



HOPE CHURCH

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

Hope Church News

Volume 56, No. 7

August 2013

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Office Hours:

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

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Hope Church Proclaims Room for All

Judy Parr

*Jesus loves the little children,
All the children of the world.
Red and yellow, black and white,
All are precious in God's sight,
Jesus loves the little children of the world.*

Remember the chorus many of us sang in Sunday School? The Holland Area Pride Festival helped people imagine a new ending to the familiar song, "Gay and lesbian, trans and bi. All are precious in God's sight. Jesus loves all the children of the world."

On Saturday, June 29, Centennial Park was filled with all God's children for the first outdoor Holland Area Pride

Festival. The event celebrated Pride month in support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning community in the Holland Area.

The Outreach and Hospitality Ministry and Reconciliation Ministry combined efforts to have a Hope Church and Room for All presence at the Festival by sponsoring a

table during the afternoon of the event. Throughout the day, the table was attended by more than a dozen Hope Church volunteers who helped to spread the news that all, regardless of sexual orientation or

gender identity, are precious in God's sight and welcome to attend and become members of Hope Church.

The Hope Church/ Room for All table was filled with Hope Church coffee mugs, brochures, and newsletters; colorful lollipops; "Jesus Loves Me" heart-shaped rainbow-colored stickers; Room for All pamphlets and lapel pins; and sign-up sheets to receive more information.



*"A lot of lives were brightened,
assured, uplifted, touched."*

-Earl Laman

"The candy did encourage people to stop at our booth to talk to us," said volunteer, Kathy Sheridan. "We were asked a few times where Hope Church was located. One woman I spoke to said she drove to Grand Rapids every Sunday to attend a welcoming church and would love to attend a local church."

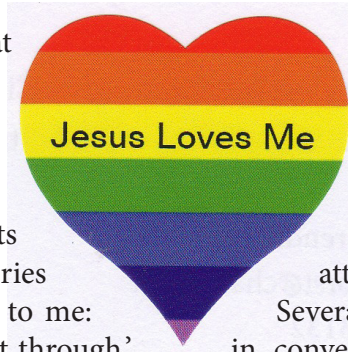
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Hope Church Proclaims Room for All

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Fellow volunteer, Earl Laman, reported that there were “a variety of conversational experiences. People from three RCA churches expressed almost grimacing wishes their churches were ‘open.’ There were good, curious questions about Hope Church and its stance.” Earl added, “Real sharing of life stories took place. Two late middle-agers confided to me: ‘The younger ones don’t know what we went through.’ A lot of lives were brightened, assured, uplifted, touched.”

“We were so proud to have our congregation at the event,” said volunteers, Fred and Lori VanDoornik, “and certainly



would love to see us do it again.”

An immediate result of Hope Church’s presence at the Pride Festival was evident the very next day. Someone who had learned of Hope Church’s room for all at the festival attended worship for the first time that Sunday. Several Hope Church members engaged with her in conversation, passed the peace of Christ to her, and invited her to stay for Pizza Sunday. As Audrienne Hill said about her experience volunteering at the event, “Sometimes it is in the little steps we take that lead to big leaps forward.”

Capital Campaign Update

Capital Campaign Exploratory Team and Feasibility Team

“So what’s going on with those facility renovations ideas? It seems like we haven’t heard much about that in a while!” That’s an inquiry and commentary that has been heard a few times around Hope Church this summer. In order to make sure our process is well thought out and comprehensive, it’s taking some time for the discussion and decision process to unfold, but rest assured, work on renovation ideas is indeed continuing. There are several developments to share with you, so here is the update you’ve been looking for!

As of this summer, here is where things stand:

- This past Spring, the Capital Campaign Exploratory Team* completed its work with architects from Elevate Studios, developing an overall concept for renovation of the Hope Church facilities. The Exploratory Team presented this facilities renovation plan to consistory for their review and input.
- Consistory responded very positively to the renovation concept from the Exploratory Team and decided to commission a Feasibility Team** as a next step. This team is taking the design concept and estimated cost of the project and exploring a workable financial plan to support the project. The Feasibility Team will report the results of their study to the consistory by the end of the calendar year for

the consistory to assess.

- The consistory will consider the feasibility information and our current financial status and will make a decision about whether to proceed with a proposal to the congregation. A facilities renovation proposal would come to the congregation early in the new year, and would include the concept and design for the project as well as the financial costs involved.

This was a process that started with a great deal of input from you, the Hope Church congregation, and we thank you for your patience as a plan takes shape. Many thanks also to all those who have been involved in developing and assessing the renovation possibilities over the past months.

That’s the update for now – watch for a complete report early in the new year!

***Exploratory Team:** Christopher Wiers, Rachelle Oppenhuizen, Ron Mulder; Julie Clough, Paul Elzinga, Ellen Engle, James McKnight, Jill Russell, and Gordon Wiersma

****Feasibility Team:** Ron Mulder, Kay Hubbard, Charlie VanderBroek, John Fleming, Brad MacLean, Sam Martin, Jill Russell, and Gordon Wiersma

ministry HIGHLIGHT

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

The Christian Education Ministry at Hope Church

The Christian Education Ministry is involved with the planning, developing, and execution of a large variety of opportunities for Hope Church members to engage in faith development. The Ministry seeks to celebrate Hope's diversity, to become even more faithful to the vision of Jesus, and to assist Hope Church in becoming a mission center in our community and world. A year's activities include a variety of educational offerings for all ages, from the child in the nursery to the retiree; all of which aim to foster a commitment to the denominational curriculum which continues to present the church family with new opportunities.

Children and Youth activities can include: Children in Worship, Sunday morning church school classes, parents and children gathering for a time to play together during the week (PACT), youth hiking adventures and mission trips. Recently, the Christian Education Ministry saw a need to address the many issues our teens face on a daily basis: split-second images, fast-food dinners, instant messages, and intense competition. Thus began the 6th and 7th grade church school class, a new offering that meets twice a month during the program year. The group

meets in the library to discuss the curriculum, "Dwell," developed by Faith Alive, which asks the questions: *What if church were different? Not more of the same, but less? What if our teens had the opportunity to press pause on their fast paced life so they could "be still, and know, that I am God"?* Dwell is a place where we pause to imagine, wonder, marvel, and dive into God's story.

The Adult Education task force meets independently under the umbrella of the Christian Education Ministry. Adult Education activities can include: Sunday morning small groups, presentations and discussions focusing on current world topics relating to the church and her mission, as well as opportunities for members to carry out their faith commitment related to world need.

Anyone interested in supporting this ministry is encouraged to contact any of the Christian Education Ministry members: Mark Sneller, Margaret Buckley, Anne Duinkerken (Youth Ministry), Keith Derrick (Adult Ed.), Judy Parr (Adult Ed.), Kim Rosenau, Sarah Kolk, Jocelyn VanHeest (Children's Ministry), and Gordon Wiersma.

The next Ministry Highlight will feature the Worship, Prayer and Spirituality Ministry.

Washington School Neighbors Update

Andrew & Kallie Spidahl, Neighborhood Connectors

As July turns to August, we have had some things happening in our Washington School Neighborhood:

- One of the discussion points for neighbors is the future of Washington School Elementary on Maple Avenue and 11th Street. An idea that came out of a partnership with Holland Public Schools, City Hall, and neighbors was housing for interns at some of the big local companies as well as a community space. The discussion continues and ideas are still forth-coming; clearly this landmark is significant to the community.
- We have also been partnering with the renovation of a house on 15th Street called "Nuestra Casa: The Gathering Place" (Spanish for "Our House"). This



space will be for neighbors to gather as they wish. We continue to welcome volunteers through the end of Summer and into Fall--anywhere from construction to bringing treats for volunteers. To get involved or find out more, email nuestracasaholland@gmail.com or call 616-953-0253 and leave a message.

- Finally, in an effort to address material poverty, Good Samaritan Ministries is launching an initiative called "Circles." Circles are ways to walk together toward financial security with those that struggle, maintaining mutuality and dignity. If you have been looking to get involved with the community, Circles might be a good way. Call the Circles coach, Stephanie, at (616) 392-7159 x108 or talk to Andrew or Kallie.

Get out and enjoy the sweet flavors of summer!

Children's Ministry

Jocelyn Van Heest, Children's Ministry Director

Church School

Over the past couple of months, the children attending summer church school have been learning about some of the great water stories from the Bible. We have learned that we should trust and obey God, just as Noah, Moses, Jonah and the followers of Jesus did in their times of need. Through role-playing, storytelling, discussion, crafts and games, the children will continue to become better acquainted with God's Word. The children, as well as the adult leaders, have enjoyed learning and growing together.

On Sunday, September 8, Church School will begin our program year. Children, age 3 through 5th graders, will be dismissed from the 11:00 a.m. service to worship in the Children in Worship centers. Look for more detailed information later this month.

Plug Into Worship

The children who remain in worship are reminded, "Don't just sit there, DO something!" There is a separate blue worksheet available at the sanctuary entrances to help you stay engaged in the worship service. It gives you an opportunity to answer some questions about the service and how you relate to what you hear and see. You are welcome to take the worksheet home and complete it with your family. When you have completed the worksheet, make sure your full name is on it, and return it to the purple box at the Welcome Desk. There are prizes involved but the most important thing is that everyone can be connected to the worship experience.

Youth Ministry

Anne Duinkerken, Youth Ministry Director

High Hopes

By the time you read this newsletter, High Hopes will have completed another mission trip to Greenpoint Reformed Church in Brooklyn, New York (July 27-August 3). This was the third time in six years that Hope Church youth have worked with Greenpoint Church and the surrounding community. Look for more news of the trip in the September newsletter as well as a presentation during Pizza Sunday on October 27.

Fish Club

On Sunday, June 9, 13 adventurous middle-schoolers and eight brave adult sponsors left the Hope Church

parking lot for the Appalachian Trail in North Carolina. The group hiked 43 miles in four days and three nights in wonderful weather, just one afternoon of rain! The trail had lots of ups and downs, literally and figuratively. There was a rattle snake sighting, the expected aches and pains, and lots of balm administered to blisters. But the group of courageous hikers hiked on, sang songs, and enjoyed the beautiful views and being in God's creation.

Thank you, Hope Church congregation, for your warm send-off, prayers, and support for this group. If you would like to hear some first-hand accounts, talk to one of the youth who went, they would love to share more details of this adventure with you.



Hikers: Isaac Laman, Stephen McGraw, Jake Stryker, Caroline McKnight, Hanna Theile, Sam VanderArk, Aaron Yost, Anelise Beltran, Caleb Steeby, Sam Accardo, Paul Stryker, Ezra Jarzembowski, and Ariana Smith. The sponsors were; Gordon Wiersma, Anne Duinkerken, Tom Stryker, Ann McKnight, Larry Mulder, Andrew Spidahl, Kallie Spidahl, and Bruce tenHaken.

Restorative Circles at Work Among Youth

Anne Duinkerken, Restorative Circles Facilitator

It has been more than a year now that I have been a part of the Restorative Circles group. I went through training a year and a half ago to be a facilitator. Pastor Jill and I had hoped and believed that this would be a process that we could use in our work with the youth of Hope Church.

That opportunity came up last January in our annual Fish Club retreat at Cran Hill Ranch. For those of you who haven't experienced this amazing weekend, I will give you a quick overview of what we do. We usually leave Hope Church on a Friday evening (often a snowy evening) and make the hour and a half trip to Cran Hill Ranch located just outside Big Rapids, Michigan. We stay in the Stone House, which has three large bunk rooms, a fully equipped kitchen, and living area. When we arrive, we unpack our vehicles and get settled in. After some get-to-know-you games and snacks, we end the evening with devotions around a theme; this past year the theme was "Reconciliation". Bed time is 11:00 p.m.

Saturday morning we rise by 8:00 a.m. We all have times and tasks assigned for helping with cooking and clean-up of meals. After breakfast we gather for devotions, then head out for horseback riding (unless it's below zero degrees!). In the afternoon we usually go snow tubing down an amazing hill (unless there is no snow, then we head to the game room for tournaments), then we return to the Stone House for hot chocolate and devotions. After dinner we take a hayride, with lots of storytelling and singing. The hayride is usually followed by snacks and a movie, and lights out by 12:00 a.m. In the morning we enjoy breakfast, clean up and pack up, then gather for a worship service. We arrive back at church by 12:00 p.m.

As you can see, this is a wonderful, intense, fun-filled time for our youth and sponsors. We usually have between seven and 18 youth, along with three or four sponsors attending. But, along with all the good, it is a lot of time spent interacting with each other, and sometimes those times are challenging. Different personalities, expectations, ages, and social interactions sometimes clash.

This past January an issue came up with four of our youth. Three of them were getting along fine, with the fourth was feeling left out, sad, and lonely. I gathered with the four of them and we began an informal Restorative Circle process.

In allowing each person to be heard, and making sure they were understood, they began to understand what the others were feeling. There was no blame and I wasn't there to give solutions, just to listen and make sure everyone was heard. They were amazing! After only about 10 minutes, they all were anxious to start anew and be aware of including all. They were generous and compassionate, and funny! We checked in with each other a few times for the rest of the weekend, and they were all feeling good. Each one of these youth felt good about being able to face a problem, talk honestly with each other, and come up with new ways of interacting with each other, all on their own!

Restorative Circle Facilitator List

*If you would like to call a
Restorative Circle, please contact one
of the following facilitators.*

Sharon Arendshorst

Ann McKnight

Laurie Baron

Rachelle Oppenhuizen

David Blauw

Randy Smit

Judy Boogaart

Curt L. Tofteland

Anne Duinkerken

Cindi Veldheer DeYoung

Jill Russell
jrussell@hopechurchrca.org
616-392-7947

Sharing the Sounds of the Organ

Rhonda Edgington, Assistant Director of Music

This summer, with the assistance of professional development funds from Hope Church, I was able to attend two different organ conventions. In June, I traveled to Burlington, Vermont for the annual national convention of the Organ Historical Society, a group devoted to appreciating and preserving the heritage of pipe organ building in this country. Vermont and New England are where this group was originally founded in the 1950's.

Though I've been to quite a number of their conventions over the years, I really enjoyed being in the small village churches out in the middle of Vermont, where congregations have been cherishing their small pipe organs with pride and dedication for generations. One of the oldest organs we saw was from 1837, still in completely original condition, including hand-pumped bellows for the winding – never electrified!

I attended two days of this convention, which involves riding from village to village, visiting small churches, and hearing concerts on each instrument. We always sang a hymn during each concert, which is a great way to experience an organ. It was fun to reconnect with friends and colleagues, and I even met a German who has an American organ in his church in Berlin. I'd always wanted to meet him when living in Germany! It truly is a small world.

The following week found me in Kalamazoo for a regional convention of the American Guild of Organists. This convention draws a different crowd, more church musicians than pipe organ enthusiasts, and there were workshops on various practical topics interspersed with organ concerts. I attended with a few local organists from the Holland

chapter of the AGO, and saw many colleagues I've know throughout my years of living in various Midwestern towns. Since our region covers Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio, people I knew from living in Chicago and attending Indiana University were also there.

The elaborate, big city churches of Kalamazoo and Battle Creek were a real contrast to the humble wooden village

churches of Vermont. I heard inspiring concerts, connected with colleagues, had thought-provoking conversations about the future of our vocation, and came home with lots of new energy to practice!

Energy to practice is good, because I have quite a few concerts coming up out of town this fall. I will be in Sacramento, California in September to play two concerts at the Bravo Bach Festival; a solo concert and a collaboration concert with a trombone quartet called, "The Guidonian Hand" (the name is a geeky musician reference to an inside joke!). We will also be playing the same program in October in Saratoga Springs, New York. This concert will include

pieces arranged for organ and trombone quartet, as well as some pieces written for brass and organ. Also in September, I will be playing a concert in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on a well-known German instrument at St. Paul's Cathedral, as well as a rededication concert on the organ at my parents' church in Pennsylvania, which recently had some work done on it.

It will be a busy fall, but I'm looking forward to seeing some new instruments and sharing music with new audiences. Thank you, Hope Church, for your support of all my musical endeavors!



Carillon Choir Invites New Players

Rhonda Edgington, Assistant Director of Music



The handbell choir will again be starting up in the fall, and is always looking for new players. We are a fun, relaxed group who

enjoy getting together twice a month to make music, play occasionally in worship, and hear the melodious sounds of bells ringing up close!

Some basic music reading skills are necessary, though no experience playing handbells is needed. We are a supportive group, who encourage one another in a no pressure environment. We will begin rehearsals in October and welcome anyone who is interested to join us. For questions, contact Rhonda Edgington or the church office at (616) 392-7947.

In Harmony to Share in Worship

On September 29, Hope Church will host a guest choral group, In Harmony, the all-inclusive, intergenerational community choir from Grand Rapids. The group will share music in worship following Pizza Sunday.

What Really Goes On in the Chancel?

Brian Carder, Director of Music

Many members and friends may not know that singing in the Chancel Choir is not just about singing. There's a wonderful perspective gained from the Chancel and singing in the choir during any worship service: breathing, praying, rehearsing, repeating songs, staying organized, standing, reading music, listening, viewing the rose windows as nature's light radiates, hearing a sermon or scripture passage without viewing the face of the leader, feeling the floor vibrate as the organ chamber sounds fully, feeling Jesus and his disciples near you (and not only from the wood sculpture presence), being ever so close to a guest musician during a musical moment, and lastly, hearing sounds from near and far forming the great praise and prayer of worship.



Chancel Choir will welcome new members for the walk-in choir on August 11, at the 10:00 a.m. worship service *and* we will start our regular Sunday worship participation on Sunday, September 8, at 11:00 a.m. Come sing with us!

September, October & November Greeters

The Outreach & Hospitality Ministry

The following list reflects the households assigned to greet for the next three months:

September Greeters

01 Doug Abell & David VanHeest
08 Greg & Lisa Accardo
15 Ed & Ann Anderson
22 Tom & Sharon Arendshorst
29 Ruth Athey & Carla Beach

October Greeters

06 Kelly & Yeta Bakker
13 Mark & Laurie Baron
20 Carol Bechtel & Tom Mullens
27 George & Fran Becker

November Greeters

03 Ric & Beth Beltran
10 John & Claudia Berry
17 Myra Berry & Barb Bingham
24 John & Stephanie Beyer

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. Thank you for the role each of you plays in fostering a sense of warmth, openness and hospitality that will enrich the life of the church as we seek to reach out to visitors and non-members in the Holland community.

Stopping Obesity One Change at a Time

Donita Robards, Parish Nurse

The state of Michigan is doing a poor job of managing obesity. In fact, Michigan is the fourth worst state in the nation. As a result, our attributable expenditures are high. We are eighth in the nation for spending on obesity related diseases, and the problem continues to increase. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, childhood obesity has increased from 7% in 1980 to almost 18% in 2010. The numbers are worse for adolescents.

What is obesity? It is simply an excess of body fat. It is due to a caloric imbalance which is more calories consumed than expended. Factors that affect this caloric imbalance are genetics, behavior, and environment. Some of us have better metabolism than others; some of us eat more than others; some of us don't have access to healthier foods.

Why do we spend so much money to treat it? There are many diseases associated with obesity: heart disease, type two diabetes, stroke, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, and multiple types of cancers. These are chronic illnesses that may not be easily treated. Other areas of concern are the social and psychological issues that stem from bullying or even prejudice.

Obesity is not just a governmental problem or a public health problem, it is a community problem. It is *our* problem. Obesity is occurring in *our* families, within *our* workplaces. It affects



people we know and love. In order to stop this epidemic from continuing to gain ground, we must strive to make changes in both our diets and our lifestyle.

Change can be difficult to start. It takes momentum to decide to make a change and then to consciously continue to live with that change every day. Change takes effort because we have to reprogram our way of thinking. It is easier if you don't make too many changes at once.

This summer as we challenge ourselves with the Go and Glow fitness initiative to improve our health and well-being, consider *one* small lifestyle change you can make. Some ideas are substituting one piece of fruit a day instead of a candy bar, trying whole grain bread over white bread, or making a salad for lunch instead of a sandwich with processed lunch meat. You may decide to take a daily walk in a park, on the beach, or around your own neighborhood. The key is to get used to *one* change before you add another. Let's work together as a church family to encourage each other to meet our goals and make the lifestyle changes necessary to prevent and reduce this epidemic from continuing.

Book Review: Authors with Autism Highlight *Unwritten Rules*

Eloise VanHeest, Health Ministry Chair

The Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships: Decoding Social Mysteries Through the Unique Perspectives of Autism. This long title describes exactly what the book's authors, Dr. Temple Grandin, PhD and Sean Barron, want the reader to understand. Most social relationships develop rather naturally, learned from observation and experience. However, those who have been diagnosed with autism, like the authors, find these unwritten rules baffling.

The entire book alternates between the perspectives of its two authors – much of it is written in the first person. Grandin and Barron share their experiences from their early years. The persistence and patience of loving and dedicated parents, and teachers finally giving them

foundations for living. Both Grandin and Barron had parents who rejected physicians' suggestions that their child should be put into an institution. They taught persistently and also knew that social relationships needed to be learned. Because relating to others was difficult for the authors to understand, they put together their own "Ten Unwritten Rules." Among them are:

1. Everyone in the world makes mistakes. It doesn't have to ruin your day.
2. Being polite is appropriate in any situation
3. Not everyone who is nice to me is my friend.

This book and three others are available in the Hope Church Library by the Health Ministry section.

Financial Update

The Stewardship and Finance Committee would like to keep you posted on the giving and expenses as of 7/22/13:

Income YTD - \$311,620

Budget YTD - \$343,519

Expenses YTD - \$378,869

Budget YTD - \$389,760

Consistory Update: Charges Against Hope Church Dropped

On July 3, the Hope Church Consistory received this official notice from Holland Classis:

'Rev. Miguel Cruz has withdrawn the filing of charges against the Hope Church Consistory in the Holland Classis. This action ends the judicial process toward which the Holland Classis had been proceeding. So as of today, the mediation/judicial process is concluded and discontinued.'

This is good news indeed, and we give thanks to God that this matter can now be put behind us. In the challenge and uncertainty that have been faced since the charge was filed, the faithful support and gracious witness expressed by this congregation have been a great blessing. We have felt God's grace bearing good fruit in the midst of this time, and we have been affirmed in witnessing to the good news of Jesus Christ for all as a part of our Classis, community, and denomination.

Deacons' Fund

Deacons' Fund envelopes are inserted in the box of yearly giving envelopes six times a year to encourage member contributions to the Deacons' Fund. The Deacons' Fund is maintained to provide temporary monetary assistance to Hope Church members and/or others from whom requests for emergency assistance are received. Confidentiality and accountability are maintained in this fund and the Deacons receive a periodic report of dispersed funds without listing the names of the persons receiving assistance. Any funds donated to the Deacons' Fund will be credited to the donor's contribution record. The Deacons want to encourage Hope Church members to support this fund with their gifts and also remember that this fund is available if there is an emergency assistance need. If you have any questions about this fund please contact Pastors Jill or Gordon, or Senior Deacon, Joyce Teusink.

Caring for Creation Parks Challenge August Outings



Events sponsored by Ottawa County Parks:

- **"Beach Zone": Friday, August 9, 10:00am, Kirk Park.** Park staff will have a tent canopy set up on the beach with a variety of activities (adults must supervise their children). No program fee, but a parking fee applies. Canceled if rain or high winds.
- **Macatawa Greenspace: Saturday, August 10, 9:30am (former Holland Country Club).** Learn about the Macatawa River environment and how the restoration project here affects the watershed. Led by Kristen Hintz.
- **Kayak Trip: Saturday, August 24, 9:30am-1:30pm.** See the parks brochure for more information on registering. Cost is \$35 with equipment and basic kayaking lesson provided. Limited space to transport your own kayak (\$15). Led by Kristen Hintz.

Caring for Creation scheduled outing:

- **Bicycle trip: Sunday, August 18, 1:00pm, Musketawa Trail.** Meet at Teusink's Farm to transport your bicycles to the Musketawa Trail, or meet at 2:00pm at the trail parking lot near Marne with your bikes (see Ottawa Parks brochure for directions). We will bicycle the section from Marne to Conklin and then transport to Grose County Park on Crockery Lake (#8 in parks brochure) to grill our supper and maybe cool off with a swim. Contact the Boogaarts for more details and to sign up.

For more information, go to the Hope Church webstie, www.hopechurchrca.org.

Thank Yous

*Dear Hope Church,
Thank you for your support of our PRIDE event with your booth and ad in our program guide. We look forward to working with you for our 2014 event.
-The Holland Area PRIDE Committee*

*A full measure of thanks and song goes out to Jean McFadden for hosting the end of year gathering of the Chancel Choir. It was a perfect setting and wonderful evening of food and conversation.
-The Hope Church Chancel Choir*

*Dear Hope Family in Jesus Christ our Lord,
Thank you for uplifted prayers on behalf of our daughter, Kimberly Madrid. She has fully recovered from her injury and surgical complications. Thank you, also, for expressed concerns during her ordeal.
Peace, The Hintz Family*

*Words like "thanks" and "appreciate" just don't fully express what I (we) feel for the concern and very real help we've received during my long months of health struggles. We are so grateful for visits, calls, and cards, for prayers and thoughtfulness, and the generous, nutritious and tasty meals that helped so much. Such graciousness!
-Char (and Earl) Laman*

*Dear Hope Church Family,
Thank you for the trip to Camp Geneva. It was awesome! I had lots of fun. I think I really learned to read the Bible more. The counselors are really good and they can help you with anything. Camp Geneva really boosted me in my faith.
Love, Kyle Rosenau*

The deadline for the September newsletter is **Sunday, August 18**. Please submit all articles and updates to Angie Griffore agriffore@hopechurchrca.org

Save the Date

Aug 4 Potluck in the Park
The 15th Annual Potluck in the Park of the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony (ACEH) will take place on Sunday, August 4, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. in Dunton Park (north of the River Ave. Bridge on Howard Ave. in Holland). Please bring a dish to share; ACEH provides table services and beverages. Come enjoy entertainment, music, games, crafts, prizes-fun for the whole family. For more information, go to www.harmonyalliance.org or call 392-5086 or 396-2201.

Sep 2 Labor Day Holiday Notice
The church office will be closed on Monday, September 2, for the Labor Day Holiday. Office hours will resume on Tuesday, September 3: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Sep 8 Kick Off Sunday
The Hope Church Fall schedule begins Sunday, September 8. Early Worship will begin at 8:30 a.m. and worship in the Sanctuary will begin at 11:00 a.m. After such a wonderful turnout last year, we will be having our Kick Off Church Picnic on the church grounds again this year in the courtyard and 11th street lawn. Watch for details in the September newsletter and upcoming bulletins.

Due to the high number of responses to Pastor Gordon's request for book recommendations, the Hope Church Book Recommendations List could not fit in this newsletter. Printed copies are available at the Church and on the Hope Church website. Thank you to all who gave suggestions!



and finally...

You'll be receiving this just as my sabbatical time begins, and I wanted to offer a word of gratitude and blessing to you for the months ahead. As I enjoy some vacation this August and then move into sabbatical time for September through November, I am keenly aware of what a rare gift such a time is. I do not find it wise for me to broadcast loudly or broadly "I GET A SABBATICAL!", since a very understandable response to that could be: "When do I get one?!" There are few vocations that make space for sabbaticals, and few churches that set sabbatical as policy for their pastors. So while I cannot fix that sabbatical deficit for others, I can deeply appreciate and be a good steward of the time you are giving me, believing it will help me to serve Hope Church and our community well in the years ahead. I am very eager for a time of in-depth reading in the coming months, and I'm hopeful my start at learning Spanish will go well. And the time to travel with my wife and to have a change of pace in schedule with my family will be a wonderful part of this as well.

During these months I'm sure to see many of you in the neighborhood and around town, and just in case anyone was wondering about sabbatical etiquette, you don't have to avoid me! I'll be glad to see you, and expect you'll also see me unobtrusively attending worship on some Sundays (since my family attends Hope Church!).

During these months I will be praying for all of you, the Consistory, Pastor Jill and our staff, as the ministry of Hope Church continues. I'm grateful to be a Pastor of Hope Church, but I have no illusions about being indispensable here! It's a gift to be able to focus on my sabbatical knowing that such gifted people are tending to the life and ministry of Hope Church. I want you to know too that I will be informed if there are deaths in the congregation so that I can express my sympathy and prayers. My love and prayers are with all of you, and I will look forward to resuming my daily pastoral duties in late November just as Thanksgiving and Advent are on the horizon.

And finally, I'll share with you this poem I wrote before my sabbatical in 2007 – a poem I am reflecting on again as I approach this sabbatical, and I offer it as my commitment to you that I will savor the time with a grateful heart and eager mind.

Peace, Pastor Gordon

Sabbatical

*if time is gift
and not a given,
then how much missed
or left unopened?*

*if each tick
is not to be assumed
but constant reminder
of the unlikeliness of being,
then what is it
to hear the space of time?*

*if life is full of those
for whom the moment, ever,
is a prison -
a nightmare awakening out of time
and into inevitability -
then how can
such extravagance
of hours
honor these?*

*Breathing, deep into my lungs, filling;
savoring a blue berry, just picked;
feeling, fearing, but not afraid;
noticing a turkey and its septuplets noticing me;
tending to what is quiet and real;
not squashing the spider;
hoping, grieving, thanking, daring to love;
listening to the rushing wind and plodding sun
and persistent bird and laughing voice;
reading the story around me and
catching its familiar plot;
breathing, deep beyond my lungs, overflowing.*

*if time is gift
then mine
the two hands of choice and fate
to open this;
only praying
with such being that the
the arc of time
bends toward a moment
for all.*

Gordon Wiersma, July 2007

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Hope Church News

August 2013



Join the Kids Hope Team

**Mentors, Substitute Mentors, and
Prayer Partners are needed to
complete the Hope Church
Kids Hope 2013-2014 Team**



If you can spare one hour per
week to mentor one child during
the school day,

we need you!



If you are willing to pray
weekly for one mentor
and one student,

we need you!

Our Kids Hope Partner School is Vanderbilt Charter Academy, 75% of whose student body is eligible for free and reduced lunch. In 2012-2013, we mentored and prayed for 14 at-risk students. Our prayer is that with your help, we can work with even more in 2013-2014. Anyone 16 years or older is welcome to participate.

For more information, please contact Anne Duinkerken or Barbara Joldersma.