



HOPE CHURCH

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

Hope Church News

Volume 56, No. 11

December 2013

In This Issue

Christmas Offering.....	2
Christmas Cards.....	2
Adult Education.....	2
Caring for Creation.....	3
Washington School	
Neighbors	3
Kids Hope USA.....	3
Ministry Highlight	4
Health Ministry.....	5
Congregational Care.....	5
New Members.....	6-7
Children's Ministry.....	8
Youth Ministry.....	8
Lectionary.....	9
Events &	
Announcements.....	10
Consistory Corner.....	11
And Finally.....	11

Insert: December Calendar

The deadline for the
January newsletter is
Sunday, December 15.

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

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



ADVENT 2013

First Sunday of Advent

December 1

8:30 am	Early Worship
9:40 am	Adult Education
11:00 am	Worship
4:15 pm	Jubilate Rehearsal
5:00 pm	Advent Activities
	• Children: Crafts
	• Youth: Cookie Baking
	• Adults & Youth: Card Making & Advent Evensong Service
5:30 pm	Youth Instrumental Group
6:00 pm	Soup Supper & Lighting of Advent Candles

Second Sunday of Advent

December 8

8:30 am	Early Worship
9:40 am	St. Nicholas Breakfast
11:00 am	Worship
3:50 pm	Jubilate Rehearsal
4:00 pm	Childcare available
4:00 pm	Advent Organ Recital
4:30 pm	Youth Instrumental Group
4:30 pm	Nativity Rehearsal
5:00 pm	Nativity Pageant

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15

8:30 am	Early Worship
9:40 am	Adult Education
11:00 am	Worship
12:15 pm	Pizza Sunday
1:15 pm	Congregational Caroling

Come let us



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22

8:30 am	Early Worship
9:40 am	Adult Education
11:00 am	Worship
12:15 pm	Jubilate Rehearsal
<i>There are no evening activities planned.</i>	

Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 24

5:30 pm	Family Worship Service
10:00 pm	Christmas Eve Reception for Young Adults
11:00 pm	Candlelight Communion

More information regarding Advent services and activities can be found in the 2013 Advent Brochure which is available on the Hope Church website and in the Gathering Area.

Christmas Offering Supports Sustainable Development



The Deacons have designated NURU International to receive the proceeds from the 2013 Christmas offering. NURU is a development organization committed to ending extreme poverty in remote, rural areas in Kenya in a sustainable way. NURU uses an integrated development model that

includes healthcare, agriculture, education, and community savings programs.

In the past year, a devastating maize blight has been spreading through Kenya, which can cause almost complete crop loss. By designating the Christmas offering to NURU, assistance can be provided for the farmers regarding disease containment, education and training, and bean seeds given to plant. Planting this alternate crop will help stop the spread of the maize blight while

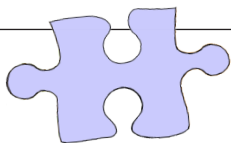
allowing farmers to sustain themselves and produce income to take care of their families. Further information can be found at nuruinternational.org.

As a community of faith it is meaningful to reach beyond our boundaries in supporting the work of NURU International as an agency bringing hope and resources in faithful ways. Your generous gifts will make a big difference in the lives of those who are so vulnerable.

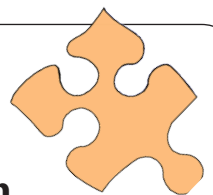
Christmas Cards for our Members

Continuing an Advent tradition, decorated gift bags will be on the pegboards in the Gathering Area. They will be delivered by Hope Church carolers on December 15. Enrich your Advent season by sharing Christmas cards with these members:

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| • LeVada Bombe | • Winnie Hollenbach | • Leola Ralph |
| • Peg Danhof | • Kathleen Hopkins | • Virginia Timmer |
| • Peggy Fitzgerald | • Clarence & Eleanor Hopkins | • Lila Vohlken |
| • Ruth Green | • Elsie Howard | • Helena Winter |
| • Bob Hanna | • Abby Price | • Carolyn Zeek |
| • Eddie Haworth | • Mary Martin | |
| • Betty Hildore | | |



ADULT EDUCATION
Sundays, 9:40–10:40 a.m., Commons I



Advent Series: The Stories of Five Women Told by Four Women

During the last few months, Dr. Lynn Japinga has been preaching and reflecting on the Biblical stories of some of the women of the Bible. Do you remember when she preached on the inclusion of the story of Tamar? Not only is Tamar mentioned in Genesis, but she is also recalled by Matthew in his gospel where he begins with a lineage of Jesus, starting with Abraham and concluding with Mary. Included in that list are at least five more women; hear their stories told by Hope Church women.

December 1

Lynn Japinga tells *Bathsheba's Story*
Bathsheba was married to Uriah, a Hittite. She became the illegitimate mother of Solomon in this lineage.

December 15

Jane Dickie tells *Ruth's Story*
Ruth was a Moabitess and a widow of a Hebrew. She became the wife of Boaz and the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David.

December 22

Leanne VanDyk tells *Rahab's Story*
Rahab was a prostitute in the city of Jericho who helped Hebrew spies investigate the weaknesses in the city. She became part of the line as the mother of Boaz by Salmon.

January 5

Sharon Arendshorst tells *Elizabeth's and Mary's Stories*
Elizabeth was a cousin of Jesus and Mary was the mother of Jesus.

Caring for Creation News

Peter Boogaart, Caring for Creation Coordinator

The challenge is over and the challenge was met. Thanks and congratulations to each of you who participated in our Ottawa County Parks Challenge. Maybe you were one of those who trekked through knee deep snow at Burr Oak Landing or endured blazing heat at North Beach Park. Maybe you simply enjoyed the historical connections at Eastmanville Farm or the wildflowers at Tunnel Park. You probably didn't get to all the parks. As far as we know, nobody did. But that isn't the point. What counts is that you were outdoors enjoying nature and the parks. Author Richard Louv likes to point out that being in nature is an

essential component in personal and spiritual development. We hope that you discovered that to be true.

Children participated by filling in a bingo card which recorded the parks they visited. Each child received a final "Parks Explorer" certificate along with a nature bookmark and magnifying glass from the gift shop at Hemlock Crossing. Ariana and Haleigh Smith won special prizes as the children who visited the most parks. Congratulations to the Karen and Mark Pearson family; they won a special prize as the family attending the most parks. Be sure to check out

the Hope Church Facebook page for pictures from many of these outings.

Early next year, the Caring for Creation ministry will be looking for families that want to work together at making their homes more energy efficient. We'll be going "off the grid" - at least in programming terms - and scheduling meeting times outside the traditional Adult Education format. We're going to look for the changes that each of us can make in our own individual homes and then support each other in following through. More information will be coming in early 2014.

Washington School Neighbors Update

Andrew Spidahl, Neighborhood Connector



**Washington
School Neighbors**

I am thinking of an open neighborhood meeting in September about the safety of crossing Van Raalte Avenue to get to Kollen Park. The image I have is of a young boy relentlessly raising his hand to question the engineer who is giving the presentation. He wants to be sure he understands exactly how each idea will help slow down the

traffic so pedestrians can cross safely. The engineer is gracious to answer each question and concern, and also clearly impressed at this boy's level of commitment and his confidence to speak up in a public meeting. At first I am a bit embarrassed—is this kid asking relevant questions or does he just want to feel important? But the more I observe, the more I realize he truly cares. Later, I am talking to last year's Community Connector,

Catie. She tells me that this same boy cared enough to go door-to-door with a petition to get this on the City's agenda, and cared enough to take that same petition and be the one to deliver it to City Hall when the time was right. He cares because he and his little brother live in the neighborhood and cross that dangerous street. The result? Keep an eye out for changes to the traffic pattern near Van Raalte and Kollen Park!

Kids Hope Relationships Continue to Grow

Anne Duinkerken & Barbara Joldersma, Kids Hope USA Co-Directors



Our Kids Hope program year is now entering its third month and we are enjoying the benefits of growing relationships between our mentors and their Kids Hope students. We are delighted to see these relationships developing, because without a strong relationship it's very difficult to affect the social and academic growth we all want

for our students. Our eight new mentors report a good beginning and look forward to their continuing relationships.

We are still looking for mentors for the following children:

- A first grade boy who loves to please and needs help with social skills and learning positive ways to handle frustration.
- A third grade boy who lives with

his father with another family and needs help developing his reading skills.

- A fourth grade boy who is funny and caring and needs help with his reading skills.

If you would like to join our group of dedicated volunteers, please contact Anne Duinkerken or Barbara Joldersma.

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 Reconciliation Ministry at Hope Church

The Reconciliation Ministry at Hope Church is called upon to be a mindful steward of our theme to provide provisions for the journey, welcome all, connect with and witness to the community; and engender deep engagement. *"This ministry will focus on Hope Church's commitment to reconciliation, peace, and justice."* In 2010, the consistory added this statement of vision to stand along our current mission statement: *"Hope Church is committed to multicultural diversity as an expression of our faith in Jesus Christ. This commitment is integral to our life as a community of faith and to our work as peacemakers and reconcilers in God's world."*

The Reconciliation Ministry encourages each of our ministries to engage with diversity and inclusivity by offering support and resources. We provide leadership for events like the Season of Reconciliation and Martin Luther King celebrations. We also discern appropriate advocacy and actions for issues facing our community such as immigration reform.

This group will coordinate the work of Restorative Circles both within and beyond the Hope Church community as a tool for reconciliation. Furthermore, the ministry seeks to build relationships with organizations within our community who are working at justice and reconciliation.

The Reconciliation Ministry provides opportunities for involvement throughout the year. Recently, a photo-text exhibit featuring well-known Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and allied clergy was on display at Hope Church entitled, *We Have Faith*. A public open house was held with comments from Pastor Jill and other community leaders.

The Reconciliation Ministry, along with Outreach and Hospitality, has been an institutional home for Room for All, a collection of RCA churches that openly portray our inclusivity. The Reconciliation Ministry has recently been a connection point for a newly formed community forum highlighting opportunities for bridging racial divides as well, *Justice for Some or Justice for All?*

In the month of January we will be celebrating the Season of Reconciliation where as a congregation we increase our focus on issues surrounding reconciliation and our place in this world. As part of the season of reconciliation the following events and opportunities abound:

1. The Reconciliation Ministry has sought congregation members to share their witness to reconciliation.
2. In combination with Adult Education, we will be offering the following lessons:

Jan. 12: *Making Sense of God's Violent Actions in the Old Testament*

Jan. 19: *Culture of Violence*, with guest speaker, Chris Dorsey from Western Theological Seminary.

Jan. 26: *Family Violence*, with guest speaker, Laura Kitchen, from the Center for Women in Transition.

Feb. 2: Summary of events from the season and where it leads through the rest of the year.

3. The Reconciliation Ministry with the Worship, Prayer and Spirituality Ministry, welcome "In Harmony" to worship with us on January 26, 2014.
4. There may be other opportunities announced throughout the season, please be mindful of bulletin announcements. More information will also be in the January newsletter and on the Hope Church website.

The Reconciliation Ministry is blessed to have a continuing spirit of discussion and deep thought and welcome any congregation members to join. If you have any questions you may contact Reconciliation members: John Koch (chair), Ann McKnight, Tom Arendshorst, Jane Dickie, Paul Smith, and Brian Yurk.

The next Ministry Highlight will feature the Building and Grounds Ministry.

Holistic Health Care

Donita Robards, RN, Parish Nurse

Holistic health, also known as integrative health, interlinks mind, body, and spirit together to create wholeness within. Orthodox medicine, also called allopathic medicine, is the absence of disease. Allopathic medicine is very helpful in treating illness through medications and surgery, and it has its place firmly rooted in our society. Integrative health however, is not so well known or widely used in the western culture. Historically, the allopathic society made several attempts to shut down holistic health, making it illegal to practice. In reality, the two can work together to provide a unique plan for each individual patient.

It is always a good idea to see your physician if you are sick. Your doctor can evaluate your symptoms, and possibly order lab work and tests to diagnose your illness. You can make better decisions for yourself once you

have all the appropriate information. For serious illness, medication and surgery may be the best course of action. However, some people may choose to forgo that route to consider a more holistic approach.

Here is an example of using the two practices for the same illness: Let's say you are feeling fatigued, gaining weight and having trouble sleeping at night. Your doctor would likely order some lab work to see if your thyroid is working effectively. The results come in, and you discover that you do indeed have a disease called hypothyroidism. Your physician will probably want to prescribe medication for this problem. You decide you want to see what else you can do for this condition. You may research online for proper nutrition, homeopathic solutions to improve your sleep patterns, and begin a yoga class.



There are a few homeopathic physicians in the Western Michigan area. It is important to note that there are many well respected integrative care specialists just as there are quacks. Do your research to make sure that the advice you receive is appropriate and accurate. Each person has different needs, and every illness is different. Just because you seek a holistic health care approach for one illness doesn't mean it will be the best choice for the next one. If you know what your choices are you will be in a good position to make the best one for you.

Wisdom for the Caregiver

Congregational Care Ministry

On October 21, a presentation was given by Karen and Larry Mulder entitled, "What We Learned about Care Giving in the House of the Dying." Karen and Larry reflected on what they learned in the House of the Dying during their time spent in Haiti. From this humbling and sacred experience they learned (or relearned) some powerful and simple truths about caring for those who are suffering. The ideas here came out of some sharing during the presentation. Full copies of these handouts are available at the church office.

When Caring for a Person in a Nursing Home:

- Remember that the person living in a nursing home is first of all a real person. Treat the person the way you would like to be treated.
- Do not "talk down" to older people or treat them like children. Show respect for each person. They may need extra help, but that does not mean that they are mentally slow. They are a person with opinions, likes and dislikes.
- Individuals look forward to mail delivery time—send a card or note often.

When Caring for the Very Ill and Dying:

- Don't feel you must talk. A really ill person may not be able or willing to talk, but he or she will still take comfort in just knowing you are there.
- Keep in touch through regular emails, texting, or CarePages website postings. Say something. Say anything. Let him or her know they are not alone.
- Ask if the person would like you to say a prayer for them. Also inquire if they would like to pray.

Hope Church Welcomes New Members

These new members were welcomed into the fellowship of Hope Church on November 10 during the 11 a.m. worship service. Please take the time to welcome all these individuals into the family of Hope Church.

Betty Arendshorst

Betty (not pictured) joins by transfer from Third Reformed Church, Holland. Betty lives at Freedom Village and enjoys reading, sports, family activities, and bridge. She is sponsored by Trudy VanderHaar. Her son and daughter-in-law, Tom and Sharon Arendshorst, also attend Hope Church.

The Marthens Family



Megan joins by transfer from Park Ridge Community Church, Park Ridge, Illinois with her husband, Tom, and daughters, Greta (age 4) and Claire (age 1). Megan is currently a stay-at-home mom, but was a teacher for 15 years. She enjoys reading, writing, music, teaching, and French language and culture. The Marthens are sponsored by Margaret Buckley. Megan's parents, Ron and Sandy Mulder, also attend Hope Church.

*"If anyone is in Christ,
there is a new creation! God has
reconciled us to himself through
Christ and has given us the
ministry of reconciliation."
-II Corinthians 5:17-18*

Joyce Proechel



Joyce Proechel joins by transfer from First United Methodist Church, Holland. Joyce lives at Freedom Village and is retired. Her husband, Don, lives in Freedom Village Inn. She enjoys bridge, reading, and golf. She is sponsored by Ruth Donaldson.

The Topp/VanderVelde Family



Don and Lise Topp, and daughters, Audrey and Evelyn VanderVelde, join by transfer from Second Reformed Church, Zeeland. Don is a psychologist and Lise is a speech-language pathologist. Audrey is in high school and Evelyn is in middle school. They are sponsored by the Steeby family.

John Schmidt & Dawn Boelkins

John Schmidt and Dawn Boelkins (not pictured) join by transfer from Second Reformed Church in Zeeland. John is a retired pastor and Dawn is a professor of Biblical Languages at Western Theological Seminary. They are sponsored by Randall and Laurie Braaksma.

“There are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, varieties of service but the same Lord, varieties of working but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”
-I Corinthians 12:4-7

Josh & Virginia Beard



Josh and Virginia Beard join by reaffirmation of faith. Virginia is a professor of Political Science at Hope College and Josh is an attorney. They are sponsored by Jim Dumerauf and DeDe Johnston.

Andrew & Kallie Spidahl



Andrew and Kallie Spidahl join by reaffirmation of faith. Both are Neighborhood Connectors for Washington School Neighbors. They are sponsored by Scott and Stephanie Parrott.

The Edgington Family



Mark and Rhonda Edgington and their children, Isaac (age 6) and Esther (age 3), join by transfer and reaffirmation of faith. Mark works in the Engineering Department at Hope College and Rhonda is the Assistant Music Director at Hope Church. The Edgington's are sponsored by Brian and Michelle Yurk.

Children Prepare for the Celebration of Christ's Birth

Jocelyn Van Heest, Children's Ministry Director

Children in Worship

As we begin the Advent season the worship centers are changing to the color of waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. The purple cloths are being displayed, the Advent wreaths are being lit, songs of waiting are being sung, and we are listening to the stories of the prophets and the angels telling of the coming of our Lord. Every week, the stories being told in each worship center are printed in the bulletin and we invite you to engage a child in conversation about their worship experience.

Church School

The church school children will be participating in some special Advent activities during the season. They will be hearing wonderful stories about the birth of Jesus and doing lots of activities celebrating the coming of

the Christ child. On December 8, children will attend the St. Nicholas breakfast celebration along with their families. Please note that there will be no church school on December 29.

Children in Worship will meet each Sunday in Advent. The children will remain in the sanctuary on December 29 for the family service and on January 5 all the children will join together for an Epiphany celebration.

Children's Offering

During the Advent season, the children's offering will be used to help with the Tree of Light gift giving. Each worship center will choose a gift request from the tree and share our blessings by fulfilling that request. Some of the children have decorated the stars on the tree, which will be used as gift tags for all the presents.



Christmas Ornaments

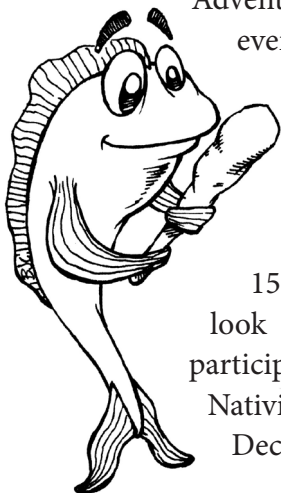
Each year the younger children (pre-school through elementary ages) are encouraged to take an ornament home with them from Hope Church. This year these ornaments will be available from the tree in the Gathering Area. These ornaments may be taken from the tree beginning December 15th. Enjoy them on your tree.

Youth Ministry

Anne Duinkerken, Youth Ministry Director

On Sunday, December 1, Fish Club and High Hopes will gather together to make cookies for our homebound members as part of the Advent activities that

evening. We will then deliver the cookies during caroling on December 15. We also look forward to participating in the Nativity Pageant on December 8.



Fish Club

Fish Club will join with First Presbyterian and Grace Episcopal youth on Saturday, December 7, to celebrate Christmas. We will go bowling and return to First Presbyterian for food, fun and devotions.

High Hopes

High Hopes will meet for "Unplugged" on the evening of Sunday, December 7. On Saturday, December 14, we are hoping for snow so that we can join with the youth from First Presbyterian and Grace Episcopal for some sledding fun. We'll keep a close

eye on the forecast! Additionally, our time honored tradition of a Progressive Dinner to celebrate the Christmas season will be held on Sunday, December 15. The group will meet at Hope Church and then proceed to our first host home.

All students are asked to bring a white elephant gift to exchange.



A Note from Our Seminary Intern

Hope Church Members,

I am sad to inform you that I will be terminating my education at Western Seminary in December and thus leaving Hope Church and Holland.

I came to WTS excited to learn and eventually end up with two Master's degrees (MDiv and MSW) after four short years. After the first few weeks of seminary coursework, I realized that I had learned a lot in my religious studies at Northwestern College and

found myself asking, "Why do I need the MDiv if I'm not going into pastoral ministry?" After many discussions with family, friends, and mentors about possible occupations, I have decided to pursue a vocation I think I will love and do well at in educational counseling. My husband, Alex, and I will be returning to northwest Iowa/northeast Nebraska and are in the process of deciding where he should finish his Bachelor's degree while I start a Master's program at a school there.

As I think about leaving, I am the most sad about leaving Hope Church. The people and leaders of Hope Church have made me feel safe with my questions and curiosity while still holding to orthodox Christianity. It is a dream church for me and I can only "hope" to find people like you again. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Danie

At Home With the Word

Daily Bible Readings from the Revised Common Lectionary

***An electronic version of the daily Bible readings for the coming year (Advent 2013-Advent 2014) can be found on the Hope Church website. Printed copies are available outside the church office.**

November 28 - December 1

Thursday Psalm 100
Thanksgiving Day
Friday Psalm 122
Saturday Matthew 24:1-22
Sunday Isaiah 2:1-5
First Sunday of Advent

December 2-8

Monday Romans 6:1-11
Tuesday Psalm 124
Wednesday Isaiah 54:1-10
Thursday Isaiah 4:2-6
Friday Isaiah 30:19-26
Saturday Isaiah 40:1-11
Sunday Isaiah 11:1-10
Second Sunday of Advent

December 9-15

Monday 1 Thessalonians 4:1-13
Tuesday Psalm 21
Wednesday Genesis 15:1-18
Thursday Psalm 146:5-10
Friday Ruth 4:13-17
Saturday Luke 3:1-18
Sunday Isaiah 35:1-10
Third Sunday of Advent

December 16-22

Monday Psalm 42
Tuesday Ezekiel 47:1-12
Wednesday Zechariah 8:1-17
Thursday Galatians 3:23-29
Friday Galatians 4:1-7
Saturday Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Sunday Matthew 1:18-25
Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23-29

Monday Galatians 3:6-14
Tuesday Isaiah 9:2-7
Wednesday Luke 2:1-20
Christmas Day
Thursday Psalm 148
Friday 1 John 5:1-12
Saturday Isaiah 49:13-23
Sunday Matthew 2:13-23

December 30-January 5

Monday Isaiah 1:10-18
Tuesday Psalm 32:1-7
Wednesday 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4
Thursday 2 Thessalonians 11:11-12
Friday Ephesians 1:11-23
Saturday Luke 19:1-10
Sunday John 1:1-18

Events and Announcements

Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 8** in the sanctuary directly following the 11:00 a.m. worship service. At this meeting, a brief presentation of the 2014 budget and 2013 giving-to-date will be given.

Coffee Time at Freedom Village

The next Coffee Time will be at Freedom Village on Tuesday, **December 10 at 10:30 a.m.** This is a caring outreach and fellowship opportunity for residents and their friends at different locations to meet with the pastors and other congregation members and staff. Mark your calendar, and come for an hour. All are welcome!

Pizza Sunday

The next Pizza Sunday is scheduled for **December 15**, which is not the last Sunday of the month! Pizza Sunday hosts and salad providers are needed for 2014; please sign up on

the Fellowship bulletin board in the Gathering Area.

Hope Church Readers

Readers will meet on **Wednesday, December 18 at 1:00 p.m.** in Commons II. The book to be discussed is, *Wedded to the Land*, by Joan Donaldson. Joan will be present to talk about the writing of the book and other interesting facts of life on their organic farm.

2014 Offering Envelopes

Envelopes for 2014 offerings will be available for pick-up in the Gathering Area in late December. They are displayed alphabetically and we request that you pick up envelopes for your entire family. If you are unable to be in worship and need your envelopes mailed, please call the church office. Special envelopes for the initial offering and for contributions to the Deacons Fund are enclosed, as well as envelopes for special holiday offerings. You are

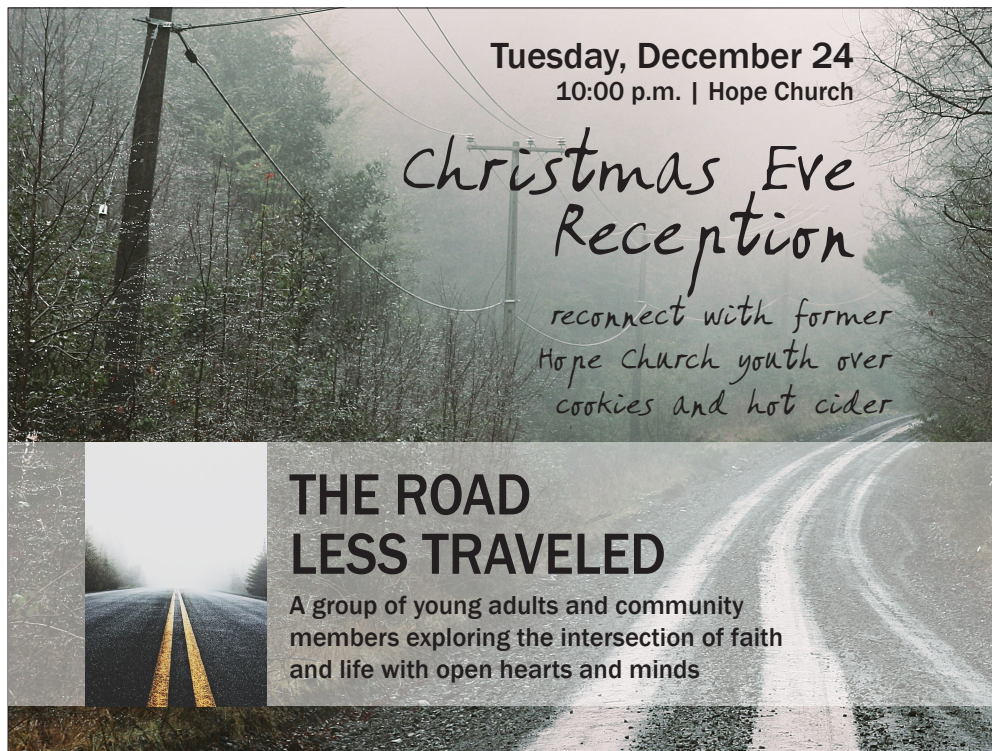
encouraged to use your envelopes as this saves time when the offering is counted and recorded.

Financial Update as of 11/18/13:

Income YTD - \$536,529
Budget YTD - \$569,407
Expenses YTD - \$588,449
Budget YTD - \$614,536

Restorative Circles

Facilitator Training is being offered **January 31-February 1** from 9am-4pm both days. The training will give a comprehensive overview of Restorative Circles and will provide more detailed information on each phase of a Restorative Circle. There will be opportunity to practice all three rounds of dialogue used in a Circle. Register online at HollandRestorativeCircles.org or call the Hope Church office at (616) 392-7947. Brochures with more information are available in the Gathering Area.



Tuesday, December 24
10:00 p.m. | Hope Church

Christmas Eve Reception

reconnect with former Hope Church youth over cookies and hot cider

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

A group of young adults and community members exploring the intersection of faith and life with open hearts and minds

December Birthdays

20 Myra Berry
Care Group: 1

29 Helen DeWeerd
Care Group: 4

If you are 75+ years old and would like to be listed in the birthday column, please contact the church office.

Consistory Corner

The Consistory met on November 11. Among other items of business, the following topics of conversation were significant to share with the congregation:

- Consistory continued the conversation begun in October about how Hope Church addresses questions of social justice and public policy in light of our faith and divergent political opinions.

A half page summary of this discussion will be created to share with future consistories.

- The Executive Committee reported on the state of the 10th Street house after a pipe burst creating extensive water damage. The cost of repairing the damage was too prohibitive. The consistory voted to demolish the 10th Street house. The current tenants of the

10th Street House were moved to new housing immediately after the pipe burst, and our mentoring team is continuing to support these tenants during this time of transition. The Community ministry is evaluating how Hope Church will continue to be engaged with the Community Action Housing Partnership and with issues of affordable housing in our community.

and finally...

As the holiday season whips into its frenzied pace all around us, we are invited to observe a very different season. The season of Advent invites us to “come and walk in the light of the Lord.” This alternative season is not necessarily opposed to parties, caroling, gatherings of friends and family, or the exchange of gifts. I rather love those parts of the season. I engage in them with appreciation for how the festive spirit draws me to a love for people that I see modeled in Jesus. After all, wasn’t Jesus getting into trouble all over the gospel for his readiness to break bread with all kinds of people in all kinds of situations?

The difference that Advent makes in the heart of those of us who observe this season is an ability to remain grounded and attentive to the longing in our lives and in our world for the light of Christ. We move through this time with awareness that not everything is “sparkle and light.” We name those places of longing and waiting. We acknowledge the

weariness and suffering. And we look for Christ everywhere we go: in the parties and in the quiet; in the sorrow and in the laughter. We watch for Christ coming in the flesh.

This hymn by Brian Wren seeks to capture the goodness of our embodied life...for it is in our flesh that God came to dwell and it is in this life we find Christ still.

Good is the Flesh ***by Brian Wren***

*Good is the flesh that the Word has
become,
good is the birthing, the milk in the
breast,
good is the feeding, caressing and rest,
good is the body for knowing the
world,
Good is the flesh that the Word has
become.*

*Good is the body for knowing the
world,
sensing the sunlight, the tug of the
ground,*

*feeling, perceiving, within and around,
good is the body, from cradle to grave,
Good is the flesh that the Word has
become.*

*Good is the body, from cradle to grave,
growing and aging, arousing,
impaired,
happy in clothing, or lovingly bared,
good is the pleasure of God in our
flesh,
Good is the flesh that the Word has
become.*

*Good is the pleasure of God in our
flesh,
longing in all, as in Jesus, to dwell,
glad of embracing, and tasting, and
smell,
good is the body, for good and for God,
Good is the flesh that the Word has
become.*

Peace,
Pastor Jill

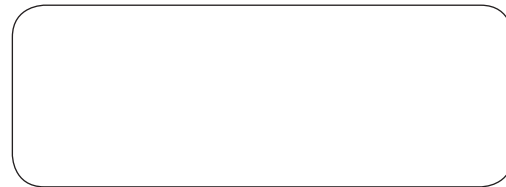
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Holland MI 49423



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Permit No. 607

Hope Church News

December 2013



Blueberry Pie Sales Provide Gift of Hope

Thank you

to the volunteers who helped make
300 blueberry pies

Thank you

to those who bought pies and
helped us raise **\$2,926.77**

Thank you

to Hope Church for giving the
Gift of Hope



*Empowering struggling women
to have a better tomorrow*

The money raised will support the Haiti Foundation Against Poverty's "Gift of Hope" program. Gift of Hope provides opportunity, training, discipleship, and jobs to women who desire to keep their children but simply cannot afford to do so.

When these mothers are asked, "If you could provide for your child, would you want to keep him?" The answer is almost always a

resounding yes! If these women had an income to provide basic needs for their children they could remain a family and save themselves from such emotional agony. That is what Gift of Hope is all about.

A second work/mission trip to Haiti is being planned for October, 2014. For more contact Ben Sikkink.