially begin his ministry with us, the Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries, PLUM, on May 9, 2022. He comes to us from Columbus, Ohio where he has served the last 13 years as a Mission Developer.

"Come and See" and "If not Now, When?"

As many of you know, I have really become enthralled by the theme of this year's Epiphany Series from year 4 of the Narrative Lectionary Series which follows the gospel of John for our Sunday sermons. We've also been using "The Chosen" TV series theme for some of our Bible studies. What made these themes even more current to me happened last week when we were visiting with our grandchildren, who, immediately upon our arrival, ran up and in animated excitement grabbed our hands and beckoned us to "Come and See" as they welcomed us into their ever-changing world. When our response was less than exuberant and more like, "whoa there" or "wait a bit," their comeback was "If not now, when?" They wanted a definitive reply to their request of inviting us into their world.

The old phrase, we've never done it that way before has truly taken a major hit in the way we can base anything for the future. Just consider how many things have changed in the way we do things as we begin the third year of COVID 19. We prayed for years that we as the body of Christ become more active and involved in the life beyond our church doors. In many ways COVID has forced and encouraged us to see the value in the many personal individual ministries that we are doing every day. And some might say that COVID isolated us and separated us, which in some ways it has. It has also made us stronger by strengthening our diversity and challenging us to look beyond the box of what "was" normal. We grew up in a time when the church celebrated our gathering together and allowed that to become the norm and identifier of what was "church." We forgot our roots where we are called to be "evangelical," or sent to proclaim ("do") and be the body of Christ in the world, i.e., scattered.

This in common terms might be better understood as the difference between being a welcoming congregation and being an inviting congregation. To be sure both are needed, but in most of our cases, I would assume we are more welcoming than inviting. We prefer people come into our doors rather than getting involved in the lives of people outside our doors. One avenue is safe, while the other takes a little more risk. And this is the part that I find most exciting because in most of our lives we are already doing this. It is in our various walks of life beyond our doors - those areas of our lives which consume our time, energy, and passion beyond church on Sunday morning. And for each of us it is different. Some are nurses, teachers, firefighters, ambulance workers, health care workers, electricians, moms, grandparents. The list is endless, and we are called to ministry in each of these areas, diverse as they are. Ministry does not stop once we leave the building on Sunday morning.

As part of the ministry of PLUM we have always pushed ourselves to be outside the box when it comes to the norms within our culture as churches. As we redefine ourselves beyond Covid 19 and with the calling of a new Pastor and the retirement of Pastor Paul Koch (Thank you, Pastor Paul), as congregations, we again have the opportunity to push ourselves away from our comfort zones back to the church of our forebearers. And that is really a group effort. Our churches and ministries have a place for you and your unique gifts to flourish. If we want to be relevant churches of the future, we must pull together with all our blessings. I encourage you to come and see the many blessings we are and how

we are better together. In the words of my grandkids, "Come and See," and if you've been sitting on the sidelines and waiting for a more opportune time, may I ask you, "If not now, when?" There is always a place at God's Table for you to be strengthened and equipped to go out in our daily lives. What better time than now? It's a time to celebrate the Resurrection and "new life."

I/we look forward to seeing you as we collectively journey together.
In Christ's Service,

Pastors John, Brenda, and Susan

If you are in need of pastoral care – a phone conversation, home visit or Holy Communion – please call, text or email one of us.

Rev. Brenda Henry 412-390-8005
brenda.henry@gmail.com

Rev. Sue Devine 412-496-4889
skdkod81@gmail.com

Rev. John J. Gropp 412-680-7867
pjgropp@aol.com

Blessings to you all,
Pastor Sue and your pastoral team

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, May 15...after worship

- Review the Annual Reports and
- Election of Church Council members
(anyone interested in serving on Church Council please contact any member of the current council.)

EASTER FLOWERS

Choices: Easter Lilies: \$14
Tulips, Hyacinths, Daffodils: \$10

Order Deadline is April 3

Order forms are available in the Narthex, questions see Janet Moberg



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HOLY WEEK

April 10...PASSION SUNDAY

10:00 am...Breakfast...(no breakfast on Easter)

11:15am...In-person Worship

April 14...MAUNDY THURSDAY...7:30PM Zoom Service

April 15...GOOD FRIDAY...7pm In-person Tenebrae Service
7:30PM...Zoom Service

April 16...EASTER VIGIL...7pm Easter Vigil on Zoom

April 17...EASTER SUNDAY...11:15am...In-person Worship

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Wednesday evenings, May 4 thru June 8

Time: 7-8:30 pm

Developing your Faith Narrative -

I Love to Tell the Story



Pastor Martin Rafanan plans to lead a study group on Developing your Faith Narrative – I Love to Tell the Story: developing ways to share your faith in the everyday storytelling we do in our lives. How to develop a story about your faith and learn to write it and tell it. Identifying and learning about the central themes of our lives. Bringing constructive God-language into our everyday speech. Identifying the gifts God has given us and writing/telling about how you share those gifts. Finding your wisdom and sharing it. Sounds interesting, right? More details will be available as we get closer.



Rx Bottle Collection

Ever wish you could find a use for all those empty prescription bottles you accumulate over the year? Well, we have news for you!

The McKeesport Lion's Club is collecting empty Rx bottles to be re-used for medication distribution in underprivileged countries around the world. The use of these containers cuts down the cost of delivering meds to folks in need.

Pocket Change & G&J Dollars

*Lend a Hand
to Make a Home*

Many refugees are coming to Southwestern PA. They are coming with very little. YOU CAN HELP! Donate to help these families make their Houses or apartments into homes.

PLUM is pleased to officially announce that Rev. Alexander Sumo has accepted the call to join the PLUM pastoral team effective May 9, 2022.

Check the narthex for a container to collect. Please remember to completely rinse the bottle and remove the labels! This is an ongoing collection effort, so no concern about a start/end date!

Thrivent Choice We are excited to share that a deposit of \$33.00 has been made on behalf of Thrivent Choice® which will help to further support your important work.

AmazonSmile Hope Lutheran Church has been issued a 17.52 donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation as a result of AmazonSmile program.

The April/May issue of Hope Notes is sponsored by JoAn Kress in memory of her sister, Dot.

The May Candle of Hope sponsored by Ken Noll in memory of his father, Wm. A. Noll

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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.

April Birthdays

3rd Janice Kuretich
12th Cheryl Finlay
15th Dawn Dietz
23rd Kathie Nelson
27th Bonnie Straley
29th Lorraine Easudes
30th Steven Beech

May Birthdays

7th Kayla Tarpley
8th Leann Dase

14th Mary Beth Tomo-Gardner
14th Kristie Hayakawa
16th Pam Hall
19th Kristie Beech
24th Kyle Tarpley
26th Bev Koch
30th Ruth Boyle
30th Christine Hughes
31st Heather Schillinger

May Anniversary

19th John & Janice Kuretich

Eastern Europe Crisis Response...There are several ways you can respond to the crisis in Eastern Europe through Lutheran Disaster Response. Your gifts will be used entirely (100%) to provide support for people impacted by conflict in the region. Forms are available in the Narthex or by contacting the church office.

Exploring Generosity and Stewardship in Movies

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88176068825>

April 28: "Before the flood" documentary-Stewarding Creation and the Environment

May 26: "It's a wonderful Life" – Stewarding Financial Resources

Learn more at : swpasynod.org/calendar/stewardmovies

Hope Prays Every Day

Nancy Dugan, rehab from stroke 3/22

Corey, health reasons 2/22

Lou Mediate, fall 2/22

Laura, knee surgery, 2/22

Gail Ciavarella, cancer 2/22

Nancy Urso, lung cancer 2/22

Ed Roehling, health issues 2/22

Bev Koch, family & friends, death of sister, Carol Harper 12/21

*We pray for members of our armed forces

*We pray for those facing difficult life situations

*We pray for our loved ones who are homebound, in care facilities, or in need of on-going prayer, including: Mary Beth Tomo-Gardner, Henrietta Partner, Peg Portera and Doris Hoffman

*We pray for our congregation and for our leadership: Jane, Barb, Lynda, Dave, Kathie, Janet, Pam, Kristina and Bev

*We pray for Bishop Eaton, Bishop Kusserow and their Staff



*Seasons change.
God never does.*

For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. Psalm 100:5