

Visions of Hope

July 16, 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 Worship
9:30 am

Communion
1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays

Interim Pastor:

Mark Reiff
920-634-1246 (cell)
715-352-2555 (church)

Secretary:

hopelcsec@gmail.com

Duties List

July 16

July 23

Ushers

Gary Bauman

Russ Bauman

Andy Yoder

Keith Bauman

Greeters

Elaine Mielke

Daryl & Beth Mueller

Readers

Chad Bender

Beth Mueller

Acolyte

Anna Fehlhaber

Korbyn Bauman



Perhaps the most important and rewarding aspect of ordained ministry is the ministry of pastoral care. It is undoubtedly the most personal of ministries as the pastor calls on people during times of great personal disease or distress. It is also a ministry that seeks to serve and build up the body of Christ through conversation and prayer, compassion and hope. It is a ministry of presence to people in deepest need.

Having stated this I want to have you know that I am not a clairvoyant. I do not have ESP nor am I anything like Karnak the Magnificent on the old Johnny Carson Show. In other words, I cannot read minds.

You have to do your part. If there is a need for pastoral care let me or Barb Giese, in the office, know of your need. It is only when we know that we can respond to your need. For the most part, you, the people of Hope Lutheran Church, have been very good in keeping me and the office informed about your pastoral needs and I am grateful for that.

But, secondly, I want everyone to be aware that my office door is always open to anyone who needs or wants to see me. I am here as your pastor and, of course, the word "pastor" comes from Latin and means shepherd. I am here to help shepherd you, through word and sacrament, through conversation and prayer, on your faith journey through life.

There are many times when people are plagued by a myriad of questions, most often during times of illness, conflict, transition, or change. During these times, you might be seeking direction and deeper answers to one of life's many rough patches.

I cannot say that I or any pastor has all the answers. But I can say this: I am called to help you meet those questions, even in the most difficult times, with the life-giving embrace of God's compassion, mercy, and love. My door is always open, just "knock and it will be opened unto you."

Pax Christi,
Mark Reiff+

I heard someone say their relative was an ala carte Christian. As the conflict rages on about religious freedom versus the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans; it underscores the problems created by a la carte Christianity.

A la carte Christians choose which doctrines within the bible that they want to follow, all the while ignoring passages they don't like, or worse, those that apply directly to them. When presented with a menu of biblical teachings, these a la carte Christians ignore the uncomfortable fact that adultery and lying are part of the big ten: the Ten Commandments, that is. When ordering from the menu, these Christians seem to say: "I'll take the Ten Commandments, hold the adultery, coveting and lying. Can I have 'keep holy the Sabbath day' on the side? There's a game on Sunday."

The Ten Commandments are a summary of the teachings in the Old Testament. The first four commandments deal with man's relationship to God, and the last six deal with man's interpersonal relationships with one another. While many Christians believe all of us are sinners, some just focus upon the Leviticus passage, "If man lays with a man, as he lays with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination"? Or why just focus on adultery as the worst possible sin or murder? Why is any particular sin worse than the other sins highlighted in the Ten Commandments?

Some a la carte Christians suggest that the focus on the Leviticus passage is because "homosexuality" is an abomination, and therefore the worse of all sins. Yet, the Bible also says: "These six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among his brothers and sisters in Christ".

There are many passages that list other abominations including adultery, improper animal sacrifice and dietary restrictions. You get the point; many acts are an abomination according to teachings in the bible, not just "homosexuality." So, the a la carte Christian's argument is that somehow Exodus, or any other passage about "adultery," has some special "worst sin sign", when the simple truth is that, all sin is an abomination to our Lord and Savior. We can, as Christian, love the sinner and hate the sin. I certainly hope this is true as the Lord examines my sins.

Either you are a Christian, having complete faith in Christ and taking everything in the bible menu, or you are a Christian who believes that passages cannot be taken literally, and often are not what they seem. What a la

carte Christians must accept, is that all sin is the same, no worse, no better. Some Christians ignore the sins and the Ten Commandments because those things tend to make them uncomfortable. A true follower of Christ cannot ignore the sins they don't want to follow. We must stand strong against the devil and his evil ways.

Christ's simple call to his disciples that *"if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"* (Matt 16:24) is completely ignored within today's Christian world. We all bring our expectations, greed, and desires to the foot of the Cross and then demand that God accept the whole package.

Since the beginning Christians demand forgiveness and salvation while ignoring the message God provides for us in His Holy word. Ala Carte Christianity has been practiced since the beginning of the church (please read 1 Corinthians for a good example), it also seems to have become the standard in today's Christian world. People approach the altar expecting it to be laid out as buffet of God's requirements of which they can pick and choose what they might deign to put on their plates.

"Yes, I want a side of God's love but leave off His justice, please."

"Mmmmm, give me a couple spoonful's of sweet compassion but no, there is no need for God's judgement on my theological plate.

"Slather on the justification but who needs a side of relinquishing lordship to Jesus?"

"Yeah, I can enjoy a good dessert of Christ's sacrifice for sin but who wants to hear about Hell?"

"Give me a healthy scoop of sanctification so I can cover over the immoral behavior I refuse to give up."

"I can't get enough of that salvation but that righteousness is too sour for me to tolerate."

"Yep, give me some good old contemporary Christian music...it is so much better to hear the gospel sung than to read the Word of God."

Wasn't Jesus' requirement clear enough? He expects us to deny ourselves, to empty ourselves of everything as He did, and to take up the cross upon which we must sacrifice everything as we constantly follow him. Luke 9:23, the parallel passage to this inserts the word "daily" into the commandment. Every morning we have a choice, to choose to follow Christ in abject obedience, or to prefer to be the lords of our own destinies.

So today we have a weak Church filled with weak Christians. The picking and choosing has helped splinter Christ's Body into millions of little pockets. Even within any single denomination, there are microcosms of smorgasbord belief that actually separate church from church. Although they may pay lip-service homage to the fact, Jesus is not the Lord of His Church, at least in the hearts of many (maybe even most) Christians. The underlying root of this is a desire for Lordship but no desire for Surrender.

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works....' (Matt 16:24-27)

One can boil this passage down to Jesus saying, "Pick a side!" If you want to follow Him, you must deny yourself. If you don't, you are not following Him and your faith is just a pretense. If you want to follow Him, you must take up your cross daily. You must choose to sacrifice anything that gets between you and Him. If you don't, you are not following Him. If you want to have a cushy life instead of letting it be dedicated to Him, then you are not following Him. Pick a side!

The Christian life is not a buffet that we choose from. When we surrender our all to Christ, He gets to put the things on our plate that He knows will profit us and His kingdom. We must accept what He gives us and let our faith and trust in God's incredible wisdom override our petty and limited human vision. There can never be true service without complete submission. There can never be Christ's Lordship without a total surrender of ourselves. For us to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, there has to be a relinquishing of our will and follow God's will instead.

It is all too common for people to apply the name of "Christian" to themselves, without any desire to abandon moral failures. This is the false pretenses of the people of the Church today. There is a Sunday morning persona which is all pious and loving and then there is a "rest-of-the-week" persona which indulges in immorality, hatred, lies, faithlessness, and filthy talk. The name of Christ is tarnished in the world. Almost reminds us of Paul's admonition to the pious Jews in *Romans 2:21-24*, *you therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.*

The call to Christianity is certain and specific. We are not invited to a buffet spread out at the foot of the Cross. We are invited to a decision, one with deep ramifications either way. May we be sober-minded and deliberate in picking Christ's side and may we be committed to following Him every day wherever He leads...only if He is truly our Lord will the Church reflect Him. The ultimate price has already been paid for our sins, our faithfulness should compel us to all to follow the commandments, God wrote them, so we should regard each commandment equally important if the eyes of God.

Your servant in Christ
Rose Schilling

Hope's Happenings

Sunday:	July 16	Attendance 109
Offering:	Regular	\$3360.00
	Building	\$135.00
	Jake	\$100.00
	Sign	\$110.00
	Mission	\$30.00
	Loose	\$24.00
	Total	\$3759.00



PRAYER CONCERNS: Please remember the following people in your prayers



Ken Bauman—shoulder surgery
 Tom Streckert—shoulder surgery (7/18) - Wausau
 Duane Kamenick—knee replacement
 Grace Schraufnagel—cancer—friend of the Streckert's
 John Hamann—Atrium
 Shyra Martyn—breast cancer—Randy and Sara's daughter-in-law
 George Wright—fell broke hip and spiral break in upper femur—Bonnie's dad
 Mildred Imhoff—fell and broke her femur—Ken's mother
 Joyce LeVoy—home recovering
 Don Hanson—health issues
 Dorothy Wright—fluid on lungs and congestive heart failure—Bonnie Blake's mom
 Leroy Syring—recovering from a stroke
 Scott Campbell—waiting for stem cell transplant—relation to the Streckert's
 Paulette Kroll—Myleloid Leukemia—receiving chemo treatments
 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

The Bulletin Board

- VBS will be held next week—July 24-28 from 5:30-8:00 pm with a light supper served at 5:00 pm



Women of Hope Lutheran projects for July and August will be "Fill A Backpack!" and "School Kits" for LWR. These items are given locally to our schoolchildren, and school kits given to children overseas through Lutheran World Relief. It is much appreciated.

**Sales on School Supplies!
 Need Your Help Fill Backpacks and School Kits!**

Here is a list of the items needed: 8 ct. washable markers, black, blue and red pens, large pink erasers, index cards, (3x5) sharpie pens, glue sticks, folders, #2 pencils, highlighters, crayons 16 or 24 ct, baby wipes, Ziploc bags (sandwich and gallon), colored pencils, rulers (with centimeter) pencil cases, pencil sharpeners, hand sanitizer (.8-12 oz), blunt scissors, medium-size Kleenex, wide-lined notebooks, and backpacks. All items need t be in by Sunday August 20. Items may be put into containers near coffee hour cupboard. Shopping lists available on coffee bar. Contact Audrey Kamenick (715-352-2714 or email her at kamenick@frontier.com or Gayle Werner (715-352-2971) or email jwpabst@frontier.com. Thank you

Hope's Happenings



.....to everyone that donated items for the El Salvador - Christmas in June mission project. We filled a box of toys for the boys and a box of dolls for the girls plus 25 stuffed animals! In addition to the Christmas items we will be taking 10 more boxes of shoes, clothing, and hygiene items to Missouri the end of August. Thank you very much!
Connie Lechleitner



'Hope on the 400 Block' with Danny Gokey' on July 30th

It would be a great event for everyone to checkout. We can do something with the Youth Group for it if others are able to help out and drive the kids. I will be helping with a Kicking Bear event right up until the concert. Please let me know if you are interested and if you can help out. Thanks Cedric Lechleitner



"Due to low ticket sales and the high cost of doing these events, we have found it necessary to postpone and restructure the tour," the Belong website said. A new version of the tour will resume in 2018.

The above statement was posted on the internet in regards to the Belong Tour, which members/friends of Hope Lutheran Church were planning to attend this October. I am in the process of trying to get our ticket money refunded. Once I get my money back I will begin distributing it back to everyone that has paid me.

Thank you for your patience,
Kelly Erickson



Richard & Nancy Goldschmidt

Welcome you to join them
as they celebrate their

50th ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, August 5

Beginning at 2:00, dinner from 4:30-6:00

Country Aire Banquet Hall

Please rsvp at 715-223-4431

by July 24

Edgar Fine Arts Association presents "Concerts in the Park"

beginning Thursday July 27
at the Oak Street Park at 7:00pm

- July 27, Keith Allynn, all the way from Branson, MO presenting his Country Comedy, "Not Really Willy."
- August 3, KT Country, August 10, "Shoes" (Edgar's Own Steve Schumacker)
- August 17, Rod Parsons, Acoustic Country.

Bring your own lawn chairs. A free will donation will be taken.
Rain location is the Edgar High Auditorium.