

# Visions of Hope

July 30, 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**

**August 6**

August 13

**Ushers**

**Gary Ludwig  
Gordon Metcalf**

Daryl Mueller  
Brian Remus

**Greeters**

**Brian Remus  
Russ Bauman**

**Readers**

**Gary Ludwig  
Michelle Bauman**

**Acolyte**

**Haylee Schreiber  
Riley Bauman**



With the beginning of the month of August, it is fair time in Wisconsin and the rest of the upper Midwest. The Wisconsin Valley runs this entire week and barely 10 days after it closes our area will also see the Athens Fair.

One of the things I have enjoyed most about these fairs is the 4H and FFA exhibits along with the Animal Barns and their displays. I marvel when going through the exhibits at the beauty of God's animate creation. And I admire the devotion of the boys and girls (and I would guess some adults as well) who show their prize animals in the judging competitions.

Cows, bulls, sheep, goats, horses, pigs, chickens, ducks, rabbits, llamas, you name it, they are all there and on full display. The wonder and beauty of God's creation, in all of its variety, is a beautiful thing to behold. It makes me so very grateful for the magnificence of God's handiwork.

But it all reminds me of a little story I came across a number of years back:

*A pastor was out walking through his neighborhood one evening and came upon a neighbor's yard that was absolutely gorgeous. The lawns were meticulously mowed. The trees and shrubs were gorgeously pruned. Awesome flower beds were in abundance throughout the property with an array of colorful and seasonal beauty. The landscaping was flawless. It was an oasis of summer time beauty. A wonder to behold.*

*The owner of the property was outside working in one of the flower beds as the pastor passed and he paused to say hello and then to comment effusively about how wonderful it was to behold God's handiwork in the beauty of his creation. He finished by saying, "Praise and thanks be to God for his marvelous workings and the beauty of this place."*

*"Well thanks," the property owner said, with an annoyed look on his face, "but you should have seen it when God had it all alone!"*

Yes, indeed, God gave us the glories of creation but he created human beings to be its stewards. He called us to work in its fields and with its animals to help make it a thing of beauty. He gave humans the task of helping creation realize its fullest potential.

To achieve a bountiful harvest, to win a blue ribbon at a fair for your animal or agricultural work, to till the fields...it's all hard work! It is work that is all too often underappreciated.

Yet, being a farmer or a rancher, or teen preparing to be one, is one of the holiest of all callings because you are working in God's garden and with God's creation. In the deepest sense of the meaning of the word, your work is *pastoral*. You are working as shepherds not only with your herds and flocks but with the seeds you plant and with the grains you harvest. Without you there would be no civilization. By your handiwork you help make God's creation not only beautiful but also bountiful.

As we praise God for his creation and its beauty we also need to give thanks and praise to farmers and ranchers who intimately work with God to make his beauty benefit us all.

Pax Christi,  
Mark Reiff+

There has been a lot of discussion recently about the necessity of Vacation Bible School. I've taught Sunday School and VBS, on and off for over 35 years. I never thought I'd see the day when churches would consider doing away with this valuable ministry. But my reasons are purely selfish. I love the look in the eyes of the children when they grasp the bible story and get the meaning of God's word.

I know the arguments, "We need to cut costs," and "We don't have enough volunteers," but these seem small compared to the growing need for spiritual guidance. But, is the answer to remove this valuable spiritual service? Or do we just need to emphasize the benefits of learning the stories of the bible and it's meaning for our children. One of the things I love most about Hope church is our commitment to our children and their spiritual wellbeing.

VBS may seem like "old hat" to some churches but according to research, 95% of churches still offer some type of classroom Bible teaching— and for good reason. The research says, "In a culture saturated with change, one of the most stable aspects in the Christian community has been Sunday School and VBS. Why? More than ever before, people need a counter-weight to offset the massive cultural shifts that modern societies are now experiencing. More specifically, children need Sunday School and VBS ministry for the following reasons. I am sure I didn't think of them all but, if we're building up our children's ministry or drawing more children to the one we have established, keep these goals in mind.

**VBS and Sunday School helps children respect, appreciate and utilize the Bible.** Reverence for God's written words doesn't come naturally, which is sad. A healthy Sunday classroom environment, centered around the Bible, will elevate its importance in a child's life. Hearing the bible stories from adults of faith, makes a lasting impression on our children.

**Sunday School gives kids a chance to ask questions.** Kids' church isn't designed for a detailed Q & A session but Sunday classes can. VBS and Sunday School is the perfect format for in-depth discussion, even debate. This format allows teachers to give kids more good food for thought.

**Also, VBS and Sunday School develops a community of believers.** Why do you think schools use the classroom method? Not just to reach more children, faster. Originally, it was because in a classroom setting, kids were more likely to help one another and push each other along in their growth. A community of children, worshipping, learning the Bible and discovering God together creates a bond that single study can't accomplish. Sunday Schools are the Petri dishes for the future church. We each had a partner during VBS, the older children helped the younger children learn the daily bible verse, this method helped the younger group learn faster and easier, but it also gave the older group the chance to help out and share their knowledge of the God's word.

**The VBS program plants spiritual seeds.** Some of my greatest revelations concerning God's love and plan for me I received while teaching in Sunday School and vacation bible school. I'll never be able to thank the children enough for making me more aware of how much I do love God's word and how much the stories of the bible still have to teach me. I will never forget the songs, the lessons and the love. VBS and Sunday Schools are like plant nurseries, they may look unimpressive at first, but under the soil, miracles are happening.

VBS and Sunday school have been a part of church culture for years. Unfortunately, its importance has been severely diminished and underestimated. Some people do not believe that Sunday School is important while others believe that Sunday School is only for children. This is seen as adults drop children off at church instead of going inside with them. But why is Sunday School or VBS so important? Take a moment and ask your children what they learned. It is so amazing what they remember and how they apply what they have learned to everyday life.

Children can engage in real conversations about God and His Word while making friends and establishing bonds of love and fellowship. Since VBS and Sunday school classes are typically small (less than 25 people), it is the perfect environment to engage in real conversation about the Word. By engaging in conversations with other members of the class, listening to their questions and hearing the answers, you learn to grow in your Christian faith. As you recognize and embrace that common bond, you develop friendships that will last a lifetime. Those friendships will also help keep you accountable and connected to the Body of Christ, especially during times of storm and crisis in your life.

Sunday school and VBS allows children to learn on their level while enhancing the Christian foundation. Since many young children struggle to understand the word of God when it is taught during sermons and regular worship services, teachers are in place in many churches to help make the message comprehensible for even the younger of children. The majority of Sunday schools and VBS classes are divided into specific age levels so that children learn according to their age and educational grade level so they gain a better understanding of what is being taught.

On the plus side, VBS and Sunday school is also an important part of the socializing process and is important to foster fellowship with other Christian children as it can help members, especially those children new to the church, to get to know one another. VBS and Sunday school are the perfect places to learn more about the word and how to share this wondrous gift with your parents and for parents to reaffirm the joy of faith with your children.

VBS and Sunday school gives families a common bond of faith and believing. Is there any better foundation for raising loving, faithful and respectful children? And yes, the sad thing is we don't get enough volunteers to teach and help with VBS and Sunday school. Do you want to take part in your child's Christian education? Does it mean something to you as parents and as a congregation to ensure we are doing our best to provide the rock of faith and salvation to our "greatest pearl"? As Pastor has said, our children are indeed, our greatest treasure and we must make sure we protect that treasure that God has given us.

And yes, your heart will melt when one of the students say "the best part of VBS was when the teacher was telling the bible stories".

I pray we can all see God's love through the eyes of a child.  
Your most humble servant if Christ;  
Rosie Schilling

# Hope's Happenings

Sunday:	July 30	Attendance 91
Offering:	Regular	\$1760.00
	Building	\$80.00
	Sign	\$170.00
	Mission	\$170.00
	Sunday School	\$1.00
	Loose	\$20.00
	Total	\$2201.00



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



Ken Bauman—shoulder surgery  
 Tom Streckert—shoulder surgery—home recovering  
 Duane Kamenick—knee replacement—home recovering  
 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

**Back To School Backpack Drive 2017**



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. 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](mailto:kamenick@frontier.com) or Gayle Werner (715-352-2971) or email [jwpabst@frontier.com](mailto:jwpabst@frontier.com). Thank you

Where do our school kits go? Below is a list where they get distributed

- 13,000—Angola
- 15,360—Burkina Faso
- 3,200—Dem. Republic of Congo
- 15,500—Georgia
- 28,485—Honduras
- 9,000—Mali
- 39,375—Nicaragua
- 39,720—Pakistan
- 7,680—Peru
- 12,180—Serbia
- 10,180—Tanzania
- 7,040—Uganda

**191,720 Total School Kits sent**

## Hope's Happenings



Thank you to everyone who helped out with Vacation Bible School last week. Thank you to the teachers, the classroom helpers, the kitchen helpers, and those who brought food; and a special thank you to Pastor Reiff for opening and closing each night's activities.

We collected loose change throughout the week for Living Water International. LWI is an organization that demonstrates God's love by working to bring clean water to the people of many countries, including Peru. We also took up a collection on Sunday morning. In total, we raised \$75.56. (That's enough to provide 15 people with clean water for a whole year!!)



Kind Thanks for giving me the chance to go to Camp Luther. I loved meeting new people, the fun activities, and becoming closer to God. Thanks again

*Lizzie Wenzel*

**Edgar Fine Arts Association presents**



**Oak Street Park, 7:00 pm**

- 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.