

# Visions of Hope

January 8, 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 15**

January 22

**Ushers**

**Scott Bauman**

**Rick Bradley**

Gary Ludwig

Andy Yoder

**Greeters**

**Rick & Sandy Bradley**

Pam Ludwig

**Acolyte**

**Anna Fehlhaber**

Madison Borchardt

**Readers**

**Michelle Bauman**

Gary Ludwig

*"Peter came up and said to [Jesus], 'Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times'" .Matthew 18:21-22*

No one may presume to approach God and ask forgiveness, who is not pure and free from all resentment. If we are withholding forgiveness from those who have truly and humbly sought our pardon, then we are claiming rights for ourselves to which we have no title. We are saved only by God's grace, and that reality must show itself in all our actions. If we have been forgiven by the Lord in Christ, we will forgive others. "This condition is added, that no one may presume to approach God and ask forgiveness, who is not pure and free from all resentment...Christ did not intend to point out the cause, but only to remind us of the feelings which we ought to cherish towards our fellow man, when we desire to be reconciled to God.

I am going to hold myself up as the worst example of being forgiving. I have held so much resentment and anger in my heart it's like an acid eating away at me. Sometime the resentment is so overpowering that my heart actually burns. How can I forgive? I know this person broke one or more of the Ten Commandments, I have proof!!! So herein lies the rub; I ask the Lord to forgive my sins every day, because we all sin every day. But my Lord looks at me and sighs: "my child, you have not forgiven those who have wronged you so why to seek forgiveness from me"? In my mind I am giving sin different levels of "bad". Is that my place? Am I to judge just how bad anyone's sin is? When writing these devotions it may seem as though I have all the answers, and that is far from the truth. I am the biggest sinner of all because my heart has been hardened by someone who could care less if I forgive them or not. The only burden I carry around is my own sense of guilt because I am withholding forgiveness. Why am I letting that person suck the joy out of my life? If I can forgive her then the burden is lifted from me and I can be right with God again. Can someone else cause you to sin? Of course! But it is up to us to look deep into our hearts and choose what is most important; to keep that grudge going or to cleanse our heart and soul and be one with God again. I am letting go of the hurt and resentment because I refuse to let anyone get between me and my God.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we must think carefully about what we are saying so that prayer does not become a repetitious exercise. If we pray from deep in our hearts, our praying can be used by the Spirit to change us. Thinking through the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer as we ask our Father to forgive us is particularly important, for in this prayer Jesus explains that God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of others are connected. We ask Him to "forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). Moreover, our Savior goes on to tell us that "if [we] do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will [our] Father forgive [our] trespasses".

This text seems difficult at first reading. Does Jesus mean that our forgiveness earns the Lord's pardon? If God will not forgive us if we do not forgive others, is salvation not all of grace? The answer to both questions is no. Christ does not speak of the manner by which we merit or even receive forgiveness, but He teaches us about the redeemed person's state of reconciliation in light of God's grace. As fallen people in Adam, we have nothing good in ourselves to bring before the Lord. Our only hope is to abandon all pretenses that we deserve leniency from God and to reject any thought that the Father owes us pardon and favor. We just need to throw ourselves on God's mercy (Luke 18:9-14). When we do this, leaning solely on the grace of God, we see that we must likewise have merciful feelings toward those who have wronged us. It is arrogant indeed to withhold our forgiveness from those who ask for it sincerely. Since our infinitely holy Creator forgives the repentant, how can we who are unclean apart from God's mercy in Christ dare to refuse others our pardon?

There is a reason that Jesus taught us that prayer. He knew even then how devastating holding a grudge can be for us. How much time and energy is put into our resentment, time and energy that could be used to pray, praise, worship and give thanks to our Lord and Savior. Don't let your resentment steal your joy from life.

Simply put, if we do not forgive, we are setting a higher bar than God does. We are exalting ourselves as better than other sinners in the Lord's eyes, revealing that we have likely not understood the grace of God at all. We show that we are not relying on the Father's promises alone but are instead trying to bring something before God to earn His favor. We are depicting an attitude that says, "I deserve God's forgiveness, but others do not." In summary, if we persist in withholding our forgiveness from repentant people, we reveal that we do not know Christ. Those of us who refuse to forgive and forget the injuries which have been done to us, we devote ourselves willingly and deliberately to destruction (that is death and the devil), and knowingly prevent God from forgiving us.

*Ephesians 2: 8-10 for by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.*

We deserve nothing, but God gives us everything. We are weak and foolish human beings, but God created us. He can be forgiving, because we have been forgiven. So simple but so important to stay reconciled with God.

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

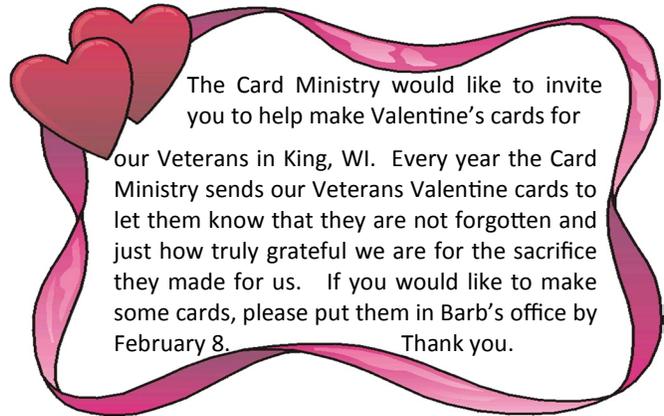
Update from Gloria Everhard and Kim Heller—Jodi Krause's cousins—Kim is "cancer free" and Gloria is also finishing her radiation treatments. Thank you for the prayers!



for your generous donation of food to the CUP (Community United Pantry) in Colby. Thank you and God's continued blessings to you! *Ivadeane Abegglen, Director*

## Hope's Happenings

Sunday:	January 8	Attendance	101
Offering:	Regular		\$3155.00
	Building		\$220.00
	Mission		\$480.00
	Sunday School		\$7.00
	Loose		\$12.00
	El Salvador trip		\$200.00
	Driveway		\$20.00
	Total		\$4094.00



## The Bulletin Board

- Sunday, January 15—Council will meet immediately following worship service
- Sunday, January 22—Blanket tying following worship service
- Sunday, January 29—Annual meeting



**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 will be collecting NEW pillowcases, blankets, small stuffed toys, small children's books, and pajamas (toddler to teen) The 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.

You may donate one item or all. 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



## Aluminum Cans

Two checks have been sent to FCA for a total of \$80. WOW!!!!  
I will be collecting cans anytime. If you have any questions please contact Jodi Krause at 715-321-2285 or [jodikrause@frontier.com](mailto:jodikrause@frontier.com)  
Thank you