



# HOPE CHURCH NEWS

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

Volume 61, No. 11

December 2018

## In This Issue

Advent .....	2
Adult Education .....	3
Caring for Creation .....	3
New Members .....	4-5
Children's Ministry .....	5
WSN Update .....	6
Poetry Corner .....	7
Events & Announcements .....	8-9
Facility Strategy .....	10
Lectionary .....	10
And Finally .....	11

## Inserts:

- *December Calendar*
- *Wisdom of the Wounded Calendar*

**The deadline for the January newsletter is Tuesday, December 11.**

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



## Christmas Offering to support Doctors Without Borders in Yemen

Médecins Sans Frontières, MSF or Doctors Without Borders, was founded to bring medical professionals together to not only provide aid in war zones, but to talk about what they saw. In spite of the risks, this group refused to watch in silence. They believed that silence could kill, making those that watched complicit in the atrocities. They hoped that by bringing abuses to light, they could help bring them to an end.

In recent months MSF has been living out this mission in Yemen in the face of increased bombings and heavy ground fighting. They have recently made the very difficult decision to close down some of their clinics to insure the safety of their staff but the need to provide quality medical care is only increasing, creating yet another major humanitarian crisis. The Board of Deacons has decided to designate the 2018 Christmas Offering to Doctors Without Borders for the ongoing work in and around Yemen. Gifts may be made at any time using the Christmas offering envelope or by noting "Christmas Offering" or "Doctors Without Borders" on the memo line of your check.

## 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 16 for those who live local. Enrich your Advent season by sharing Christmas cards with these members:

- |                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • LeVada Bombe               | • Dick & Norma Noordijk |
| • Ted & Shirley Bosch        | • Rae Pearson           |
| • Dan DeGraaf                | • Stan Rock             |
| • Helen DeWeerd              | • Barbara Schmitt       |
| • Peggy Fitzgerald           | • Barbara Stockman      |
| • Marjorie French            | • Trudy VanderHaar      |
| • Pellebon-Smith Family      | • Marlin VanderWilt     |
| • Ellen Hale                 | • Terry VandeWater      |
| • Eddie Haworth              | • Rowland & Jane Van Es |
| • Betty Hildore              | • Josh Vis              |
| • Elsie Howard               | • Lila Vohlken          |
| • Mary Martin                |                         |
| • Rode Molla & Endrias Assen |                         |

## Additional Advent Opportunities

### Advent Organ Recital

Join us this year on the first Sunday of Advent, to bring in the new season with our annual Advent Organ recital, on Sunday, December 2 at 5pm.

Rhonda will be joined this year by local musicians Jordan VanHemert on saxophone and Lauren Garza on viola. Rhonda and colleagues will perform a few ensemble pieces, based on Advent and Christmas themes. Rhonda will play some solo organ works, incorporating well-known seasonal tunes, as well as tunes that may be new to you. There will also, as in previous years, be a chance for us all to sing together some familiar, and not-so-familiar Advent and Christmas hymns, with organ and instrument accompaniment. Come join us the first Sunday in December for an hour of music to get you in the Advent mood!

**Please note:** On Dec. 2, there will be a second bus pick up at 4:20 pm at Resthaven-40th St., 4:30 pm at Freedom Village, and 4:40 pm at Warm Friend.

### Saint Nicholas Breakfast

Please join us before worship at **10:00 am on Sunday, December 9** to celebrate a Saint Nicholas Breakfast.

Children will meet Saint Nicholas during worship and be able to visit with him during the breakfast. We will enjoy scrambled eggs, pig-in-a-blankets, and oranges. Please have children bring an extra shoe to leave for Saint Nicholas to fill with a treat. **Call the office to sign up!**

### Gift of Hope Sale

On Sunday, December 9, products from the Gift of Hope women's program of the Haiti Foundation Against Poverty will be available for purchase in the Gathering Area. Purchasing these fabric and jewelry items provides much needed income for the women in this program, which allows them to provide for their families, and some have even been able to provide help to other families. Samples of the products can be viewed at [giftofhopehaiti.org](http://giftofhopehaiti.org).

### Young Adult Open House

If you are post high school to age 30, in Holland for Christmas, please come to a special Christmas Eve Reception on Monday, Dec. 24. It will be in the Hope Church Gathering Area from 10:00 - 11:00 p.m. before the Candlelight Service in the sanctuary. There will be cookies, cider and hot chocolate! Reconnect with past members of Fish Club and High Hopes!

More information regarding Advent services and activities can be found in the **enclosed insert**.

## Tree of Light 2018: Gifts and Greetings

Hope Church is again supporting families within our church and community in helping with Christmas gifts for children and parents. Your response last year to the switch to gift cards was much appreciated, and we are continuing with that this year, asking you to purchase and contribute \$25 gift cards along with a Christmas card. The process will go like this:

### Hope Church Christmas Gift Card Project

1. Remove a tag from the tree on December 2 or 9
2. Purchase a \$25 gift card and a greeting card from Meijer, Target, or Walmart
3. Write greetings and blessings for the Holidays and New Year in the card
4. Place gift card in the envelope with greeting card. **DO NOT SEAL ENVELOPE**
5. Return **UNSEALED** envelope with contents to Hope Church
6. Deadline is **Sunday, December 16**
7. Hope Church will deliver all cards to Hope Church families and local ministries.

Our goal is **60** gift cards! – so your support will be appreciated. Many service organizations have now moved toward requesting that gift cards be donated so that parents can make decisions together about gifts for their families. Just as we do, these parents enjoy the opportunity to go shopping and to wrap presents for their families. Just as we do, these parents enjoy knowing that the gifts under their tree reflects some of their love and individual attention. So we realize that it may not be quite as enjoyable initially for us to purchase “just” gift cards, but what we can all do is consider the extra joy we are providing to those who are empowered to make choices about their family Christmas celebration. And please note: the personal Christmas card that you send is a very important part of this project! Please make a point to express your greetings of love and joy for the season, which will be a gift of support and blessing for our neighbors. God's blessings to all of you for your generosity in supporting this project, as we join together our gifts and prayers to express the love of God in our community. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

## Adult Education: December

Sundays, 9:40-10:40 am

December 2:	Congregational Meeting: Budget Discussion
December 9:	Saint Nicholas Celebration
December 16:	Lectionary Bible Study led by Pastor Jill Russell and Pastor Gordon Wiersma
December 23 & 30:	No classes

## Caring for Creation

Peter Boogaart, Caring for Creation Co-coordinator

Sociologists tell us that Americans now spend 90% of their time indoors. Spiritual mentors, however, note the importance of engagement with nature. Beings made from the dust of the earth lose something of their very soul when separated from nature. The following narrative from Dave and Janice Chase conveys well the joys and values of engaging intimately with the natural world. Think of your own stories to tell.

*~Peter Boogaart*

### Our Life on the Water

Time on the water has been a factor in our lives from an early age. Both of us grew up in families that enjoyed nature and spent time on the waters of Michigan. This love of the outdoor life has continued on in our marriage and has produced a wonderful variety of memories.

While sailing in a small boat with young children has its challenges, we watched our young daughters enjoy activities such as fishing, swimming, and collecting blueberries in Lake Huron's beautiful North Channel. The beauty of pine scattered islands sprinkled with brown to pink granite cliffs was enhanced by seeing our girls adapt to tight living quarters on a small boat.

As our daughters grew to adulthood and married, we had the pleasure of encouraging our grandchildren to enjoy nature. Through sailing, kayaking, swimming, and hiking, their enjoyment, understanding, and respect for nature grew.

Now we continue to have experiences such as viewing wildlife at close range from our kayaks to tropical sunsets and night sailing passages filled with the majesty of the constellations and northern lights. We have seen the beauty of Michigan's Great Lakes and inland waters as well as that of the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico as our sailing adventures took us farther from home.

Life on the water has not always been a joyful escape, since we have experienced tedious boat maintenance in hot, tropical environments, stressful days at anchor in winter gales and tropical storm Josephine, and seeing trash from the Atlantic wash up on an uninhabited island in the northern Bahamas.

Throughout all, we do treasure our time on the water and embrace the beauty of nature. We are ever mindful of the responsibilities placed on us to be good stewards of our world.

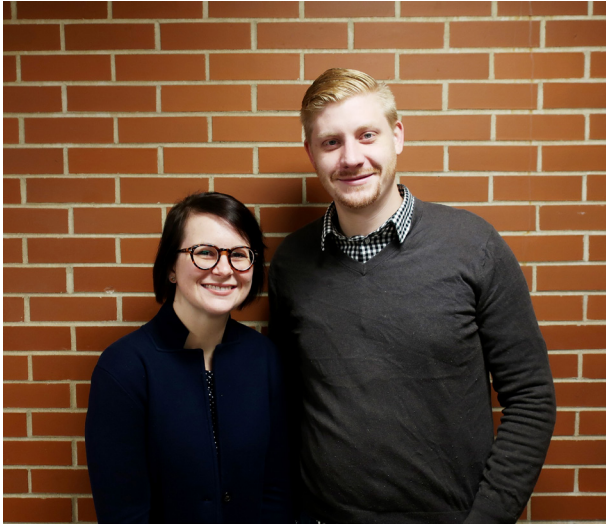
Caring for Creation is so much more than an easy to say catch phrase. It demands effort and work to protect the world in which we inhabit.

*~David and Janice Chase*

## Hope Church Welcomes New Members

These new members were welcomed into the fellowship of Hope Church on November 18 during the 11 a.m. worship service. Please take the time to welcome these individuals into the family of Hope Church.

### Jared & Tatjcha Lambers



**Jared and Tatjcha Lambers** join by reaffirmation of faith and profession of faith. Jared is a Quoting manager at JR Automation (Holland) and Tatjcha is a preschool Spanish immersion teacher at Zeeland Christian School. In their free time, they enjoy walking their dogs and working on home projects.

### Trey Tirpak



**Trey Tirpak** joins by transfer from Central Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, MI. Though born and raised on the island of O'ahu Hawai'i, Trey attended Calvin College for his undergrad in Christian Religion, and is now a second year seminarian at Western Theological Seminary; therefore, Trey reads too much nonfiction. Trey enjoys chatting, especially over food, as well as traveling with his boyfriend Cameron.

### Bill & Sue Hondorp



**Bill & Sue Hondorp** join by transfer from Third Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, MI. They moved to Holland in May of 2017. They have been summer residents for many years but now call Holland home base. They plan on dividing their time between Holland and Palm Coast, FL. Sue is a retired teacher from Forest Hills Public Schools where she taught in the ESL program and Bill is a semi-retired attorney with Smith, Haughey, Rice and Roegge where he has practiced for 42 years. They are looking forward to becoming involved in community activities.



## Pat & Dave Van Wylen



**Pat and Dave Van Wylen** join by transfer from Northfield United Methodist Church, Northfield, MN. Pat and Dave both work at Hope College, Pat as Hope's Global Travel Program Coordinator and Dave as the Dean for Natural and Applied Sciences. They have three children and one grandchild.

## Leon VanRees



**Leon VanRees** joins by transfer from First Presbyterian Church, Muskegon, MI. He calls Biglow, MN his childhood hometown. Moves were made to Sandborn, IA, Chicago, IL and he settled in Muskegon, MI for 58 years before coming to Holland. Leon graduated from Calvin, then served in the Army Quarter Master Corp during the Korean War. He finished his education at Western Michigan, receiving his Master's Degree in Political Science. Today Leon is an avid reader of political science, history and theology. He enjoys all kinds of music and riding his electric bike, meandering on the Muskegon trails.

## Children's Ministry

Jocelyn Van Heest, Children's Ministry Director

### Christmas Ornaments for the Children

Each year the younger children (pre-school through elementary ages) are encouraged to take an ornament home with them from Hope Church. These ornaments will be available from the tree displayed in the Gathering Area and will be available beginning December 9th. Enjoy them on your tree at home.

### Church School

The church school children will be participating in some special Advent activities during the season. They will be learning about how God's family had been waiting and anticipating the coming of the Christ child. On December 9th they will be attending the St. Nicholas breakfast celebration along with their families.

Special schedule note: There will be **no** church school on December 23rd or 30th.

### Children in Worship

As we begin the Advent season the worship centers are hearing stories of waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Each 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.

**Children in Worship will meet each Sunday in Advent. The children will remain in the sanctuary on December 30th for the family service except for the pre-school and K-1st grade worship centers.**

### Special Notes about Advent Activities

- Please remember to sign up for the St. Nicholas brunch by December 2.
- We especially encourage young families to go caroling on December 16th with other Hope Church members. The people we visit love to see the children!
- Our unrehearsed pageant will be enjoyed at the **Family Christmas Eve service at 5:30 December 24**. Costumes will be available Sunday mornings on December 16 and 23 and also before the family service. We hope this will make the day a little easier for your families. **Grandparents and families of young children visitors—visitors are invited to take part in the pageant too! Come 15 minutes early to the family service and we will find a costume for the child and give them a few instructions about the pageant and they may enjoy the experience with the other children.**

## Washington School Neighbors: Spread Simple Kindness

Lisa Kasten, Neighborhood Connector



### Washington School Neighbors

I have been blessed with a job that allows me to connect with my neighbors, and those in this community. I have seen those who struggle, those who flourish and others that just exist. One of the pieces of my job is to support a group of neighbors who desire to play a more invested role in their community, called Block Connectors. We meet once a month and talk about upcoming WSN hosted events within our neighborhood and community, resources available and also discuss concerns that they feel need to be addressed. Block Connectors support a smaller group of neighbors and act within the three main roles of: connecting, communicating and gathering with those who live in a designated block. Every month I look forward to gathering with these neighbors and often try to challenge them in ways that will help them better connect with residents on their block.

We live in a time where we cannot escape the feeling that we have a disconnected society. It is easy to feel overwhelmed, discouraged and uncertain about the future that we are building for those that will come after us. I started thinking about ways to spread a little kindness in the Washington School Neighborhood. Sometimes taking a smaller piece of a community and addressing a specific issue seems less daunting than looking at the big picture and feeling helpless to change any of it.

I went out and bought several packs of blank note cards. I challenged my Block Connectors to each deliver five notes of appreciation, encouragement or well wishes to neighbors on their block. I took out barriers that may make this challenge harder for some, by saying that they do not have to sign the notes, but could. They did not even have to know the name of the neighbor that they deliver the note to. I simply wanted them to think about the residents on their block, maybe someone who does not have a support system, and extend a note saying "I see you, you are heard and appreciated". Sometimes an unexpected gesture of kindness is all we need to keep going and fighting for a better future.

I would like to extend the same offer to all of you. If you would be willing to deliver five notes to your neighbors, with messages that can encourage and uplift, I will provide the note cards. My Block Connectors all chose to participate in this challenge, so over the months of November and December there will be over 35 notes of kindness given out in the WSN neighborhood. Every little piece of kindness that can be shared has the ability to spread.

To receive the note cards, please email me at: [lisa@washingtonschoolneighbors.com](mailto:lisa@washingtonschoolneighbors.com)

If you live in the WSN neighborhood, I will drop them at your home. If you live outside of the WSN Neighborhood, I will leave them in the Hope Church office with your name attached so you can pick them up at your convenience.

If all we do is spread a little kindness in this community, maybe to someone who really needs some encouragement, it is enough that we try to do something.

*"Unexpected kindness is the most powerful, least costly, and most underrated agent of human change." – Bob Kerrey*

[WashingtonSchoolNeighbors.com](http://WashingtonSchoolNeighbors.com)

[Facebook.com/WashingtonSchoolNeighbors](https://Facebook.com/WashingtonSchoolNeighbors)

# Poetry Corner

hosted by Randy Smit and Rhonda Edgington

I'm not sure when or how I first found myself in one of Laurie Baron's writing circles, but whatever the circumstance, her gracious spirit put me at ease. Then the intriguing prompts and quotes she kept pulling out of her basket or notebook inspired me to begin writing, and the welcoming energy of the group encouraged us all to share our work together. Since then, we've sat together writing all over town, with many different groups of people, and I've only grown in appreciation for her gifts. In addition to her skill in leading writing groups, she is a profound writer herself, and a thoughtful editor, who has helped many of us with our not-quite-there-yet pages. Now it's our turn to listen, and her turn to share some of her words with us, in a poem especially suited to this season.

~Rhonda (for R&R)

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Here's one of my favorite poems from Elizabeth Alexander that makes me want to shout, "Preach it, sister!" I love the way the speaker comments on her voice rising, love the simple, packed words and the urgency that builds to the final question, which has haunted me since the first time I read it.

## Ars Poetica #100

Poetry is what you find  
in the dirt in the corner,

overhear on the bus, God  
in the details, the only way

to get from here to there.  
Poetry (and now my voice is rising)

is not all love, love, love,  
and I'm sorry the dog died.

Poetry (here I hear myself loudest)  
is the human voice,

and are we not of interest to each other?  
*by Elizabeth Alexander*

And here's one of mine. Something about the coming of the winter solstice and the beginning of Advent has always touched me deeply. It's a subject I keep coming back to in my writing, but maybe this short poem says it best.

## A Northern Grace

One day past the longest night  
and Earth still breathing.

Even before the baby light  
becoming. Our tables can be readied  
now, for celebration, our impulse joy

and trying again. Do you  
feel this turning too?  
*by Laurie Baron*

## Events and Announcements

### Winter Cancellations

Be sure to check the Hope Church website blog and Facebook for any cancellations due to weather!

### Women's Circle Meetings

**Circle 1** will meet at Hope Church on Wednesday Dec. 5, at 9:30 A.M. in Commons 1.

**Circle 2** will meet on Wednesday, December 5 at 9:30 A.M. in Commons 2.

**Circle 4's** Christmas Potluck Dinner will be held on December 5, 2018 at Kathy Sheridan's home, 390 Fairhill Court, Holland. Dinner is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Please bring a dish to pass and a wrapped Christmas ornament as a gift exchange. Guests are welcome but please call Kathy if you are bringing a guest. Please call if you are a Circle 4 member and you can not make the dinner, call Kathy Sheridan.

### Coffee Time at Resthaven-40th St.

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 Resthaven-

40th St. on Tuesday, December 11, 2018, at 10:30 a.m. Mark your calendar, and come for an hour, all are welcome!

### Pizza Sunday

The December Pizza Sunday will be Sunday, December 16.

### Hope Church Readers

Hope Church Readers will meet on Wednesday, December 19th, at 1:00pm in Commons 2. We will be discussing the book, Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine, by Gail Honeyman. Our discussion leader will be Claudia Berry, and our hostesses will be Nancy Rock and Barbara Bright. New members are always welcome! For more information call Lauren Heyboer.

**The church office will be closed on Tuesday, Dec. 25 for the Christmas holiday, and on Tuesday, Jan. 1 for the New Year's Day holiday.**

### 2019 Offering Envelopes

Envelopes for 2019 offerings will be available for pick-up in the Gathering Area in late December. They are

displayed alphabetically. If you are unable to be in worship and need your envelopes mailed, please call the 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.

### At Home with the Word 2018-2019

An electronic version of the daily Bible readings for the coming year (Advent 2018-Advent 2019) can be found on the Hope Church website. Printed copies are available at the Advent table in the gathering area.

### Sign Up for Email Giving Statements

Opt in to receive your Hope Church giving statements by email instead of by mail! All you need to do is fill out the online form with your name and the email address you'd like the statements emailed to by going online to: <https://tinyurl.com/emailgiving>.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

20 Betty Arendshorst

29 Helen DeWeerd

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](mailto:office@hopechurchrca.org)



## Todd Kamstra Receives Mental Health Foundation Award

Hope Church member Todd Kamstra, ZPS counselor and advocate for the be nice. program, received the Elizabeth Sarafis Live, Laugh, Love Recognition Award at the Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan annual event. The award recognizes Kamstra's dedication and commitment towards mental health awareness and the be nice. program.

Elizabeth Sarafis served on the Mental Health Foundation Board of Directors from 1998 until she passed away after her battle with cancer in 2012, at the age of 91. Sarafis exemplified what it means to be a true advocate for those struggling with a mental illness, as well as those who have lost a loved one to suicide.

The Elizabeth Sarafis Live, Laugh, Love special recognition award is given each year to a person who demonstrates the mission of the Mental Health Foundation in their everyday life and is recognized for going above and beyond to educate and bring awareness to mental health, stigma reduction, and suicide prevention.

## Thank You

*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,*

*Thank you SO MUCH for making such a big deal over us during our visit to Hope on October 21st. The regard and attention were uplifting and the leftover cake we took home has continued to nourish us as it reminds us of your love. May God bless you all "real good."*

*Peace,*

*~Dave & Char Alexander*

*Thank you to those of you who attended our Election Night- War and Peace- Pipedreams Anniversary concert on Nov. 6 at Hope Church. Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$350 to pass along to Blue Lake public radio, to help with funding for the organ program Pipedreams, in honor of it's 35th anniversary. I also appreciated all who came out on a dark and dreary November evening to enjoy music together, and have been encouraged by your comments of appreciation about that night.*

*~Rhonda Edgington*

*Dear Hope Church Friends,*

*I cannot thank you enough for the beautiful 10th Anniversary celebration you shared with me at the end of October. I was so surprised by the guest speakers that Pastor Gordon arranged and so deeply touched by the kind words of love and appreciation shared by fellow staff, pastoral colleagues, and the personnel committee. I will forever treasure the memories of the day as well as the lovely notes and beautiful gift of the Hope Church cross stain glass window. It is a beautiful addition to our home. I also wanted to add one more word of thanks and that is to my partner in life, Andrew Bunnell. I didn't say so on the day, but my ministry here is only possible because of the way we share in life and parenting together. Because I love being your pastor so much, I am very grateful to him for making it possible for me to serve in this way. I look forward to many, many more years of sharing life and ministry with all of you!*

*Blessings,*

*~Pastor Jill*

*It's Day 2 of our Thanksgiving Basket Distribution and the office is flurry of activity as we hand out turkeys and all the fixings to families to enjoy in their homes. We've currently provided about 650 Thanksgiving meals but expect to have a busy afternoon. We estimate we'll be handing out 900 boxes total. Please share our gratitude with everyone at Hope Church!*

*~Community Action House*

## Hope Church Events on Website

Did you know you can find up to date event information about Hope Church events and community events on our website at [hopechurchrca.org](http://hopechurchrca.org)? Hover over "Events" at the top of the page, and then click "Church Events" or "Community Events." On these pages, you will find a listing of upcoming events. If you click on the title of most events, it will also take you to a page with more information. Under "Events" you can also click "Calendar" which will take you to our church calendar, which is now completely online!

## ministry/committee HIGHLIGHT

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

### Facility Strategy Committee

Dan Fisher, Facility Strategy Committee Chair

A new initiative at Hope Church, the Facility Strategy Committee has as its primary purpose to be intentional about planning for and managing our facility as an asset to our ministry. This charge grew out of what we learned from the Living Hope facility renovation, which necessarily included a number of upgrades, especially to HVAC (heat, ventilation, and air conditioning). While the volunteers of Building & Grounds have done (and continue to do) an admirable job of responding to day-to-day issues and needs, we realized a more strategic view would help us focus future capital projects on new functionality.

While we may never completely eliminate surprises (like the leaking of the north wall of the educational wing or the restoration urgently needed

to the sanctuary and bell tower) and the costs associated, we're working toward minimizing large expenses.

To start, the Facilities Strategy Team is developing a deep understanding of the condition of our many facilities systems through what we call a health assessment. Based on that, we will make plans to keep our systems in good working condition, prolong the life of the systems or equipment, and project when major expenditures will be required. Among the components of our health assessment are roofs, HVAC systems, exteriors walls, interiors, plumbing and electrical, and fire protection; we've also identified sustainability, functionality, historic preservation, and age and disability concerns as perspectives to include.

Our team members include Paul Elzinga, Clare Heyboer, Lois Maassen, Sam Martin, Ben Sikkink, and Dan Fisher. We are also asking other Hope Church members to provide support on one of many of the system health assessments we have targeted for evaluation and planning.

Our church building is one of the oldest churches in Holland, with additions made over the decades as our needs have evolved. Some components are 150 years old; each part of the building uses materials and methods of the decade of construction. Our challenge is complicated, but taking care of our beloved church, keeping it relevant to our current work, congregation, and community, is well worth the effort.

*The next Ministry Highlight will feature the Adult Education Ministry.*

### At Home With the Word

Sunday Lectionary as Daily Bible Readings

#### December 1–December 2, 2018

Saturday Luke 21:29-36  
**Sunday First Sunday of Advent**

#### December 3–9, 2018

Monday Malachi 3:1-4  
 Tuesday Luke 1:68-75  
 Wednesday Luke 1:76-79  
 Thursday Philippians 1:3-8  
 Friday Philippians 1:9-11  
 Saturday Luke 3:1-6  
**Sunday Second Sunday of Advent**

#### December 10–16, 2018

Monday Zephaniah 3:14-16  
 Tuesday Zephaniah 3:17-20  
 Wednesday Isaiah 12:2-6  
 Thursday Philippians 4:4-7  
 Friday Luke 3:7-14  
 Saturday Luke 3:15-18  
**Sunday Third Sunday of Advent**

#### December 17–23, 2018

Monday Micah 5:2-5  
 Tuesday Psalm 80:1-3  
 Wednesday Psalm 80:4-7  
 Thursday Hebrews 10:5-10  
 Friday Luke 1:39-45  
 Saturday Luke 1:46-55  
**Sunday Fourth Sunday of Advent**

#### December 24–30, 2018

Monday Christmas Eve; Isaiah 9:2-7  
 Tuesday Christmas Day; Luke 2:8-20  
 Wednesday Psalm 148  
 Thursday Colossians 3:12-17  
 Friday 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
 Saturday Luke 2:41-52  
**Sunday First Sunday after Christmas**

#### December 31, 2018

Monday Psalm 72:1-7

## and finally

Here's a brief poetry exercise for you to do:

- Take a moment to read the poem in the far-right column. It's a poem I wrote in 2007 titled "Mundane."

- Now, read the poem again. I've developed a habit of always reading poems twice.

- So, what do you think? – or better yet, what do you feel, or notice, or wonder?

OK, that's the poetry exercise; we'll come back to it later.

Over the past several months this column has had an ongoing topic of the pastors delving into the interplay in our faith between action and formation, between living out our faith and nurturing our faith. Identifying and addressing that interplay – which sometimes feels more like a conflict, and sometimes feels more like just one or the other – has struck a chord with many at Hope Church and has been a point of discussion in many settings in our church life.

One of the ways that I have come to see some things about myself in this interplay and tension that exists with action and nurture is that I'm a person who can tend to focus more on thinking and analysis than on reflecting and feeling. Is that something any of you can relate to?! I tend to gravitate toward analyzing faith, or analyzing an issue, and when I've done that analysis then I have a sense of being settled about what I believe and what I will do.

And that all works out pretty well for me, until I run into some matters of life and faith that don't lend themselves so neatly to my analysis and definitive action.

I wasn't particularly aware of that in myself for a long time, but at a point in my life poetry found me and gently demanded that I pay attention

to things like mystery and feeling, images and ambiguity, lament and hope.

Poetry offered me something I didn't know I was missing, and now it is a lifeline for me of exploring the places in me that need to be heard, healed, confronted, felt, nurtured. When I write poetry, I am surprised by what emerges – not because it is good, but because it says things that I wasn't aware were in me. When I read poetry, I am often amazed – amazed by the creativity of humanity and by the way a poem seems to describe and recognize me.

So with all that said, what about the poem I've offered here? I gave you a chance to read it and to feel and wonder about it. Whatever surfaced in you is good and I'd love to hear about it. Now it's my turn.

I shared this poem because it is an Advent/Christmas poem. I didn't know that when I wrote it 10 years ago, but it is. It is an Advent poem because it gives voice to a deep ache about all of the brokenness in life and a deep longing for wholeness. It is a poem set to the tune of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." It is a Christmas poem because it dares to hope, dares to believe. The birth of Christ is not quaint or naïve or wishful thinking; rather, the Incarnation opens me to audacious things like hope and beauty and joy. It is a poem set to the tune of "Joy to the World."

How can it be both? Well, that's just what we've been delving into these past months, isn't it? I invite you in this season to lean into space for longing and yearning; I invite you to lean into joy and hope; I invite you to read a poem and to write one.

And as you, I, we, do so, then also listen for where the Spirit is leading

and calling into the seasons ahead. It may be a calling to make some good things in the world seem mundane.

In Christ's Peace,  
~Pastor Gordon

### MUNDANE

*it is the  
thrill  
of the mundane  
that I long for...*

*the same old news  
of a child  
treasured and fed;*

*the commonplace sight  
of a missile  
rusted from dis-use;*

*the assumption  
of a coral reef  
thriving undisturbed;*

*the plodding repetition  
of lives  
joined in love;*

*the yawn  
when air is sweet  
and water pure;*

*the restful sleep  
that fills  
once anxious hours;*

*the rut  
of faith  
that serves life;*

*the boredom  
of peoples  
living in peace;*

*...it is the  
thrill  
of the mundane  
that I long for*

Hope Church  
77 West 11th Street  
Holland MI 49423

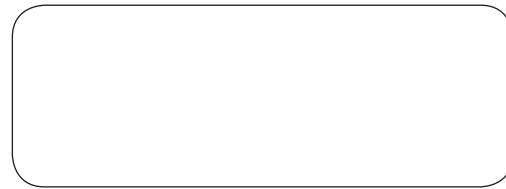


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# Hope Church News

December 2018



## Season of Reconciliation Book Study: January 23, 30 & February 6

Wednesdays, January 23, 30 and February 6, 5:30-6:45: *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of the Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

This year for the season of reconciliation, we will be reading *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of the Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. We will share discussion and a light meal surrounding the lenses by which we see the world around us, the scientific and the spiritual. While we tend to see them in conflict, we miss the intertwined harmony toward a central theme of our need to expand our ecological consciousness and live our reciprocal relationship with our planet and all its inhabitants.

All are invited to be a part of this study, and books will be available starting December 2 and into January for \$15. The books and signup sheet will be in the gathering area.

# December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b>
<b>2 ~ First Sunday of Advent</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Early Worship, <i>Gordon Wiersma</i> <b>9:40 am</b> Church School (children, adults) <b>9:40 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>10:45 am</b> Nursery <b>11 am</b> Worship, <i>Communion</i> <i>Jill Russell, preaching</i> <b>11:15 am</b> Children in Worship <b>4:15 pm</b> Jubilate Choir Rehearsal <b>5 pm</b> Crafts for Kids & Youth Activity <b>5 pm</b> Advent Organ Recital <b>6 pm</b> Dinner	<b>3</b> <b>5 pm</b> Executive Committee <b>6:15 pm</b> Stewardship & Finance	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>6:15 am</b> Men's Breakfast <b>9:30 am</b> Circle 1 <b>9:30 am</b> Circle 2 <b>5 pm</b> Community <b>6:15 pm</b> Carillon Choir <b>6:30 pm</b> Circle 4 <b>7:30 pm</b> Chancel Choir	<b>6</b> <b>2-4 pm</b> Hope Church Nurse <b>7 pm</b> Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9 ~ Second Sunday of Advent</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Early Worship, <i>Linda McFadden</i> <b>9:40 am</b> Gift of Hope Sale <b>9:40 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>10 am</b> St. Nicholas Breakfast <b>10:45 am</b> Nursery <b>11 am</b> Worship, <i>Gordon Wiersma, preaching</i> <b>11:15 am</b> Children in Worship <b>12 pm</b> Second Sunday Snacks <b>4:15 pm</b> Jubilate Choir Rehearsal	<b>10</b> <b>11 am</b> REST Support Group <b>6 pm</b> Spiritual Formation <b>7 pm</b> Consistory with Mission & Social Justice Leaders	<b>11</b> <b>10:30 am</b> Coffee at Resthaven - 40th St.	<b>12</b> <b>6:15 am</b> Men's Breakfast <b>7:35 am</b> Discerning our Future <b>6:15 pm</b> Carillon Choir	<b>13</b> <b>2-4 pm</b> Hope Church Nurse <b>5:30 pm</b> Brim Bunch <b>7 pm</b> Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>5:30 pm</b> Progressive Dinner Youth Christ-mas Party
<b>16 ~ Third Sunday of Advent</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Early Worship, <i>Judith Boogaart</i> <b>9:40 am</b> Church School (children, adults) <b>9:40 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>10:45 am</b> Nursery <b>11 am</b> Worship, <i>Jill Russell, preaching</i> <b>11:15 am</b> Children in Worship <b>12:15 pm</b> Blood Pressure Clinic <b>12:15 pm</b> Pizza Sunday <b>1 pm</b> Congregational Caroling	<b>17</b> <b>12 pm</b> Facility Strategy <b>6:30 pm</b> Christian Education	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <b>6:15 am</b> Men's Breakfast <b>12 pm</b> Building & Grounds <b>1 pm</b> Readers <b>6:15 pm</b> Carillon Choir <b>7:30 pm</b> Chancel Choir	<b>20</b> <b>2-4 pm</b> Hope Church Nurse <b>7 pm</b> Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> <b>10:45 am</b> Nursery <b>11 am</b> Worship, <i>Beth Carroll, preaching</i> <b>11:15 am</b> Children in Worship <b>12:30 pm</b> Caring for Creation <b>12:30 pm</b> Jubilate Choir Rehearsal  <b>No Early Worship, Church School, or Adult Education.</b>	<b>24</b> <b>11 am</b> REST Support Group <b>5:30 pm</b> Service & Pageant <b>10 pm</b> Young Adult Open House <b>11 pm</b> Candlelight Communion Service	<b>25 ~ Christmas</b>  <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>26</b> <b>6:15 am</b> Men's Breakfast <b>6:15 pm</b> Carillon Choir	<b>27</b> <b>9:30 am</b> Newsletter Assembly <b>2-4 pm</b> Hope Church Nurse <b>7 pm</b> Volleyball (FUMC Gym)	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> <b>10:45 am</b> Nursery <b>11 am</b> Worship, <i>Poetry Sunday</i> <b>11:15 am</b> Children in Worship ~only Preschool & K-1 will meet  <b>No Early Worship, Church School, or Adult Education.</b>	<b>31</b>					