



HOPE CHURCH NEWS

"...A living hope..." | Peter 1:3

Volume 61, No. 7

August 2018

In This Issue

Reconciliation.....2
 2nd Sunday Snacks2
 Room for All.....2
 Children's Ministry.....3
 Early Worship3
 WSN Update4
 Women's Service Day.....4
 Communications.....4
 Lectionary.....5
 Habitat for Humanity.....5
 Caring for Creation.....6
 Poetry Corner7
 Events &
 Announcements.....8
 Thank You9
 And Finally.....10-11

Inserts:

- *August Calendar*
- *Wisdom of the Wounded Calendar*

The deadline for the
 September newsletter is
Friday, August 17.

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday:
 9:00am - 5:00pm
 Friday: Closed

Hope Church, RCA
 77 West 11th Street
 Holland, MI 49423
 (616) 392-7947
 HopeChurchRCA.org



Down on the Farm...August 17 Picnic

Fellowship Ministry



Fellowship Ministry is hosting a summer picnic at **6 p.m. on Friday, August 17!** Bring your own picnic supper and meet at Teusink's Farm. The picnic area is no charge and will be available to Hope Church members and friends for food and fellowship. Watermelon will be provided by the Fellowship Ministry. From 6 – 8:30 pm it is *Family Fun Night* at the farm! You can take part in the activities listed below or just enjoy visiting together at the picnic area. No reservations necessary! Come and enjoy a summer evening at the farm!

Family Fun Night at Teusink's Pony Farm ~ 1468 West 32nd Street, Holland, 49423

Fun on the farm for five generations

Activities: Pony Ring Rides, Hayride, Surrey Ride, Hay maze, Fishing, Penny Hunt, Barn Animals, Exotic Birds, and Feed the Sheep and Goats (50 cents a bag)

Price: Kids (age 1-16) \$9.00 / Adults \$5.00 (Cash or checks accepted, but no credit cards.)

September 9 is Fall Kick-off Sunday

The Hope Church Fall schedule begins Sunday, September 9. After the 11 a.m. service (note change from summer time), we will gather for our annual Kick Off Church Picnic on the church grounds. Watch for details in the September newsletter and upcoming bulletins!

Reconciliation Ministry: Are Immigrants a Blessing or a Burden?

George Kraft, Hope Church Member



It is somewhat perplexing that illegal immigration has become such a hot topic in 2018 since immigration across our Southern border is on the decline. In fact, since 2009 more Mexican families and individuals have returned to Mexico from the U.S. than visa versa (Pew Research Institute). This is unfortunate since immigrants fuel our economy and grease the wheels of the labor market by their willingness to move more readily than established U.S. citizens to where the jobs are and work in industries where there are bottlenecks and shortages.

Undocumented workers, like everyone else, pay sales tax, property taxes and the best evidence suggests that at least 50% currently file income tax returns or have tax deductions withheld from their paychecks. Undocumented workers paid 11.6 billion dollars in state and local taxes in 2013 (Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy).

Despite the rhetoric we hear from the White House, immigrants are less likely to commit crimes. Neighborhoods with greater concentration of immigrants have much lower rates of crime and violence than comparable nonimmigrant neighborhoods (National Academy of Sciences).

Current immigrants are assimilating into American culture as rapidly as previous immigrant populations. In fact, some evidence suggests current immigrants are learning English faster than earlier immigrant waves (Dave Griswold, 2018).

After morning worship on Sunday, August 12 and August 19, we will be distributing lawn signs simply stating - IMMIGRANTS ARE A BLESSING NOT A BURDEN. We encourage anyone who is interested to pick one up.

Second Sunday Snacks

Outreach & Hospitality Ministry

Everything important in our Biblical story takes place around food. Relationships are formed, festivals are celebrated, connections are made and bodies and souls are fed.

On June 10 we began Second Sunday Snacks, a time for us to congregate around food and to connect with each other after the 10:00am worship service. Snacks of bagels, cream cheese and fruit are provided.

Outreach and Hospitality ministry decided to support this idea from a parishioner, which came with a donation to start this ministry. This will be a way to engage more people, especially visitors and newer members. We will gather together for snacks after the second service on the second Sunday of every month in the Gathering Area.

We hope you enjoy the opportunity to share a snack and conversation with others!

RfA Connection Challenge



Our congregation is part of a public roster of 34 RCA churches that share the mission of Room for All (RfA), a not-for-profit organization advocating for the full affirmation of LGBTQ people in the life and ministry of the Reformed Church in America. RfA has announced a new opportunity to support this work. Inspired by the witness of a diverse group of generous donors who have made combined gifts totaling \$50,000, RfA challenges our broad community of supporters to match this amount with another \$50,000. Individual gifts in any amount will be used to sustain RfA's ministry. Further information may be found at <https://roomforall.com/connection-challenge/>, or by calling 201-364-4538.

Children's Ministry

Jocelyn Van Heest, Children's Ministry Director

Summer Church School

We have had a wonderful summer learning about how the people Jesus met shared in the light of Jesus and how they shared that light with others. The children have tried to find ways to relate those stories into their own lives. How would they react? What would they have said or done? How can we share the light of Jesus with others?

During the month of August, we will be hearing stories about Jesus being there when his friends and followers were in need. Through song, stories and crafts we will continue to try and make these stories relevant to our lives.

Summer ponderings- fulfilling our baptism covenant with the children of Hope Church

As the congregation of Hope Church, we were blessed to be a part of baptism ceremonies as we promise to help in the faith formation of these young children. How can we fulfill these promises? Being a prayer partner and engaging with the children at special events are wonderful ways but might you also have gifts that would be meaningful to share in children's ministry. Think about the possibility of becoming involved as a Children in Worship leader, nursery care provider or even a visitor to the worship centers. After worshiping or visiting in the centers you may realize that this is a place where you are needed and where you will be able to share your gifts with the children. There can be great flexibility in scheduling and any amount of commitment will be a great service to our children's ministry. Nursery care giving is a great place to make connections with the young families of our church and have fun with the littlest members of our church. Everyone has something to share with the children and your talents will certainly be appreciated. If you have an interest in participating in the Children in Worship experience of helping in the nursery, contact Jocelyn Van Heest at the church or by email jocevh2@gmail.com.

KICK OFF SUNDAY IS SEPTEMBER 9

Our fall schedule begins September 9. Church School will start with a celebration of our time together and an introduction to our program for the year. We look forward to seeing all the children, 3-year-olds through 5th graders, get excited about the lesson with a group time and then dividing into age appropriate activities to further our understanding of the lesson. That same Sunday the children will leave the 11:00 a.m. service to worship in the Children in Worship centers. More detailed information may be picked up at the church later this month and invitation will be sent to the children.

Invitation to Early Worship

Audrienne Hill, Hope Church member

It is Sunday; 8:30 AM and Rhonda is playing a beautiful piece of music on the piano as those readying for Early Worship settle into chairs in the chapel. There is a loaf of bread placed on the plate along with pitcher and goblets on the communion table. The baptismal font is to the north and the liturgical stand with Bible to its south, just below the stained glass window.

The setting doesn't appear to be much different from what one might expect two and a half hours later in the sanctuary and yet, there are some who find this early service a bit intimidating. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote in *The Great Gatsby* that small parties don't provide any privacy. But what Hope's Early Worship service does provide for some is a more intimate relationship with God's word.

The participant is encouraged to share thoughts to further their understanding of the text, to create a poem, draw, use a bit of drama to enhance the experience and sometimes if one is so moved, shed a tear in the safe space of lovers of Christ. There is a moment with children to assist in their understanding of The Word, and in that moment, adults may find their understanding assisted as well.

When Early Worship was created over twenty-five years ago, the intent was to provide an altered style of worship beyond a traditional service; an alternative for fellow Hope Church members and their children. In that light, I am reminded of the lyrics to the hymn, *All Are Welcome*; "*here the love of Christ shall end divisions: All are welcome...in this place.*"

You are invited to Early Worship. "*All are welcome.*"

Washington School Neighbors

Lisa Kasten, Neighborhood Connector



Washington School Neighbors

Sweet Summer Celebration
Wednesday August 15th, 6-7:30 PM
Rosa Parks Green-College and 19th St.

Join neighbors from the Washington School Neighbors, 3-sixty and Westcore Neighborhoods for this time of sweet treats and sweet conversations.

Bring a dessert to share and any lawn games you would like to use.

We hope to see you there as we celebrate the core city of Holland and all things summer.

WashingtonSchoolNeighbors.com

Facebook.com/WashingtonSchoolNeighbors

Mark Your Calendar for Women's Service Day on Thurs., October 4



At Women's Service Day, you can offer time, skills, and talent to nonprofit organizations in the Holland/Zeeland area, learn about issues for area women and children, and network among women in our community. Online registration opens on September 4 and volunteer opportunities will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about the event, go to womensserviceday.com.

Our event will include a raffle to raise funds for Camp Sunshine, a local nonprofit that looks to expand its services for adults with developmental disabilities. *Do you have an item to donate to the raffle?* Contact us at WomensServiceDay@gmail.com to explore the possibilities.

Communication Sign Ups

Communications Committee

Congregational Emails

Sign up to join our congregational email list by calling the church office or signing up online at this link: <https://goo.gl/xCUceB>.

Hope Church Volunteer Blog

To receive email notifications of Volunteer Opportunities, go to our Volunteer Blog at: <https://lifeofhopechurch.wordpress.com/>. Then, on the right side of the page under "Follow Blog via Email", enter your email address and hit "follow".

Text Reminders

To receive texts about Hope Church cancellations, service time changes, and special events, **text "@hoperca" to the number: 81010**. To receive via email rather than text, send an email to: hoperca@mail.remind.com.

You can also sign up to receive texts or emails for:

- **High Hopes (High School Youth):** Text @highh to 81010 or email: highh@mail.remind.com
- **Fish Club (Middle School Youth):** Text @fishclub77 to 81010 or email: fishclub77@mail.remind.com

At Home With the Word

Sunday Lectionary as Daily Bible Readings

August 1-5

Wednesday Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15
 Thursday Psalm 78:23-29
 Friday Ephesians 4:1-16
 Saturday John 6:24-35
Sunday Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

August 6-12

Monday 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33
 Tuesday Psalm 130
 Wednesday 1 Kings 19:4-8
 Thursday Psalm 34:1-8
 Friday Ephesians 4:25-5:2
 Saturday John 6:35, 41-51
Sunday Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 13-19

Monday 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14
 Tuesday Proverbs 9:1-6
 Wednesday Psalm 111
 Thursday Psalm 34:9-14
 Friday Ephesians 5:15-20
 Saturday John 6:51-58
Sunday Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 20-26

Monday 1 Kings 8:22-30, 41-43
 Tuesday Joshua 24:1-2, 14-18
 Wednesday Psalm 84
 Thursday Psalm 34:15-22
 Friday Ephesians 6:10-20
 Saturday John 6:56-69
Sunday Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 27-August 31

Monday Song of Solomon 2:8-13
 Tuesday Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
 Wednesday Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9
 Thursday Psalm 15
 Friday James 1:17-27

Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity Unity Build Update

Community Ministry



The Glidewell house is moving along ahead of schedule! We have officially passed the halfway point as we move from exterior to interior work. Things tend to move quickly at this point where the shell of a house begins to morph into a home. Volunteer opportunities available and appreciated. Contact Travis Steinhoff, volunteer coordinator, at 393.8001 x103 or at volunteer@lakshorehabitat.org.

ministry/committee HIGHLIGHT

This series of highlights on ministries/committees at Hope Church is intended to be sure our members are aware of how things happen and their opportunities to engage.

Caring for Creation Ministry: Thoughts on Climate Change

Peter Boogaart, Caring for Creation Ministry Co-chair

"The dream of 'costless mitigation of climate change' has been a constant ... in the climate change debate We prefer certain, decisive action free of politics to messy, indeterminate responses that affect the way we live. We will avert our eyes from reality as long as a simple solution seems just over the horizon."

Dale Jamieson
Reason in a Dark Time

I've been thinking a lot lately about our order of worship. Yes, really! In particular, I've been drawn to the practice of confession, which I experience as an intrusive, weekly moment of honesty—intrusive in the sense that I prefer not to think of myself this way. I've never been in jail. I pay all my debts and show up for work on time. I even brush AND floss! On the great balance beam of life, not so bad.

Beyond the weekly ritual, there is, of course, one's original confession. We often gentrify that moment now and refer to it as "joining the church." Perhaps that's OK. One shouldn't hold on to the raw edge of a broken relationship. Christian life isn't so much about moving on as it is about moving closer.

Nearer. Closer. Those are meaningless words unless you have a point of reference. So, I'm back to confession, which measures me against my starting point. The question is whether or not I've moved closer to Christlikeness. I'm back to intrusive, in the sense that I've lost my edge and working my way back is painful.

I'm not arguing for a constant state of

crisis. Life needs regular, predictable, routine and reassuring ritual. I am increasingly conscious, however, of the costliness of living in habituated space—places so familiar as to be invisible. This isn't a hard concept. Let me ask: What's the wallpaper pattern in your bathroom? How many light bulbs are in your house? How many miles do you drive in a year? I'll bet you can't tell me.

Habituated space becomes dangerous when you lose the capacity to see and hear the warning signs that are essential to your wellbeing: Yes, you're going to trip over that rug; "We don't talk anymore"; Ottawa County is short 15,000 affordable housing units; the icecaps are melting.

I prefaced this essay with a quotation from Dale Jamieson. I did so because I believe that the mitigation of climate change is the essential issue of our time; and because, as the subtitle of his book—*Why the Struggle Against Climate Change Failed—And What It Means for Our Future*—indicates, we, at our peril, have failed to heed critical signals. Jamieson suggests a reason for this behavior. Evidently, we are wired to prefer illusion: "We will avert our eyes from reality as long as a simple solution seems just over the horizon."

We don't want "responses that affect the way we live." But, the way we live is exactly the problem. Wendell Berry has said that we don't have an environmental problem, we have a way of living problem. The decisions we make on a daily basis, the values we hold, and the policies we pursue accumulate in such a way as to create

a broken world. Nobody wants that, yet we lack one thing: the capacity to turn around.

I hope that in the reverberations of this discussion, you're sensing Christian language. The Church is the one place that knows something about turning around. This is in fact our story. Each one of us confessed that in some way our lives were lost and out of control, that God's grace turned us around, and that we found a way of letting go of those things that endangered and encumbered us.

The Church is, in fact, the only place where the climate change issue can be met. Only here, will the difference between appropriation and willing sacrifice be understood. Only here can we address the question: "How much is enough?" Only here can we genuinely define what it means to love your neighbor as yourself.

What are the specifics? What does climate change mitigation look like? In what way do we need to change our daily habits, values, and public policy? There's no shortage of suggestions and, quite frankly, nobody knows it all. But I believe that there will be no reconstruction without confession. Change begins with honest confession and ultimately, joy will be its verification.

Upcoming Caring for Creation Event:

August 5, 11:30 AM: Bike Ride - Tunnel Park to Rosy Mound
Bring bikes to church with you and a trailer will transport bikes from church to Tunnel Park.

The next Ministry Highlight will feature the Disability Concerns Ministry.

hosted by Randy Smit and Rhonda Edgington

Sometimes you meet one of those people along the way who somehow seem to be, what we might call, truly alive. When I first met Earl Laman I knew that I'd met such person and that our friendship was going to change my life. His is the sort of soul to let you know that "every fifth breath... (is) created beneath the surging seas." He beckons us to recapture our sense of wonder and to witness with tender honesty the realities of our lives of mutual care. May his words bless again and open our eyes.

Just a few few years ago a too frequent exclamation about most anything was "Awesome!" (These days it's "Perfect!") Well, everything is awesome! Whatever you can put your index finger or your mind's attention on IS awesome! Even though we usually take most everything in view for granted or as just there for us. But I love it when "no wonder" breaks open into ripe awareness of the deeper reality about "some thing or other". So I loved it one day when the Creation and the Spirit seemed to geyser up an initial phrase that flowed out in several directions- thus this poetic expression:

Show me a thing that is not a wonder
and I will be all the more amazed!

the breath I just took, ripe with oxygen,
from whence did it come?
invisible micro-creatures, ocean bound,
are major contributors
in fact, every fifth breathe I take to live
was created beneath the surging seas

that tomato there, puffed up in its fullness,
its shimmering redness stretched shiny,
promises succulence raw or heat processed
as did its innumerable predecessors.
and yet, enmeshed in its goodness,
lie the seeds of endless generations

and those atoms we've never seen, which
make up the solidity of our bodily existence,
nevertheless, are minute solar systems
perpetually faithful to their unmasked mass,
and yet, if they would be collapsed to their nuclei,
we'd all be reduced to the size of a pin

or those unseen millions of cells, balled together,
securely socketed in the front of our heads,
somehow ganged together they transmit scenes
of our miniscule-to-monstrous world
to our inner lmax theater screens
and form innumerable photo albums

and the date there on today's squared-off calendar
contains an exacting number of minutes
which will march in step and then be forever gone
as have the minutes of all days previous
and yet no day from the Big Bang onward
has ever been the same- or ever will be

Look also at your automobile- of 3,000 parts
assembled to maximize the ancient wheel,
each part an evolvment from earth's raw materials,
reshaped, reordered, recreated, retooled,
having passed through multitudes of inventive minds
and untold numbers of crafting and laborng hands
so we can steer our way through the obligations,
pleasures and unknowns of our futures

Well, I'd better stop wondering aloud now
lest I create the longest poem in history;
while unsure whether my grandchildren will be awed
by the remotes and ipods they hold in their hands,
I say again- show me a thing that is not a wonder
and, yes, I will be all the more amazed!

~by Earl Laman

When, as a small kid in Depression days, my aging grandfather broke a leg and was cared for by my mother in a hospital bed in our dining room for seven months, I was introduced to caretaking- resentfully. Now after a lifetime of witnessing, interacting, and engaging in various kinds of caretaking of others, it calls for deep love and is often heroic. Demanding caretaking may geyser into a prayer such as the following:

A CARETAKER'S PRAYER *~by Earl Laman*

Please Excuse
my nighttime rantings
when I needed to be letting go
of the string of fears
that rise from days
that require
that I be
more than I can be
in lieu of days
that are strained with pain
that is more than mine
that love demands
that I want to fulfill
and so need to breathe
in the spirit of peace and love
that goes beyond understanding
which seems to come
not by withdrawing
but by wrestling with angels
dressed in whatever
deceptive or illustrious garb
comes down the path
of each day.

Events and Announcements

Blueberry Pie Sale

We will again be offering luscious, handcrafted, blueberry pies for sale for \$12.00. The pie sale will support adult mission trips and other spiritual formation opportunities. Order sheets are on the tables in the gathering area and in the narthex. The handcrafting will take place August 10 (evening) and 11 (morning) and volunteers are needed and appreciated. A sign up sheet for volunteers (no experience needed) is on those tables as well. Please order a pie! Pies will be ready for pick-up on August 12. Please consider giving an hour or two or more to help make those wonderful blueberry pies a reality.

August Pizza Sunday

The next Pizza Sunday is scheduled for August 26.

Labor Day Holiday Notice

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 3, for the Labor

Day Holiday. Office hours will resume on Tuesday, September 4.

Hope Church Readers

Hope Church Readers meets the third Wednesday of every month in Commons 2. We are a lively and interesting group of women who love to read and discuss books. Our book list for the 2018-2019 year is available at the Welcome Desk on Sundays. If you would like to be on our e-mail list, please leave your contact information when you pick up a book list. Our next meeting will be on September 19th at 1:00pm. We will discuss Our Souls at Night by Kent Haruf. New members are always welcome! If you would like more information, please contact the church office or Lauren Heyboer.

Immigration Summer Series

Hear a comprehensive overview of our country's immigration system presented by local experts in immigration law, presented by

Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates. The community is invited to attend an Immigration 101 Workshop on August 8 from 6 pm - 8 pm and an Attorney Q&A Session on August 15 from 6 pm to 8 pm, both at St. John's Episcopal Church, 524 Washington Ave. Grand Haven, MI.

ACEH Potluck in the Park - August 12

This year's Potluck in the Park will be Sunday, August 12, from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm, at Kollen Park on Lake Macatawa. Music, family activities, great food, and fellowship with people you already know and new friends you will meet that day. **SAVE the DATE**, plan to bring a dish to share from your cultural background (ACEH provides beverages and table service). Invite your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors; bring along someone who is new to Holland.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 03 Char Alexander
(Missionary)
- 28 Cecil Williams
- 31 Jean DeWeert

If you are 75+ years old and would like to be listed in the birthday column, please contact the church office at (616) 392-7947 or office@hopechurchca.org

Thank You

Comprenew is grateful to have been chosen as the beneficiary of your Think Hope for the Earth fundraiser on April 21st. Your generous donation of \$5,000 to Comprenew will be put to great use supporting our mission to protect the environment and foster job readiness and environmental stewardship among at-risk youth and adults in our community.

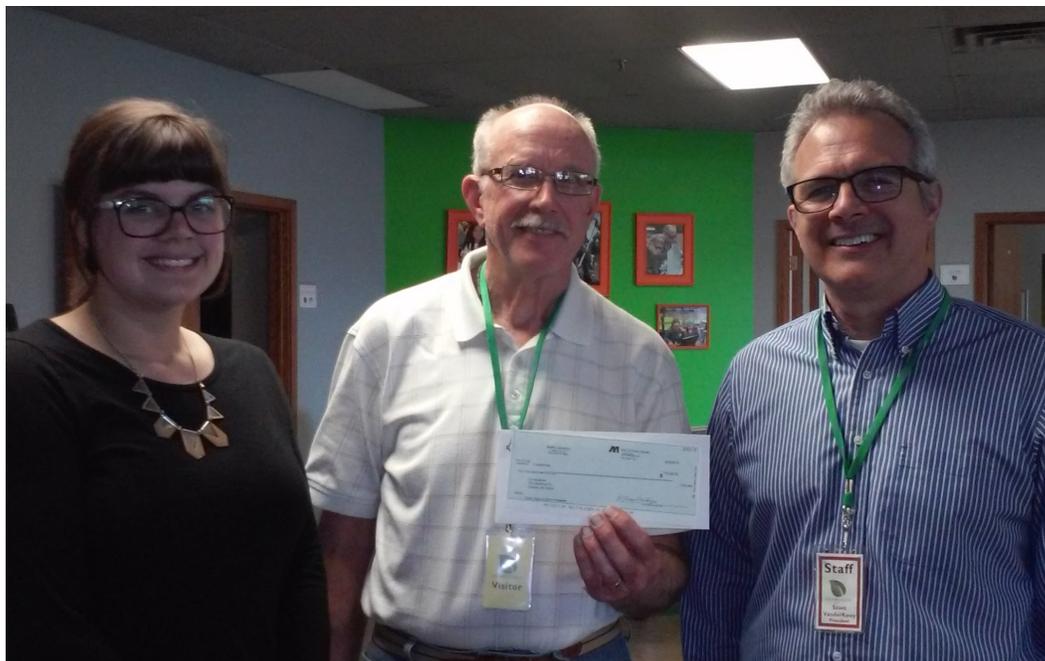
Because of your support, and that of others like you, we are able to:

- *Provide internships and work skills development for youth and adults*
- *Divert over 5 million pounds of e-Waste from the waste stream annually*
- *Bridge the Digital Divide by providing computer training and low-cost home computers for low income people in our community*
- *Refurbish and resell electronic devices to make them both useful and affordable*
- *Provide service learning opportunities to schools, churches and community groups to inspire them to a heightened sense of caring for the environment*

Without your support, we would not be able to achieve these outcomes. We are grateful for your commitment to the environment and people in our community in need of our help.

Sincerely,

Scott Vander Kooy, President of Comprenew



Jeff and Sarah Mulder would like to thank Hope Church for the baptismal gifts that were given to them to celebrate Eden Louisa Mulder's baptism on May 20. They would especially like to thank cross stitchers, Kristine Bradfield and Jocelyn VanHeest, for the beautiful baptismal banner. Also the Hope Church knitters are also to be thanked for the beautiful pink baby blanket they received. The baptismal candle will also be treasured. These gifts were so kind and thoughtful. Thank you again.

Thank you for your prayers and care during my recent anticipation of surgery, surgery, and recovery. The beautiful cards with their encouraging notes along with the texts, emails, and phone calls to see how things were going lifted my spirits and kept me moving forward. The out-of-this world meals were so timely and helpful (thank you for being so cautious about what I could eat). Circle 4 sent lovely flowers that I and all my visitors thoroughly enjoyed. With the help of so many, our needs were wonderfully met. What a gift! Thank you!!

~Jane Schuyler

A big thank you to everyone who helped me celebrate my goth birthday with lovely cards, kind words, and best wishes. It helped make my birthday an especially happy one.

~Dorothy Sherburne

Dear Hope Church,

Thank you so much for the special baptism banner and knit blanket, those will be cherished for many years. And, thank you to all that made baby Andrew's baptism so special, and also for the use of the youth room, it was just perfect!

Sincerely,

Rick & Sarah & Andrew Boss

and finally

Somewhere around early June, a group of us from Hope Church gathered over lunch to process some of our engagements over the spring in racial equity training. It was initially a moment to gather those who attended the one-day *Summit on Race and Inclusion* but I invited people who had joined me in other lectures or trainings around the community and when I counted up how many there had been it was four in less than two months. It was about the same time that people were planning the *Keeping Families Together Rally* in response to the immigration and refugee crisis at our southern border. It was just after a flurry of meetings with city leaders about police and community relationships, following a high stakes traffic stop in our neighborhood. At around the same time, Faith Leaders for Justice began addressing some concerns with city leaders on another front.

If you feel like you have been hearing a lot about social justice in the preaching at Hope Church through this season and over the past two years, it's because you have! It has been alive in our community and at the fore front of your three pastors' hearts and minds. And frankly the texts of the lectionary made it easy to bring a reflective lens from Scripture to this work that was happening all over our community and the realities of injustice happening all over our world. We have more intentionally preached in recent years with "the bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other" as one reformed theologian has commended.

However, I began recognizing a feeling inside of myself throughout this last spring that became more crystallized for me as I talked about it with Pastors Beth and Gordon and then later with some of our leadership in the Reconciliation Ministry, the Worship, Prayer and Spirituality Ministry, and the Personnel Committee. We began talking about a polarity between Social Activism and Spiritual Formation. The polarity came to mind because I was feeling (and others were confirming) some red flags going off that this polarity was not flowing back and forth as freely as it should.

Let me back up and do a quick refresher on what we mean by polarities. Kay Hubbard initially brought this concept of polarities to the Hope Church leadership quite a number of years ago now. Some of us read a wonderful book back in 2010 by Roy M. Oswald and Barry Johnson called *Managing Polarities in Congregations: Eight Keys for Thriving Faith Communities*. If you are not familiar with this concept from organizational development of managing polarities, the very simple and obvious polarity you manage every second of every day is the polarity of breathing. In order to stay alive and be healthy you need to manage the flow between inhaling and exhaling. It's not about finding the balance

between these two things as if you could find that place between inhaling and exhaling and just live there. It's about keeping a healthy infinity loop back and forth between one pole and the other. You hang out too long on either pole and red flags will start going off signaling that the polarity is off kilter. Oswald and Johnson identified 8 key polarities that need management for congregations to be healthy and vibrant communities of faith. The consistory identified four that were particularly relevant to our life together: Tradition and Innovation, Strong Clergy Leadership and Strong Lay Leadership, Inreach and Outreach, and Individual and Community. We took a survey of the congregation back in the fall of 2014 that looked at people's perception of how these polarities were functioning. We are planning to do a follow up sometime in the coming year.

One of the gifts of polarities, is the way it reframes our either/or thinking into both/and thinking. We value each side of these polarities. We cannot choose between them. Truth be told, some of us like one side more than the other and can quickly name the "upside" of our preferred pole and the "downside" of the other. Someone could make the claim that tradition, for example, honors the gifts of the past and keeps us grounded in our strengths and can point to the chaos that comes from too much innovation where no one recognizes the distinctives and stability of our church anymore. Someone from that perspective may find themselves in conflict with the person making the claim that innovation breathes new life into a place that otherwise feels stagnant and irrelevant to the realities of the world. You can't make the claim that one of them is right and one of them is wrong; they are both seeing parts of the same polarity. You can see each of these perspectives charted in the polarity for Tradition and Innovation on the next page.

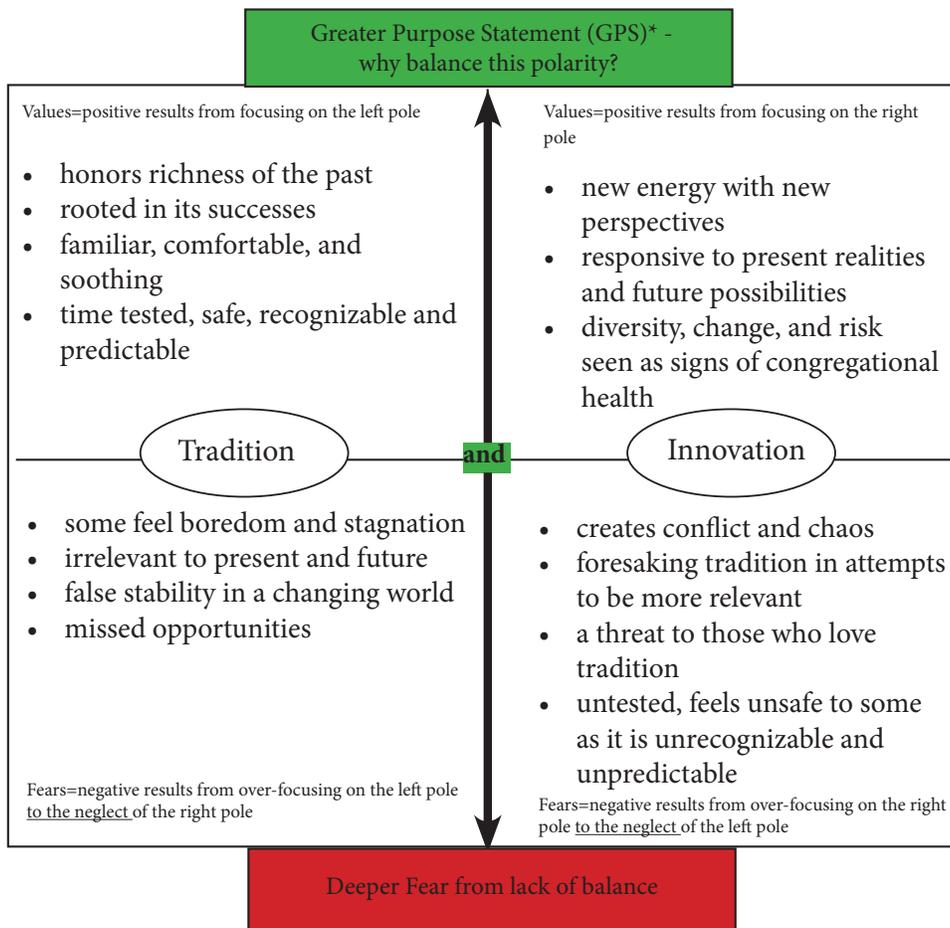
So that is the background for what I mean when I say that I was feeling like there is a polarity for us at Hope Church around Social Activism and Spiritual Formation. (This may not be a wholly unique polarity but just a more particular way to name the polarity of individual and community or another of the polarities named in the book that we didn't measure called nurture and transformation.) I first began thinking about it because I began feeling some red flags flying or as the chart above names it: early warning signs that I (we?) were hanging out too exclusively on the social activism side of this polarity. Here were a few of the red flags I was feeling: exhaustion, feeling like I was absorbing every "code red" coming from the community as if it were my "code red" to try to solve, realizing that I wasn't feeling grounded in my relationship with God but in a reactive mode that had me running ragged. At the same time, each

continued on page 11

Thriving Congregation

Action Steps

How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this left pole?



Action Steps

How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this right pole?

Early Warnings

Measurable indicators that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this left pole.

Early Warnings

Measurable indicators that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this right pole.

Declining Congregation

continued from page 10

of us as pastors had a conversation or two with Hope Church members that was beginning to help us see this polarity more clearly. One theme was a recognition that if we are to engage this work of social activism together we must be drawing from an internal reservoir that was full through a sense of connection and strength in our relationship with God and with each other. We cannot run on empty...in fact we could not always be **running**. A second theme was a need to keep connecting the dots between the scriptures and theology that grounds our faith and the movement toward action on behalf of social justice. We need to go about our work in the public square in ways that are distinctive as followers of Jesus and flow from our relationship with God and our drive to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

It is an incredible gift to serve a place where we can talk about these things together. Raise concerns, reevaluate our strategies, and do a course correction. If your passion is for the work of social justice, please do not get anxious that we are going to step back from that call. We aren't and we

won't. The gospel does not let us! But for those who have been feeling the red flags, know that we have some plans in place this coming program year to attend our need to fill the reservoir and dive a little deeper into the spiritual formation end of this polarity.

As my favorite prayer book leads me to remember on the Saturday mornings that I pray with it, "For the night followed by the day, for the idle winter ground followed by the energy of spring...for rest and wakefulness, stillness and creativity, for reflection and action, thanks be to you... let me know the disciplines of withdrawal and the call to engagement. Let me know from my world the cycles of renewal given by you for healing and health, the pattern of the seasons given by you for the birth of new life."

*Peace,
Pastor Jill*



Hope Church News

August 2018



September, October, & November Greeters

The Outreach & Hospitality Ministry

The following list reflects the households assigned to greet for the next three months (**Please note: the schedule for the entire year is also now posted** on a "Greeter Schedule" poster in the gathering area):

September Greeters

02 Jared & Erica Duimstra
09 Bert & Anne Duinkerken
16 Jim Dumerauf & Deirdre Johnston
23 Paul & Janet Elzinga
30 Keith & Becky Derrick

October Greeters

07 Todd & Ellen Engle
14 Sally Farabee
21 Janice & Francis Fike
28 Rich & Carmel DeLeau

November Greeters

04 Lois Gaiowski
11 Michelle & Grant Gerig
18 Michael DeVries & Marge
DeBlaay
25 Dave & Trish Gosselar

If you are unable to greet on your assigned Sunday, you are invited to either switch with someone or find your own substitute. You can communicate this change by marking the change on the Greeters Schedule poster in the Gathering Area, or by calling the office and a staff member will mark the change for you. ***If you are willing to volunteer as a substitute greeter or greet more often than once a year, please contact the office.***

August 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:15 am Men's Breakfast <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <i>High Hopes Mission Trip July 28 - August 4</i> </div>	2	3	4
5 9:45 am Nursery 10 am Worship, <i>Brad Bartelmay</i> 10:15 am Summer Church School 11:45 am Bicycle Tour Event	6 5 pm Executive Committee 6:15 pm Stewardship & Finance 7 pm Advent Planning Meeting	7	8 6:15 am Men's Breakfast 7:35 am Discerning our Future 12 pm Building & Grounds 7 pm Ministry/Committee Chairs Meeting	9 10 am Communications 2-4 pm Hope Church Nurse 7 pm Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	10 Evening Blueberry Pie Making	11 Morning Blueberry Pie Making Time TBD Joint Youth Amusement Park Trip
12 9:15 am Summer Walk-in Choir 9:45 am Nursery 10 am Worship, <i>Gordon Wiersma</i> <i>Communion</i> 10:15 am Summer Church School 11 am Second Sunday Snacks	13 11 am REST Support Group 7 pm Consistory with Worship & Spiritual Formation	14	15 6:15 am Men's Breakfast	16 2-4 pm Hope Church Nurse 7 pm Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	17 6 pm Teusink Pony Farm Picnic	18
19 9:45 am Nursery 10 am Worship, <i>Eddy Alemán</i> 10:15 am Summer Church School 11:15 am Blood Pressure Clinic 11:15 am Q&A with General Secretary Eddy Alemán	20 12 pm Facility Strategy 4 pm Outreach & Hospitality 5 pm Fellowship 6:45 pm Congregational Care & Health 7:30 pm Reconciliation	21	22 6:15 am Men's Breakfast	23 2-4 pm Hope Church Nurse 7 pm Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	24	25
26 9:45 am Nursery 10 am Worship, <i>Jill Russell</i> 10:15 am Summer Church School 11:15 am Pizza Sunday 11:30 am Caring for Creation	27 11 am REST Support Group 5 pm Community 6:30 pm Personnel 7:00 pm Worship, Prayer & Spirituality	28	29 6:15 am Men's Breakfast 9:30 am Newsletter Assembly	30 2-4 pm Hope Church Nurse 7 pm Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	31	