



HOPE NOTES

April ~ May 2023

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
Pastor Susan Devine-412-496-4889
Pastor Alexander Sumo-614-218-6730

Hope Lutheran Church

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Pittsburgh, PA 15221
412-242-4476

Hopeforesthills@aol.com
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Office Hours:

Wednesdays - 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

Choose today what's best for you – is it more Control or Surrender to Christ?

For the last few weeks, and all of Lent this year, we are fasting and praying and walking with Jesus to the cross. Most of us are denying ourselves of things or activities that are important to us and are taking other activities and things that will change our lives for work and service to the kingdom. What are you “denying” yourself of this Lent? What are you putting off as your Lenten sacrifice? What are you taking up or what are you adding to your physical or spiritual lives for this season? Have you considered putting away “control” yet? Have you considered a total surrender of “your control of things”, “worries about life”, and ALL your cares to the CREATOR OF ALL THINGS? Will you share your burden and control with Jesus? Hear this invitation from Jesus:

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
Matthew 11:29-30 (NIV)

If you're living life of overloaded schedules, burn-out, stress and feeling burdened by activities, events and responsibilities, here's one reason why: You may be trying to control. We sometimes believe and think it all depends on you. We believe things like, “If it's to be, it's up to me. I've got to be there so that things won't go wrong. I've got to hold it all together. I know and understand what's best for this institution. I've got to make it all work.”

Brothers and sisters, you are not the general managers of the universe. The greater your need to control, the more stressed and burned-out you're going to be in life. Get rid of your stress by giving up your control.

Jesus wants us to share our “control of life” with him. Christ has a different plan for you: *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”* (Matthew 11:29-30 NIV).

You say, “Wait a minute. Take something else on? That sounds like a burden. I don't need to take on more. I'm already carrying way too much!”

Let's take another look at what Jesus is saying in Matthew 11 when he tells you to take his yoke on yourself. If you didn't grow up on a farm, you may never have seen a yoke. A yoke is a single piece of wood that brings two farm animals together, so they can share the burden of a load. A yoke is not a harness. When you put a harness on one animal, it has to pull the whole load. But with a yoke, you team up two or more animals, so the load is shared; it's lightened. A yoke makes life easier on the animal, not harder.

When Jesus tells you to take his yoke upon yourself, it's like he's saying, “I never meant for you to carry all your problems by yourself. Let me help you! Team up with me, partner with me, and I will help you carry the load.”

If you feel stressed right now, it means you are not fully yoked to Jesus Christ. Stress is a warning sign. It tells you that you're trying to control things and carry too much on your own unnecessarily.

Every time you get disconnected from Jesus, the stress goes up in your life. You may be a follower of Jesus Christ, but if you're overloaded at this moment, you are not yoked up to him.

But every time you get reconnected and yoked up, Jesus helps you pull the load. And your stress goes down.

It's tempting to think that the antidote to stress is escape. But the problem is that stress is in your mind—so you take it with you wherever you go. You can be just as stressed lying on a white sandy beach as you are right in the middle of your problems at home.

Now, what if we give up some control, to accept the yoke of Jesus? When we do this, God will give us peace that surpasses all human understandings.

*What areas of your life have you been trying to control that are causing stress for you?

*In practical terms, what does it look like to give up control to Christ? Is it possible? Can you do it?

How can you reconnect with Jesus this Lent and in the upcoming Easter season so that he can help carry your loads of control, worries, burdens and cares?

Please consider yoking with Jesus today. I promise you that your life will never be the same again if you do. You will experience God's peace and comfort in your walk with Christ. You will find good health and calmness of life when you fully yoke with the Lord. Please try and see!

Pastor Alexander Y. Sumo on behalf of PLUM Pastoral Team



Pocket Change & G&J Dollars

Donations are designated to the Food Pantry in Turtle Creek



Passion Sunday, April 2
11:15 am ~ In-person Service
3:00 pm ~ Zoom Service

Maundy Thursday, April 6
7:00 pm ~ Zoom Service

Good Friday, April 7
7:00 pm ~ In person Service
7:00 pm ~ Zoom Service

Resurrection Sunday, April 9
11:15 am ~ In-person Service



E2J: From Exile to Jesus: A History of Israel's Stories

~ Taught by Pastor Ken Ofslager ~

On the 3rd Sunday of the Month 1:00 ~ 2:30 pm
April 16, May 21

*What happened between the Babylonian Exile
and the birth of Jesus?*

In person at Emmanuel Lutheran Church
1229 Jefferson Heights Road, Pgh., PA 15235
eastmontelc@hotmail.com, www.emmanuelutheraneastmont.org
412-824-4525 (office); 412-401-5742 (Pastor's cell)

Live and interactive on zoom. <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89760867900>

Watch on Emmanuel's facebook page live or on your time after the event.

News from PLUM

There will be no Easter Vigil this year. One of PLUM's 7pm services held on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be shared live on ZOOM.

The blessing of the Paschal candles will be included in the beginning of our Easter worship services.

Closed captioning is now available on our ZOOM meetings and worship services. We are considering investigating the addition of a sign language interpreter to ZOOM worship services. We MAY also investigate adding sound amplifiers to our churches (if viable).

A lack of readers is still the biggest issue on our ZOOM worship services. Please include the following blurb in your bulletin and/or newsletter to see if we can get more volunteers for this important aspect of the ZOOM worship.

ZOOM worship has continued to be a vital part of our weekly worship opportunities. Each week, a person is needed to join the worship service and read the congregational parts and lessons printed in the ZOOM bulletin. Please prayerfully consider volunteering to take on this role on one of our weekly ZOOM worship services. It only requires an hour of your time on Sunday Afternoon (3-4pm), but the outreach we are providing from these worship services are priceless. If you can assist in this ministry, please let you office staff or a Pastor know, so that you can be included. Thank you for your consideration.



Rx Bottle Collection

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.

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!

The April/May issue of Hope Notes is given by Lillian M. Bell in loving memory of Lynn Sewak.

The April Candle of Hope is sponsored by Lillian M. Bell in loving memory of Lynn Sewak.

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

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



Hope Prays Every Day

Diane Armstrong, clots in lung & leg 3/23
Ronda Anderson & family, draw closer to God 3/23
Alan Milloy, prostate cancer 2/23
Val, health issues 2/23
Bob Koschik, cancer 11/22
Amy T, health concerns 11/22
Bob B, cancer 11/22
Peter B, 11/22
Karen V, difficult life situation 11/22
Dick Dougherty, breathing problems 11/22
Doug McIntyre, health concerns 11/22
Meghan Younkin, brain cancer 10/22
Pastor John, advanced Lyme disease 9/22
June Perry, health concerns 11/22
Brian Leach, cancer 9/22
Joyce Hunter, stroke 9/22
Mary O'Hara, nursing home 9/22
Don Pearrell, cancer 9/22
Jill Ann Sewick, breast cancer 9/22
Bob Leech, brain tumor & myasthenia gravis 9/22
Bob Carlisle, surgery following fall 9/22
Ray Smith, myasthenia gravis 8/22
Brayden Hay, cerebral palsy 7/22
Robin Hanna, knee surgery problems 7/22
Dick & Jane, health concerns 6/22
Joe Dombrosky, health concerns 6/22
Ken Noll, pinched nerve 7/22
Alecia Francis, bladder cancer 7/22
Partner Family, death of Henrietta 12/22

*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, Peg Portera, Esther Harris and Doris Hoffman

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

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

AmazonSmile

Hope Lutheran Church has been issued a \$13.36 donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation as a result of AmazonSmile program activity between October 1 and December 31, 2022.

The AmazonSmile was discontinued on February 20, 2023. We are very proud of the difference that AmazonSmile has made over the past ten years, and we thank you for your support and partnership. Thank you!

Your AmazonSmile Team

Thrivent Choice

In 2022 you received \$95 in Thrivent Choice Dollars® grant funding. We are proud to help support the important work you do and hope, together, we can do even more in 2023!

Thank You from ANGELS' PLACE

Dear Members of Hope Lutheran Church,

December is here and we look forward to celebrating this holy season and embracing all the joy that surrounds this time of year. The Holidays are the perfect time for reflection and to give thanks for the blessings received throughout the year. Thank you for being one of those blessings and responding to our "Let it Shine" campaign. Your gift of \$145.00 provides the opportunity for families to receive quality early childhood education and family support.

By believing in the potential of our parents and children you allow them to shine. When a family enters our program, we immediately assume the responsibility of raising 100% of the funds needed to provide services, and we depend on charitable donations to continue our programs. We are grateful for the support of our friends who help us grow, exceed goals, and transform lives. A recent comment from an alumna and current donor reinforces the difference we are making together, "I wouldn't be where I am today without Angels' Place."

As 2022 draws to a close, our student parents are working hard to complete their courses and are excited for a relaxing winter break. The children have been helping to decorate their classrooms while listening to and singing Christmas songs. Each child eagerly awaits a turn to share their holiday tradition from home with their peers and teachers. Both centers have a party complete with a pot-luck feast and a visit from Santa.

Our many faithful friends in the community share gifts to make the event special for everyone.

During this time of year, we remain motivated by our support system which enables us to invest in strengthening families leading to positive ripple effects throughout the community.

May you have the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace of love during the Christmas season and always. Have a Happy New Year!

*Sincerely,
Beth E. Banas, Executive Director*

Thank You from LUTHERLYN

Dear Friends,

Thank you for making a difference at Lutherlyn! It is friends like you who make it possible for Lutherlyn to keep our vitally important promise to never turn a child away from summer camp for financial reasons.

By supporting Lutherlyn you are ensuring that all children, regardless of their financial circumstance, can attend summer camp at Lutherlyn where they learn how to be Christ's light in the world.

Your recent gift of \$188 goes further than just helping kids get to camp. As their time at Lutherlyn draws to a close, we challenge each camper to take Christ's love into their communities and to shine their light everywhere they go. Through them, your gift is a blessing to their families, friends, and communities.

Each year, registrations for summer camp programs arrive at the Lutherlyn office, and with these registrations we also receive requests for camperships. It is thanks to you, and people like you, that these requests will be approved.

We are truly grateful for your dedication to this ministry and for the many Life-Changing Adventures in Faith you have made possible for campers this summer at Lutherlyn!

*Yours in Ministry,
Deb Roberts, Executive Director*

Dear Fellow PLUM WELCA Members

Our Savior's WELCA group has decided our next evangelical outreach project will be making "Comfort Kits for Cancer Patients". This project will involve collecting/making items to aid people who are battling cancer. The kits will be available for distribution to our local outpatient cancer treatment centers, friends and members.

We will begin collecting the items needed and then assemble kits as needed. Here is the list of new items needed as suggested by a cancer treatment center:

New Blankets	Seat belt cushions	Water bottles
Snacks	Puzzle books	Pencils
Lip Balm	Hand warmers	Mints
Mouthwash	Q tips	Vaseline
Lemon Drops	Crest Pro Health Toothpaste	
Dove soap	Extra Strength Tylenol	
Mesh Bath Scrubby	Carnation Instant Breakfast	
Plastic knife, fork and spoon, sealed in a bag		

We are hoping to make this an ongoing outreach project.