



HOPE CHURCH NEWS

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

Volume 58, No. 8

September 2015

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Inserts:

- *September Calendar*
- *Lectionary*
- *Restorative Circles Facilitator List*

The deadline for the
October newsletter is
Thursday, September 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



September 13 is Fall Kick-off Sunday

Worship

Early Worship begins at 8:30 a.m. in Commons I. This service offers informal and interactive worship, and encourages people of all ages to participate through music, story, art, drama, and weekly Holy Communion.

Worship in the sanctuary begins at 11:00 a.m. with Pastor Gordon Wiersma preaching and Andrew Spidahl as liturgist. Communion will be celebrated. Children will be led from the sanctuary during the service to participate in Children in Worship.

Church Picnic

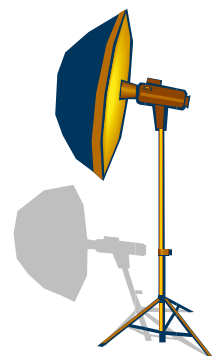
Join us in the courtyard and on 11th street after the 11:00 a.m. worship service for the annual kick-off picnic. Lunch will be provided with a suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 per household.

There will be activities for children and time to share in fellowship. For those who participated in the Health Ministry's Go & Glow Summer fitness initiative, be sure to attend for the prize drawing that will take place during the picnic. Members and friends are all welcome!



See pages 2-4 for information on the 2015-2016 Christian Education offerings.

Photo Directory Reminder: Sept. 21-26



Photos for our new 2015 Photo Directory will be taken September 21-26 at Hope Church. There are portrait sessions available for you to sign up for between 2:00-8:30 on September 21-25, and between 9:00-4:30 on September 26. Sign up for photo sessions at the table in the gathering area after Sunday worship, in-person during weekday office

hours and online at HopeChurchRCA.org - click on the photo directory slider on the home page or click on the "happening" page and then the photo directory icon. Photo sessions are 100% free. If you need transportation to church the day of your picture, sign up by the directory sign up table in the gathering area or call the church office.

Don't forget to sign up! Help make our photo directory complete!

Find Your Place

Christian Education | Music Groups | Fellowship Groups

"The SPIRIT of LIFE: *fruits & gifts*" - it's a very pleasant sounding theme, as most anyone loves fruits and gifts! But take a look at the image for our theme, and you'll see it suggests that the way the Spirit's gifts and fruits are received is also unpredictable, jumbled, not always so neat and tidy. Part of the adventure of being a community of faith is that such a jumble of gifts and fruits among us can at times be creative but can also feel chaotic, can at times feel like abundance and at other times confusion. Perhaps that's something of the beauty of life in the Spirit: the Holy Spirit does not bless us with spiritual fruits and gifts so that we can manage God in a predictable way; God's Spirit lives among us to move us in ways of faithfulness that are both familiar and new, comforting and creative, reliable and surprising.



"The SPIRIT of LIFE: *fruits & gifts*" – it's your unpredictable invitation to join in this community blessed by the Spirit and to explore God's gifts and fruits in you.

Pages 2-4 highlight the Christian Education offerings starting with Fall Kick-off Sunday on September 13.

Worship and Music

Chancel Choir (High school - Adults)

Brian Carder, Director

Rehearsals:

Sundays, 9:40 a.m.

1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month, 7:00 p.m.

The Chancel Choir sings weekly at the 11:00 a.m. worship service and provides leadership with liturgical song and anthems. We love to sing and enjoy the art of making music together. Sopranos, Altos, Tenors and Basses - come join our worship choir! The first rehearsal will be a special "get ready for fall worship" rehearsal on Wednesday, September 9th at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Brian at BCarder@hopechurchrca.org.

Carillon Handbell Choir (High school - Adults)

Rhonda Edgington, Director

Rehearsals: 1st & 3rd Weds. of each month, 5:45 - 6:45 p.m.

If you love music, have some basic note reading skills, and enjoy making music with others, the Carillon Choir may be just the thing for you. Music is rehearsed to be used approximately monthly in worship services. Rehearsals begin on Wednesday, September 9. New members are always welcome. If you have note reading experience, and cannot commit to being a regular member, but would be interested in being on our sub list (you are contacted about specific dates, to fill in at rehearsals and on Sundays, for members who will be out), this is also an opportunity to be involved. For more information, contact Rhonda at RhondaBSE@gmail.com.

Children's Choirs

Children's choirs gather seasonally, Advent & Christmas, Palm Sunday & Eastertide. Watch for additional announcements in newsletters and bulletins regarding startup times.

Instrumental

Hope Church values the talents and skills of its members and friends. We encourage instrumentalists to accompany choirs, play for worship services (11 a.m. or Early Worship), and assist in accompanying groups and mid-week events. Do you play guitar? There's a group for you! Do you play a wind, brass, string instrument? Please join us in making great music for worship. For more information, contact Brian at BCarder@hopechurchrca.org.

Adult Education

Sundays, 9:40–10:40 a.m. in Commons I

September 13–October 11:

Understanding Islam

Sept 13: **Dr. Sahibzada**, Imam at the Islamic Center of West Michigan, will present an overview of Islamic theology and practice.

Sept 20: **Dr. Sahibzada** will describe the experience of the Islamic religious community locally and nationally.

Sept 27: **Dr. Anne Heath Wiersma**, Associate Professor of Art History at Hope College, will present a survey of Islamic architecture and culture.

Oct 4: **Kari Miller-Fenwood**, Art Archivist for the Holland Museum, will present a survey of Islamic graphic arts.

Oct 11: **Dr. Annie Dandavati**, Professor of Political Science and Director of International Studies at Hope College, will discuss current Islamic politics in the Middle East.

Sept. 20, Oct. 4, 18, and Nov. 1:

Sex + Faith

This class will be led by Youth Ministry Director Beth Jarvis, and is intended for parents of children of all ages. We will be studying the book *Sex + Faith: Talking to Your Child from Birth to Adolescence* by Kate Ott. Please let Beth know if you will be attending. Room location to be determined.

For a full schedule of Adult Education classes being offered through November, see the Christian Education 2015-2016 Brochure, available at the church and online at www.HopeChurchRCA.org.

Youth Groups

Fish Club (Middle School)

Fish Club is a youth group experience for the sixth, seventh, and eighth graders of Hope Church and their friends. Fish Club seeks to provide a close Christian community of friends for our middle school students, while forming relationships with adult sponsors in the church. A variety of programming is offered to take a close look at ourselves, our faith, and our world. Service projects are an important part of the group's community ministry as well. Fundraisers enable us to plan some very special events, like retreats, and a trip to the Appalachian Trail. All middle school youth are welcome!

High Hopes (High School)

High Hopes is a youth group for 9th – 12th graders. There are a variety of social, service, and learning opportunities throughout the year. The activities are designed to build and strengthen relationships among the youth and sponsors as part of a community of faith. There will also be fundraising for a mission trip planned for the summer and service work right here in our community. All high school youth are welcome!

Both groups typically meet on Sunday evenings. Watch for special joint events with First Presbyterian Church & Grace Episcopal Church youth groups. Updated schedule information is available on the Hope Church website. Contact Youth Ministry Director Beth Jarvis with any questions.

Hope & Grace: College and 20/30s Ministry

The Hope & Grace: College and 20/30s Ministry is a shared ministry with Grace Episcopal Church. Together we seek a variety of ways in which we might create space for college students, church and community members from the ages of 18 - 30 to encounter God and one another in spiritually rich ways. Our weekly Thursday Nights gathering focuses on friendship and community around a shared meal, prayer, and communion. We also offer a couple weekend retreats in the fall and spring, and a week-long border encounter trip. Our desire is to create a space where honest questions are welcomed in discussion, where everyone finds belonging without judgment, and where affection and laughter are shared freely. Be sure to check the website for up-to-date information, or contact Andrew Spidahl: aspidahl@hopechurchrca.org or 616-422-5104. Important Dates: Oct 2-4 Fall Retreat, Jan 1-8 Border Encuentro.

Wednesday Evening Fall Series

Wednesdays in October (7, 14, 21, 28), 6:45-8:00 p.m. Pastor Gordon Wiersma will lead a time of study and discussion. Watch the bulletin and Hope Church News for further details.

Nursery and Young Children

Nursery (Infants through 2 years old)

9:40 a.m.–12:15 p.m. Room 103

Caring adults and youth are scheduled as caregivers, and volunteers are needed. Please contact Jocelyn if you are interested in volunteering.

Family Time Together (FTT)

This group emerged from the former PACT (Parents and Children Together). This group is open to all Hope Church families with children of any age. The group will meet periodically throughout the year for various family-oriented times together. Events may include Game Night/Game Day, Pancake dinner and celebration (Shrove Tuesday), and other opportunities for families to spend time together and with one another. Look for specific dates, events, and times in newsletters, bulletins and on the Hope Church website.

Children In Worship

Children In Worship is a walk-out program for ages three years through 5th grade during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. During worship, children will be invited to come to the front of the sanctuary for “A Word with the Children.” From there, Children In Worship leaders will escort the children to the worship centers.

Children In Worship transforms ordinary time and space into sacred time and space. Our children enter sacred time in order to experience and praise God by being with God, talking with God, listening to God, and hearing the stories of God. The special time and space of Children in Worship helps the children bring the stories of God’s action in the past and promises for the future into their present experience as they wonder, respond in their own way to the story, and pray together in community.

Ages 3, 4 & 5

Room 202

A parent may be asked to stay with young three year olds until the child is comfortable in the center and is ready for worship

Kindergarten and 1st grade

Room 204

2nd and 3rd grades

Room 206

4th and 5th grades

Room 208

This fall’s offerings will be given to support Girls and Boys Christian High Schools in Martinpur, Pakistan. If you have any questions about the children’s opportunities, contact Jocelyn VanHeest, Children’s Ministry Director.

For more information on the Hope Church Christian Education offerings this program year, pick up a brochure in the Gathering Area or go to HopeChurchRCA.org.

Church School

Church School (Preschool through 5th grade)

9:40 a.m.–10:40 a.m. Room 204

Classes will be using the “Kid Connection” curriculum, inviting the children to connect with each other, their leaders, the Bible stories, and their families. Children will begin each Sunday morning together for an exciting presentation of a Bible story, then divide into smaller groups by age to continue to learn about the story with age-appropriate activities and ways to connect the story to their lives.

Family Church School

2nd Sunday of each month beginning in October

Parents and their children will explore a different topic each month that will help to nurture their faith together as a family.

Youth Church School

6th and 7th Grade

Sundays, twice a month at 11:00 a.m. *(leaving with Children in Worship)*

Library

The class follows *Crossings, God’s Journey With Us*, which is published by Logos Productions. Crossings uses eight key Biblical themes as a foundation and uses these themes to frame the larger Biblical story. This class is led by Beth Jarvis.

8th and 9th Grade: G.I.F.T.

Sundays at 9:40 a.m.

Youth Room

G.I.F.T. (Growing in Faith Together) class is a focused time for participants to explore faith in God and their connection to the church and faith. Some might call G.I.F.T. a “confirmation class,” but this is a bit different. Some participants will be led to make profession of faith in Christ at Hope Church, but it’s not required. This class is a two-year experience led by Pastor Gordon Wiersma.

10th - 12th Grade: High Hopes “Unshowered”

2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 9:40 a.m.

Garden Lounge

This group meets with Pastor Jill Russell and Youth Ministry Director Beth Jarvis for Bible study, fellowship, and prayer. A three-year cycle leads each student through a year of thinking about their faith (theology), exploring how to live their faith in very practical terms (Christian practices), and how to sustain a lifelong commitment to study of God’s Word (Bible study). This one-hour gathering meets September through May.

A Vietnam Story

Dan Fisher, Hope Church member



I'd like to invite you to sponsor me, as I run with my daughter Elyse in the Holland Park-2-Park Half Marathon on September 26, in support of children in Vietnam with HIV/AIDS.

Our family started on this Vietnam journey after a family visit in 2007. We began working with 17 children with HIV/AIDS in Ho Chi Minh City. Today we support over 98 children in three provinces and work with an amazing team of 25 volunteers who make up the "Warm Hold Association."

Please get on our website and learn more about this very cool project and how your support last year has made

a huge difference in the lives of many young children in very desperate situations.

<http://danfishervn.wordpress.com>

In February, I talked about my Vietnamese experiences during this year's Season of Reconciliation at Hope Church. Links to that story are available on the Hope Church website.

Text: <http://hopechurchrca.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Witness-to-Reconciliation-020115.pdf>

Audio: <http://hopechurchrca.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/02012015-Witness-to-Reconciliation-audio.mp3>

There are thousands of children in Vietnam who were born with HIV and are left orphaned as their parents die from AIDS. Being an orphan is hard enough by any measure. Being an orphan infected with HIV presents many additional challenges.

What can we do? Here is just one example of how the Warm Hold Association Team is changing the lives of children with HIV/AIDS.

Phuoc is a 4-year-old boy with HIV. Phuoc's father died of AIDS in 2012, and his mother abandoned him. His grandmother, Thi Toi, who is 63 years old, has taken on the challenge of raising a young child with HIV, and works hard to sell lottery tickets on

the streets to support her grandson and herself.

In January, I first met Phuoc and his grandmother, who at that time had a serious snakebite on her hand. It was not a pretty sight. They were living in a terribly unsafe and dilapidated shack. The Warm Hold team, in cooperation with the local government and a local donor, built them a new house providing a safe and healthier living environment, and providing hope for an improved life (see photos).

Learn more about this project and many other important initiatives we have recently completed or that are now in progress.

And if you get a chance, come cheer for Elyse and me on Sept. 26 at the Holland Park-2-Park Half Marathon. You can sponsor us on our run though the website:

<http://danfishervn.wordpress.com>

All donations will go directly in support of children in Vietnam with HIV/AIDS. Join us and help change the lives of some very special children.

Thank you for your encouragement, caring and support.

Peace to all.

Dan Fisher



Phuoc & Thi Toi home: Before and After



Youth Ministry

Beth Jarvis, Youth Ministry Director



High definition billboards, chain stores five stories high open every night until 2, hawkers in our faces coercing us to buy scalped tickets for Jon Stewart's last show that night. The chaos of Times Square is like no other. The High Hoppers clutched their bags and focused their eyes on the beacon of Gordon's blue shirt as he made his way forward, until we finally stepped into the quiet lobby of the Lyric Theatre, a white flag of surrender amidst the chaos of the war outside.

Earlier that day, our group confronted a different chaos. It is not every morning we awake in a church sanctuary, the coolest space in the building, and rarer still to sleep on the floor next to 50 pounds of onions on the pew next to you. But that night we did. Our wake up call was the arrival of three food distribution volunteers who entered the sanctuary at 6:30 AM to set up the food that had been delivered the day before. The temporary pantry was our sleeping space, the coolest room in the building. We rubbed our eyes, brushed our teeth, and caffeinated

our hospitality, before we joined the volunteers in the preparation to hand out countless bags of groceries to a couple hundred of Brooklyn's neediest. At my station, I offered folks the choice of cranberry juice concentrate, a 16 ounce box of raisins, or a can of pureed cranberry sauce.

One. They could pick only one.

Neighborhood families could choose between raisins, a small bottle of juice, and a can of corn syrup, gelatin, and pureed fruit. No high definition billboards herald choices like these.

For the next three hours each of us manned a station. Natalie and Caroline offered a choice of three cans of soup from a selection of five varieties. Ian offered the choice of brown rice, white rice, or a box of pasta. Clara and Isaac offered bags of onions and bags of carrots, by far the most popular table in the line. Each of us young and privileged. Each of us trying to overcome the barriers of English, Spanish, Polish, and degradation to explain that each could have only some and not all.

Later that night, we emerged from the song and dance utopia crafted for us and stepped back into the square, its anarchy just as acute as it was several hours before. We had informed our youth that we would take 45 minutes to break into small groups and visit

one of three stores. One group would go to a popular chain clothing store, one group would go to a cheesecake stand, the rest could wait at the Starbucks while others shopped.

One. They could choose one.

45 minutes later we met at the Starbucks bathed in the sensory overload of lights, noise, activity, and painted women. Like a waddle of penguins pressed together for warmth, we banded together and pushed our way down to the subway platform below.

As we boarded our train, Ian said softly, "This morning I was trying to explain to an elderly poor Polish woman why she couldn't have an extra bag of rice and tonight I watched adults throw \$30 at souvenir T-shirts in Times Square. How can anyone process this?"

How can anyone process this? Do we even choose to try? What does our choices say about who we are?

Choose wisely, friends.



Will You Help Change a Child's Life This Year?

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

As we look forward to the beginning of our Kids Hope program year, we are delighted to announce a new partnership with Third Reformed Church. With the blessing of Kids Hope USA, we will be working together to provide mentors, prayer partners and substitute mentors for the at-risk children of Vanderbilt.

The program at Third will be led by Beverley Rannow. Together we hope to substantially increase the numbers of children we are able to serve. If this is a ministry to which you feel called or for more information, please call Anne Duinkerken (550-2079) or Barb Joldersma (399-7319) or talk with Barb at the sign up table in the Gathering Area, September 13 or September 20.

Training for new mentors and substitute mentors is tentatively scheduled for the last week of September. Our work with at-risk children at Vanderbilt Charter Academy begins in October and ends just before Tulip Time. It would

be wonderful NOT to have a waiting list of children this year. Please prayerfully consider mentoring a child. The at-risk children of Vanderbilt need YOU.



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.

Adult Education: Increasing Understanding of a Variety of Faith-Related Topics

Judy Parr, Adult Education Task Force chair

Among classes being prepared for autumn are a 5-week course on Understanding Islam, a 2-week course on Creation Care, a 3-week course about a Christian View of Work and Life, and a 2-week discussion about the past, present, and future relationship of our congregation to the Reformed Church in America. Classes meet in Commons I between 9:40 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. each Sunday morning during the school year. They are free and open to all adults. For more information, see the 2015-16 Christian Education brochure.

Several years ago, those planning Adult Education adopted the following mission statement:

The Adult Education group plans and coordinates educational

opportunities for adults using as much as possible the talents and resources of the congregation. Such opportunities are intended for spiritual formation through biblical study and critical examination of cultural, social, and moral issues from a Christian perspective.

Memorable classes from last year include Hope College President John Knapp's presentation about Hope College and discussions of the Room-for-All-produced DVD, "Body and Soul: We Belong," which focused on inclusion as a theme of our Reformed theology and practices. Organized by Jane Dickie, discussion leaders included Jane Dickie, Lynn and Jeff Japinga, Paul Smith, Dawn Boelkins, and Don Luidens. Other informative Adult Education classes throughout

the year were presented by members of Community Ministry, Outreach and Hospitality, Health Ministry, and Reconciliation Ministry.

Adult education also happens in Hope church worship services, book discussion groups, men's breakfasts, women's circles, and Caring for Creation activities. Operating under the supervision of the Christian Education ministry, Adult Education planning members are Curtis Gruenler, David Myers, Milt Nieuwsma, Judy Parr (chairperson) Jane Schuyler, Eloise Van Heest, and Gordon Wiersma. If you have an idea for a course you want presented or would like to join the planning group, contact one of these people.

The next Ministry Highlight will feature the Sacristy Guild.

Events and Announcements

Appointment of New Elder

The two years remaining in the term of Elder Cindi Veldheer-DeYoung will be filled by Elder Judy Parr.

Circle 1 will meet Weds. Sept. 2nd at 9:30 a.m. at Hope Church in the library.

Circle 2 will not be meeting in September.

Circle 4 will hold their first meeting of the season on Weds. Sept. 9, at 7:00 p.m. Details to be announced later.

Labor Day Holiday Notice

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 7, for the Labor Day Holiday. Office hours will resume on Tuesday, September 8.

Coffee Time at Freedom Village

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. The next Coffee Time will be at **Freedom Village on Tuesday, September 8, 2015, 10:30 a.m.** Mark your calendar, and come for an hour, all are welcome!

River Encounter - Sept. 12

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Outdoor Discovery Center led family friendly kayak expedition of Macatawa River starting from Window on the Waterfront park; kayaks are provided. To have the cost waived, contact Joe Arevalo to register.

Flu Shot Clinic - Sept. 16

Hope Church Commons, Wednesday, September 16, from 5-7 p.m. This will be sponsored by Holland Hospital. Please bring your Medicare card. Costs: \$30 for flu shot; \$80 for pneumonia shot.

Hope Church Readers

Hope Church Readers will begin their fall season on Wednesday, September 16, at 1PM in the Commons. Our

book choice is the fascinating autobiography, *I AM MALALA* by the young woman herself, Malala Yousaafzai. Our discussion will be led by Kay Hubbard. Newcomers are welcome, and book lists may be picked up at the Welcome Desk.

West Michigan Peoples Climate March - Sept. 19

Saturday Sept. 19th, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. in Grand Rapids. Join the movement of people activating to build Climate Resiliency in West Michigan. Join us for a celebratory parade of allies who are taking action alongside you to address climate change. To carpool meet in the Hope Church parking lot at 11:30 a.m.

Caring for Creation Movie - Sept. 27

Bring your Pizza (it's Pizza Sunday) with you and come to Room 106 after 11 AM worship for a special showing of "Dirt! The Movie". Industrial farming, mining, and urban development have endangered the soil and resulted in cataclysmic droughts, starvation, floods, and climate change. How can humans reconnect to dirt — the living skin of the Earth?

Room For All 2015 Conference

Join RfA in celebrating ten years of making room for all. "From Sorrow to Celebration" will be the theme of the special 10th Anniversary conference. The dates are Thursday evening, Oct. 22nd – Saturday noon, Oct. 24, with an optional additional day that concludes after worship on Sunday, Oct. 25. The conference will take place at Central Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, MI. Register online by October 1.

Orientation to Hope Church Class

On Sunday, October 4, at 9:40 a.m., an Orientation to Hope Church Class will begin for people who are exploring possible membership at Hope Church. The class will meet on three Sunday mornings, **October 4, 11, and 18 at**

9:40 a.m. in the Garden Lounge. A meal and a meeting with the Board of Elders for those wishing to join Hope Church will occur on November 8 after the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Public reception will take place during 11:00 a.m. worship on November 15. Please contact Pastor Jill Russell or the church office (392-7947) if you would like more information. Please know that attending the class only indicates your possible interest in joining our fellowship, not your actual decision to do so.

Diners Club

Diners Club is a wonderful opportunity for fun and fellowship with members and friends of Hope Church. This year's dinner dates will be:

October 16 or 17, 2015

January 22 or 23, 2016

April 15 or 16, 2016

From the sign-up sheets, groups of seven or eight are randomly formed with 'hosts' (or co-hosts) listed at the top of each group. The hosts are responsible for selecting the time and the menu, contacting group members, and assigning parts of the meal. Look for the sign-up in the Gathering Area. Deadline for sign up is September 27.

Restorative Circle Facilitator Training

September 24th -25th from 9am-4pm. This two day training is for anyone who is eager to support the creation of strong communities, families, and work environments. You will learn how to communicate and collaborate during times of conflict or even just around different points of view. You will develop skills that can be put to practice immediately in informal ways and will also learn how to facilitate a formal restorative circle as well. For more information and to register go to <https://hrcircles.wordpress.com/> or call the church office at 392-7947.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

03	Ruth Hoekstra-Telgenhof Care Group: 5
03	Martha LaBarge Care Group: 3
15	Grant Alexander (missionary) Care Group: 7
15	Peggy Fitzgerald Care Group: 5
16	David Alexander (missionary) Care Group: 7
17	Earl Laman Care Group: 7
19	Jane VanEs (missionary) Care Group: 7
23	Eloise Van Heest Care Group: 4

Thank You

To the Hope Church Community,

Late winter I received a message from Lois Maassen that Camp Sunshine had been selected as the beneficiary of Think Hope this year. I was thrilled, doubly because Hope Church is also my church and has been a friend to Camp Sunshine in other ways for years.

The night of Think Hope on May 5 was so much more than I ever expected. The collective spirit of all who were willing to help was enormous—the kitchen crew (yes I know it took three days and many people to prepare all of that food), the people who made such loving donations out of their talents and gifts, those who made bids and later paid for those treasures (and, yes, I know that many of you ended up paying more than you bid), the “players” during the performance in the community hall (Deb, Gordon, Kay, Andrew, and more). All of it was just fabulous.

A few weeks ago we received the check for \$4,218.68—more than was announced the night of May 5. Your generosity and your love for what Camp Sunshine is all about is deeply, deeply appreciated. We just finished our camps for 2015—two at Camp Henry in Newaygo and two at Camp Blodgett in West Olive. We had a total of approximately 250 campers between the ages of 12 and 50, over 250 counselors, and hundreds of volunteers. Each and every one of them are heroes to me. And all of you are heroes as well. Thank you so much for helping us to do this.

~Cindy Terlouw, Executive Director Camp Sunshine

Thank you Hope Church for helping me go to Camp Geneva!

Love,

~Marisol Moreno

Thank you Hope Church for helping me go to Camp Geneva. I had a great time at Geneva Pines. I made a lot of friends and I hope you guys can help me go again next year!

Sincerely,

~Julian Moreno

P.S. Camp Geneva is the best place to be and to get closer to God for some people.

It is certainly time to thank my church family for all you have done for me since my surgery in May. As the saying goes, “I am not yet completely out of the woods”, so please keep praying. This reminds me of the many times my family camped beneath God’s amazing redwood trees. Walking back to our tent after the evening campfires, those giant trees shut out all light. Our flashlights lit only a few feet at a time, but we didn’t have to see the whole path to get safely home. Countless precious people have shared my life journey. You are among those who have made my journey brighter. Thanks!

~Trudy Vander Haar

A thank you from Mark and Randi, a family we have supported through the Community Housing Partnership (formerly the 10th Street House Program). Our time mentoring them has come to an end but they wrote:

Our family is continually blessed by your help each month. Really, words cannot express our gratitude for your blessings from you and your church family. God has been ever so faithful to our family.

~Mark and Randi

*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@hopechurchrca.org*

Health Ministry

Ginger Clark, RN, Parish Nurse



FLU SEASON IS UPON US!

We are hosting a Flu Vaccine Clinic here on Wednesday Sept. 16th from 5-7 pm. This is provided by Holland Hospital.

WHY GET VACCINATED? The flu is a contagious respiratory disease that can lead to serious complications, hospitalization or even death.

Anyone can get the flu, and vaccination is the single best way to protect against influenza. Even healthy children and adults can get very sick from the flu and spread it to family and friends.

Health experts now recommend that everyone 6 months of age or older get vaccinated against influenza.

There are certain people with an increased risk of getting serious complications from the flu- those with asthma, blood disorders, diabetes, chronic heart and lung disease, a

weakened immune system or any other chronic medical conditions. Others at risk include pregnant women, people over 50 years old, people living in nursing homes and health care workers. It is especially important to get the flu vaccine and get medical attention quickly if you get flu symptoms.

Symptoms of the flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Some people will not have a fever.

GO and GLOW REVIEW SUMMER of 2015

The Health Ministry Team hopes that you have enjoyed being active this summer! We would like to thank all those who participated and turned in their fitness cards. Whether you reached your goal or not, we encourage you to keep moving and enjoy the many fall activities out there! The winner of the prize drawing will

be announced at the Church picnic scheduled for Sept. 13th. It's never too late to start working on fitness goals that are appropriate for you- all year long!

Blessings of Health to you all!

DEMENTIA EDUCATION MONTH

The month of September is "Dementia Education Month." Resthaven will offer three opportunities for care coordinators and the general public to learn more about dementia, a disease that affects over 5.1 million people today and is expected to increase by 40% by 2025. All sessions will be held in the Cook Chapel at 280 W. 40th St:

- "Dementia from a Medical Perspective" on September 15, 6:30 - 8:00 pm
- "Ask the Experts" on September 22, 4:00 - 7:00 pm
- "Knowing More About Dementia" on September 29, various times

Watch the Sunday bulletins for more details or call Resthaven 796-3677.

Children's Ministry

Jocelyn Van Heest, Children's Ministry Director

Church School News

Church School kicks off September 13. All children ages 3 through 5th graders are invited to gather in Room 204 at 9:40. We will do a variety of activities that will help us to understand that each of us has gifts given by God that we can share with the world. We will learn together how important children are to God and the world and we all can make a difference to others while sharing our special skills and talents. Throughout the year the children's stories will be presented and enriched with music, art, personal reflection and interaction with the teachers and the other children.

It is an important benefit to our

children that Hope Church provides both Church School and Children in Worship each Sunday. The Church School lessons are presented to reach children through a variety of learning styles. The children are given the opportunity to hear stories that may not be told in the worship centers and these stories are often presented to introduce a theme, to give perspective to a sequence of events and to relate them to how we live in our world. Plan to take advantage of this opportunity to nurture your family's faith through both the adult and children's offering.

Children in Worship

Children in Worship will also begin on September 13. Children will leave the

11:00 a.m. service, meet together, and be led to their worship centers. The storytellers are looking forward to worshipping with them in this special environment throughout the year. Each week the story for each worship center is printed in the bulletin so members of Hope Church are aware of what the children are hearing and responding to, and also to let the children know that they are an important part of our congregation. Remember the children and storytellers that are worshipping in their centers in your prayers as you worship. As always we invite anyone who is interested in the Children in Worship experience and in our children to worship with them on any Sunday.

and finally

As I sit to write, it is still summer and my sabbatical is just around the corner. As you sit to read this, I will be several weeks into that time away. Know that I continue to hold tremendous gratitude in my heart as I anticipate this wonderful gift of time and space.

As I sat at the Worship, Prayer and Spirituality ministry meeting in late July, I wondered if you all know that one of our most substantive agenda items each and every time we meet is something we call "Worship Responses"? This is where we share any responses to worship we have heard and share any feedback that has come our way. One topic of conversation at our July meeting was how the new hymnals are sitting with folks. We've heard lots of affirmation from people for the rich new offerings that these hymnals have provided. We have also heard that we might be trying too many of those news hymns at once. People want some more familiar hymns that allow them to sing unselfconsciously in the course of worship. When the editor of the "Red Hymnal" was with us this Spring she commented that we were bold in our choices of hymns that day. In her congregation, the only way the new hymnal was accepted was to sing only familiar hymns for the first year! I felt a surge of deep gratitude for the musical gifts and openness of spirit in our congregation. And we also want you to know that we have heard and are seeking to be responsive to the desire to have some solid ground on which to stand while singing.

Here's another moment from "Worship Responses" a few months ago. Someone shared a question and suggestion after stumbling over a phrase in the ecumenical version of the Lord's Prayer week after week. The person said something like this: "Why do we pray 'Save us from the time of trial'? God never promised to save us from times of trial. Jesus himself was not saved from the time of trial. Why would we expect to be saved from suffering in this life?" My first instinct was to whole heartedly agree. We aren't saved from the time of trial. We are saved IN the

time of trial but not FROM the time of trial. Wouldn't that be a better way to pray that line? So we talked about this suggestion at ministry meeting. We were poised to give the reinterpretation a try in worship. We decided we should do a little investigation first and I agreed to do a little research. When I read about the formation of the Ecumenical versions of the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer (both of which we use in worship here at Hope Church), I received an education about this line of the prayer. There was considerable discussion about how to word that phrase. The "time of trial" referred to in the biblical text from which this prayer comes refers to what is sometimes called eschatology – or the end of time. It refers to an expectation that there will be times of trial and suffering at the end of time where people will be tempted to renounce their faith. The way I think about this phrase now is that it gives voice to our longing to remain faithful to the gospel to the end of life no matter what pressures may come our way. Knowing that the word choice was intentional and connected to a close reading of the biblical text, we decided it was best to let the language stand even if some of us will continue to do a little translating in our minds as we pray.

I am grateful that much of my sabbatical will keep me close to home (even as I am grateful for those couple of opportunities that will take me traveling to places like the Iona community). I may worship from time to time in a sister church but mostly plan to worship with all of you because this is the place I love to be. Worship is such a central part of our life of faith together, isn't? I am grateful to continue to share in that experience even if it is from your side in the pew. I share this window into the behind-the-scenes of worship because I wanted you to know that when you share your responses to worship they are taken seriously. Our liturgy truly is the work of the people!

Peace to you,
Jill

New Organ CD Available!

If you enjoy listening to preludes and postludes each week at Hope Church, and would like the chance to hear more of Rhonda's playing wherever you are, you are in luck! Rhonda has just self-produced a CD, recorded last year in Chicago, and it is available for \$15 from her. Entitled "Subtlety and Sparkle: Rhonda Sider Edgington and the Wahl Organ and Augustana Lutheran", it was recorded on a new instrument in the Hyde Park neighborhood of

Chicago. Wahl Organbuilders is a small, family-run company located in Appleton, Wisconsin. Rhonda met the Wahls at organ conventions over a decade ago, and they asked her to play the dedication recital of this new instrument in 2013. This is a small but lovely organ, with colorful stops and a clarity of sound that reminds Rhonda of the organs she loved in Germany.

The CD program contains mostly

German music – ranging from the Baroque to Romantic - as well as one modern American piece, written by the former Music Director at Augustana, as a commission for the dedication concert. Rhonda still has copies of a previously produced CD, available as well, for the bargain (we have to get these out of our house) price of \$10 – French Organ Music of the 19th and 20th Century – recorded in 2004 in Oak Park, Illinois.



Hope Church News

September 2015



Living Hope Schedules Taking Shape

Lois Maassen, Project Team Leader

As reported in the August newsletter, work is ramping up on design following Consistory's June approval of the facility renovation project scope to include the elevator for access to the second floor of the education wing. The Design Team met mid-month and is confirming schedules. As it currently stands, the "design and development" work, which includes confirming cost estimates, will be complete by the end of October (at which point there will be an open design presentation); developing construction documents will occur in November and December so that we can request bids in January.

Underway is structural review to assure there are no obstacles to including the elevator in a central location, and review of interdependencies to see what parts of the plan might be undertaken yet this fall. Otherwise, the "design and development" work is to add levels of detail in architecture, engineering, and interior design. A communications plan is also in the works; the project blog at LivingHopeRCA.wordpress.com will certainly be a part, as well as newsletter articles and presentations.

Meanwhile, the Capital Campaign Team has been researching financing options to bridge us from the start of construction through the receipt of all pledges, as well as continuing fundraising outreach. If you have not yet pledged, you can be a part of this renewal of our facility with a contribution of any size (contact the church office for a pledge card); if you have pledged, keep in mind that pledges fulfilled as early as feasible will simplify our financial management.

This is an exciting time for Hope Church as our dreams become reality!