

# Visions of Hope

January 15, 2017



F4356 State Hwy 97  
Edgar, WI 54426

**Mission Statement:**

Hope's Mission is to teach the bible and follow Christ's example by giving back to the community and those in need

**Website:**

hope4centralwi.com

**Email:**

hope4centralwi@yahoo.com

Sunday School  
8:45-9:30 am

Bible Study  
8:45-9:15 am

Sunday Worship  
9:30 am

Communion  
1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays

**Pastor:**

David Lathrop  
715-574-1419 (cell)  
715-352-2555 (church)

**Secretary:**

hopelcsec@gmail.com

**Duties List**

**January 22**

January 29

**Ushers**

**Gary Ludwig**

**Andy Yoder**

Gary Bauman

Keith Bauman

**Greeters**

**Pam Ludwig**

Tom & Tammy Kirsch

**Acolyte**

**Madison Borchardt**

Anna Peterson

**Readers**

**Gary Ludwig**

Jerry Anderson

God is both love and justice. He loves us and wants to have an intimate relationship with us, but when we try to hide sin in our hearts, His holiness can't put up with our lies and deceit, and so our relationship suffers. There is nothing we can truly hide from Him. If I buy a candy bar and hide it in my purse until no one is around, do the calories still count? Of course, silly question. So if we sin and no one finds out will we be held accountable? Another silly question. His word promises that He knows and will deal with the hidden things in our life. Ultimately, He decrees that the sins we commit in private will result in publicly recognizable consequences. No matter how much we try to hide our sin it comes to bite us in the end. No pun intended.

Even though we know we can't out sin God's grace, we get caught up in sin and the lies of the devil and we start to doubt the depth of God's mercy for us. God never meant to abandon us to sin, He strenuously works to keep us free from sin and close to Him. However, free will and our own stupidity keeps us apart from our Lord and Savior.

*II Kings 17:9-18 The sons of Israel did things secretly which were not right against the LORD their God. Moreover, they built for themselves high places in all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city. They set for themselves sacred pillars and fertility goddesses on every high hill and under every green tree, and there they burned incense on all the high places as the nations did which the LORD had carried away to exile before them; and they did evil things provoking the LORD. They served idols, concerning which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah through all His prophets and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My servants the prophets." However, they did not listen, but stiffened their neck like their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God. They rejected His statutes and His covenant which He made with their fathers and His warnings with which He warned them. And they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the nations which surrounded them, concerning which the LORD had commanded them not to do like them. They forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God and made for themselves molten images, even two calves, and made a fertility goddess and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and practiced divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him. So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from His sight; none was left except the tribe of Judah.*

II Kings 17:9-18 gives an example of God's dealing with secret sin. Verse 9 speaks of Israel secretly (the word means: trying to cover, act covertly, protect or encase) doing things which were not right against the Lord their God. In verse 13, God warns the people to keep His commandments, but they (v14) stiffened their necks, entered into (v15) vanity, (v16) idolatry and (v17) witchcraft. As a result, God turns His face from them in anger (v18), and condemns them to exile (which means: uncover, remove, stark exposure, make named, to shame).

This passage clearly describes the process of secret sin. When we start out secretly sinning against God -- perhaps intentionally, or perhaps unaware of our errors. God then warns us to respond in repentance and live by His word. Instead, we choose to harden our hearts and become proud, entering into stubbornness and denial as we believe our ways are higher (better) than God's. We think we know better than what God's word has supplied. Who needs that? We are just going to do our own thing, and be in complete control.

In response, God condemns us to the consequences of or sin, in hopes that we will eventually respond and restore our relationship with Him. As a result, on judgment day our sin is exposed publicly and we are humiliated and embarrassed as we fall from our sinful pride. Hopefully, this view of our future brings us to a place where we can finally respond, as our ideas of hiding sin are shattered and we are confronted with the enormity of that sin. If not, then God will continue to increase the consequences and will turn up the heat. Ultimately, if we remain stiff-necked after many rebukes, we will be destroyed suddenly. *Whoever stubbornly refuses to accept criticism will suddenly be destroyed beyond recovery. (Proverbs 29:1)*

The Bible constantly speaks of those who delight in evil and fear exposure (in John 3:20, this word means: refute, confute, rebuke, reprove -> confrontation). *Ecclesiastes 12:14 says that God will judge all that I do, the good and the bad, including every hidden deed.*

We should fear the promise that is given for those who plan on hiding sin. Joshua 7 tells the story of Achan, who directly disobeyed the command of the Lord. He suffered the consequences of Jericho and its inhabitants, because he sought to keep part of Jericho, which God had said should be totally destroyed. Similarly, Psalms 64:5-8 speaks of how God turns the hidden snares and schemes of the wicked against them. So if we directly disobey God and plot acts of hidden sin against others, God will bring the consequences. And a word to the wise tells us not to wait until the last minute to change direction.

There are those who willfully choose to commit their deeds in darkness, and then live in fear of being exposed. And then there are those who seek a relationship with the Father, and want the hidden sins to be brought to the surface so they can be dealt with. Because the wise person knows we can't hide anything from the "All Knowing". The ones who are hiding sin are promised judgment. The ones who repent are encouraged to press for a more intimate relationship with God. A curse to the one is a promise to the other. *Proverbs 7:7-9 calls the first "simple, immature and lacking in judgment" as they walk in the dark, instead of being children of the light.*

To those who are children of light, (which we all want to be, right?) the scripture promises an armor of light which is literally an offensive instrument of war (a weapon against sin and the devil). Other scriptures plead with us to have nothing to do with darkness, but to expose such hidden sins, repent, and thus to enter into self-control and get armored up for battle. But when we dwell in hidden sin, not only do we lose some valuable protection which is also an offensive weapon, but we will also lose our ability to control our sinful life. We lose our protection of our God (through faith, love and hope) and are unable to defend ourselves against the attacks of the enemy, that is, the devil.

Those who live in the promise can rejoice in the light exposing their secret sins, worshipping and thanking God for His awesomeness. *You have placed our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your presence. (Psalms 90:8).* Jesus even promises it as part of the discipleship process, exhorting us not to fear man but God. Indeed, as a child of the light we should be part of the exposing process and encouraging God to continue the process in us, to never give up and to always be our champion, which is His promise to us. Proverbs speaks of the health and nourishment of the body and compassion and mercy of our soul. These are the benefit of confessing and forsaking sin. *1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* And acknowledging and confessing our sins, and then repenting and forsaking our sins will result in an intimate love relationship with God.

When we choose to live in secret sin we are bound in fear of the final judgment and separation from God. It even has physical and emotional/psychological consequences on our well-being. But, living as a child of the light not only offers us a superior lifestyle of intimacy and love with the Father, but it also supplies us with defensive and offensive protection against the attacks of the enemy, physically, spiritually and emotionally. To choose to live in secret sin is to choose to live in defeat and bondage, kept apart from God. We must choose to live in the light, enjoying the life God has given us. We must seek out and expose our sins and the influence that sin has on our souls, and we need to be a healthy and fruitful child of God.

*Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

Your servant in Christ  
Rosie Schilling



**PRAYER CONCERNS:** Please remember the following people in your prayers

Elaine Mielke—broken ankle  
Betty Spring—cancer—friend of the Ludwig's  
John Hamann—home recuperating from hip surgery  
Jim Decker—had stem cell transplant, doing good—friend of the Streckert's  
Leroy Syring—recovering from a stroke  
Emery Rahm—cancer—friend of the Viegut's  
Scott Campbell—stage two leukemia—relation to the Streckert's  
Bonnie Blake—home recovering  
Don Hansen—Bladder cancer—undergoing chemo treatments  
Paulette Kroll—Myleloid Leukemia—receiving chemo treatments in Milwaukee  
Bill Brayton—DeEtta Peterson's brother  
Amy—cancer—friend of Barb Mohr-Borchardt  
Dylan, Logan Weichelt—sons of Bryan & Stacey  
Sawyer Mueller—microcephaly—Daryl & Beth's son  
Jennifer Bohman—prayers of healing  
Dennis Bohman—Colby Nursing Home

# Hope's Happenings

Sunday:	January 15	Attendance	106
Offering:	Regular		\$2075.00
	Building		\$95.00
	Sunday School		\$14.00
	Loose		\$8.00
	El Salvador trip		\$610.00
	Driveway		\$30.00
	Total		\$2832.00



Children's Choir  
will resume practice on  
February 5, 12.  
They will also be singing on  
February 19

## The Bulletin Board

- Sunday, January 22—Blanket tying following worship service
- Please have all items for the February calendar in to Barb by Monday, January 23. Thank you
- Sunday, January 29—Annual meeting
  - ALL items for report are due to Barb by January 18

**We are producing a pictorial directory for Hope Lutheran Church. The sitting session is being paid for through the treasury.**

There will be no cost to you for the sitting session and each family that has their photo taken will receive a free 8 X 10 portrait. If you choose to purchase additional photos we will be getting a 20% discount for scheduling this photo session in the winter, plus \$10.00 off each photo and then another \$5.00 if you bring a nonperishable food item to fill the pantry of "Feed the Need". We need to fill up 60 time slots, if we don't they might cancel the photo shoot. Please call Rosie Schilling @ 715-352-2884.

There are reminder cards at church on the table with all the other information on the photo session. If you are willing to be a "host/hostess" for any 4 hour time slot, please contact me, Rosie Schilling @ 715-352-2884. Tammy Kirsch is my co-pilot. So if you can't reach me please give her a call 715-687-3135.



Our mission project for January is called "Sweet Dreams". We are in need of **Children's pajamas (winter or summer) and children's books** (good condition) to fill our pillowcases. These items will be given to children who have been removed from drug-related or domestic violence homes. Many times, because of the situation at home, the children when removed, have nothing to take with them. A pillowcase filled with the items will bring them comfort.

If you would like to help make blankets the Women of Hope will be doing so Sunday January 22nd after church. A shopping list is on the coffee bar. A tub is available nearby. Any questions call Audrey Kamenick 715-352-2714 or e-mail [kamenick@frontier.com](mailto:kamenick@frontier.com). Ending date is January 29. Thank you



We would like to thank everyone for the food items. You always have items we use every week.  
Thank you from the *Spencer Food Pantry*

Thanks to the members of Hope for your generous donation of food you again gave to our Circle of Joy. It will help us through the long winter. God Bless all of you!  
*Athens Circle of Joy, Nathlie Venzke Charpin*

The Edgar FFA would once again like to thank you for your support of our meal packaging event. On December 22 the entire high school packaged over 50,000 meals in under 2 hours! Your generosity is going to help with hunger right in Marathon County. The event couldn't have gone any better. Once again, we would like to thank you. We hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! (see poster on bulletin board)

*Hanna Lang, President, Alexandria McKibber, Sentinel*