

Visions of Hope

October 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

Sunday School
8:45-9:30 am

Communion
1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays

Pastor:

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

Secretary:

hopelcsec@gmail.com

Duties List

October 22

October 29

Ushers

Larry Peterson

Chad Erickson

Gary Ludwig

Ron Kunkel

Greeters

Elaine Mielke

Gwen Bauman

Readers

Rose Schilling

Gary Ludwig

Acolyte

Anna Peterson

Jaicee Kunkel



Several months back I read a remarkable book titled The Benedict Option. In it the author, Rod Dreher, challenged American Christians to rethink our options in the midst of our current culture that is both anti-Christian and anti-God. Nothing underscores the ugliness and depravity oozing out of this culture quite like the current Harvey Weinstein scandal in Hollywood.

"From the inside," Dreher writes, "America's churches have been hollowed out by the departure of young people and by an insipid pseudo-Christianity. From the outside by challenges to religious liberty in a rapidly secularizing culture. Keeping Hilary Clinton out of the White House might have brought a brief reprieve from the state's assault, but it will not stop the west's slide into decadence and dissolution."

The author then goes on to explain that Christians need to be prepared to walk a distinctly different path (think the road less travelled) from the world around us and to be prepared to endure the consequences of living in a way that will be contrary to the ambient culture – the culture of the world's Weinstains. This is particularly true when we begin to look at the future...and our children who must live in that future.

The culture wants your children, your sons and daughters, and it wants them to be immersed in the ugliness and perversity of emerging anti-God, anti-Christian culture of the so-called post-modern world. Again, as Dreher understands it, we are not entering to an age of new enlightenment in this culture but, rather, we careening toward a new dark age.

What are we as Christians, as parents, grandparents, God-parents, sons and daughters to do? Remembering the words of Jesus, "It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone put round his neck than that he should lead astray one of these little ones." We need to act and act proactively to disciple our children and form them in the way of God as revealed in his Son Jesus Christ.

This means

1.) we need to challenge the culture in which we are immersed. It is a soul stealing culture. We need to expose a culture that reduces the next generation to just a bit of DNA and tissue in a womb that can be easily be disposed as mere garbage. God does not make garbage! We need to expose the emptiness of a culture that makes our hunger for diversion, entertainment, and thrills the greatest good. We need to expose a culture whose hedonism is really nihilism. A Christian culture is a culture of life not of death. We need to expose the false of Gods of our culture in sports and entertainment, in politics and in our false pieties, on Wall Street and on Main Street.

This means

2.) we need to challenge our schools. In my few years on this earth I have seen how are education system has been ravaged by Federal mandate. Perhaps the worst thing that ever happened to education in our nation was the creation of the US Department of Education under President Jimmy Carter. We no longer have control over our schools – Washington does. Learning, thereby, has been replaced by a secularist indoctrination that is woven throughout the very fabric of our education system from top to bottom. They very idea that God has given unalienable rights, as our nation's founders believed, is mocked and laughed at, derided and dismissed. We need to be bold enough, strong enough, and wise enough to challenge our public schools and those who work in them to treat us and our children with the intellectual dignity and with the respect that we and they deserve. **Our schools need to respect our spiritual heritage and values.** Your children belong to you not to some anonymous, nameless, faceless, statist bureaucrat. Perhaps, it is time for our churches to band together and build a new kind of Christian school that is ecumenically based for the welfare of the honest educational development of our children.

This means

3.) we need to challenge ourselves and our children. We are part of the problem. The greatest lessons we will ever learn are learnt in the home. What do you believe, what do you think, how do you act? **Is God and his Son, Jesus Christ, really important to you and your life? Or is it a mere veneer?** To you read the scriptures with your children? Do you pray with your children? Is there instruction in the Christian faith really important to you? Is Holy Baptism, and its completion in Catechism and Confirmation, important to you or is it seen as a hurdle to be jumped so that when you die, after a faithless life, you have your "get out of jail free card"?

I know we all think it is the Pastor's job to prepare and bring your children to confirmation BUT I can accomplish little or nothing if the example you set is contrary is to the words that I am asked to teach. Life's greatest and most formative lessons are taught in the home not in the one or perhaps two hours a week that your church has set aside for their instruction.

You need to challenge yourselves and your children to take the time and care to learn life's greatest and most enduring lessons that no celebrity, or no football or no basketball, or no politician can teach. That lesson is simply this: God is God and I am not! I cannot save myself. Only God can and IF I come to know him and trust and have my hope in Him I will come to understand that He has accomplished this life-giving event for me in Christ Jesus. This is the greatest lesson of all.

Pax Christi!
Mark Reiff

As we grow in the Lord and learn more about how scripture affects our lifestyle, we make choices that work with our new growth in Christ. Scripture has a way of molding us into who we are or who we are not. Christians usually mature as they grow in the Word. And as we mature so do our choices in life. Some of these choices may be very subtle and we won't even realize the change, but other choices will be major and will make a total transformation in our lives and the way we live – hopefully for the better.

Subtle changes are ones that affect us personally rather than a whole group or family. It may be that we have slowly changed the kind of music we listen to, or changed the manner of how we dress, or changed the kind of programs we watch on television. When we take up our own cross to follow Christ some of our choices can be very difficult. If we have a family, it will affect them all – that means there may be dissention and confusion among members of that family. But we must persevere if we want to continue to mature and grow spiritually in the Lord and do His will. If we truly believe it is the will of God we must choose to follow Him.

*As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. **Matthew 9:9***

Matthew could have asked Jesus why he wanted him to follow him but Matthew did not question Jesus. He knew in his heart it was the right thing to do. We shouldn't stop following Christ because a family member doesn't want us to. Sometimes we may have to leave behind those things that would hinder us in following Christ. Many in my family are not Christians, that is hard for me to conceive because I know of God's grace. We cannot force our faith upon others, but we should never give up our faith or hide our faith because our friends or family refuse to see the light. But it also means we never stop trying to get others to see the light, so to speak.

God allows us to make our own choices in this life. We can choose to follow Him and His wisdom-filled ways or we can choose to follow our own understanding of what we think is wisdom. Some of us will discover that our ways are not conducive to a faithful, righteous Christian lifestyle and continue to grow and mature in the Word, while others will still not be able to distinguish a lifestyle apart from their own.

*Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Amen. **Romans 1:24-25***

Those people chose to reject God and God allowed them to do it. And it is no different today. God is not going to stand over us with a paddle and tell us what we can or cannot do. God allows us to do whatever our heart desires and many make rebellious choices. When we inspect the condition of the world today we see no difference in the morality of its people. Does life without God mean freedom? Are these people who are enslaved to the almighty dollar free? We are free to make choices but once we make bad choices there will be consequences. There is no worse choice than to be controlled by our sinful desires. Our search for fortune and notoriety can put us on the wrong side of God, and in the long run is it really worth it? Is there anything in this earthly world that is worth an eternity in hell?

*Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. **Romans 1:26-27***

The great news is we can choose to follow God's choices for our life. We can put our trust and faith in God and let Him choose for us. It may be that we think His choices for us are not the right ones, but know that they are what is needed in our life at the time of that choice, because God loves us and He will always know what is best for us at all times and in all things. If we doubt God or we doubt His choices for us simply means we have already decided against Him. We've made our choice. Does this mean God thinks we will become perfect? Not at all, what God wants is for us to repent every time and believe in him all the time.

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. **John 3:36***

Your servant in Christ
Rosie Schilling

Hope's Happenings

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT !

Sunday:	October 15	Attendance 91
Offering:	Regular	\$1535.00
	Sign	\$175.00
	Building	\$10.00
	Loose	\$25.00
	Sunday School	\$5.00
	Total	\$1750.00

If anyone is interested in working with the council and being part of the call committee, we are planning on meeting this **Wednesday, October 19, 7:00 pm**, at church

PRAYER CONCERNS: Please remember the following people in your prayers



Jeff Hoffman—quadruple bypass—Cru missionary—friend of the Streckert's
 Marge Manecke—health issues
 Annette Krahn—failing health—Audrey Kamenick's mom
 Mildred Imhoff—chemo treatment—Ken's mother
 Bob Nowak—home recovering from surgery
 Grace Schraufnagel—cancer—friend of the Streckert's
 John Hamann—Home recovering
 Shyra Martyn—breast cancer—Randy and Sara's daughter-in-law
 Don Hanson—health issues
 Leroy Syring—recovering from a stroke
 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

- **Youth Group** will meet Wednesdays at 5:15 pm
- **Adult Choir** will practice for Christmas music immediately following Sunday worship services
- **October 22** we welcome The Promise Quartet. Please join us as they lead us in worship with their Southern Gospel music
- **October 28** Hope will be having their All You Can Eat Italian Dinner, 4:30-7:30 pm. We need your help! There are a lot of items still needed for our dinner. Sign up sheets are on table in narthex.
- **All Saint's Sunday** will be held November 5. We will be lighting a candle in remembrance of your loved one. If you would like to submit a name please do so by October 22 to Barb (hopelcsec@gmail.com or 715-352-2555) or drop off in her office or mailbox.
- **Quarterly meeting** will be held Sunday, October 29 immediately following worship service. We are looking for volunteers to fill council positions. Needed positions are: Treasurer, Deacon (2), Trustee, Financial Committee (4), Parish Ed, and Cemetery. If you are interested, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex on counter.
- **Trunk or Treat** will be held Sunday, October 29 following worship.

Looking for a volunteer or two with a truck that will be able to take all of our LWR boxes to Faith Lutheran in Marshfield on October 28. Items have to be there between 8:30 and 9:30 am. Thank you.

Hope's Happenings



It's time to start gathering items for shoeboxes! For the past several years, Hope has participated in Operation Christmas Child, a Samaritan's Purse program that allows children all over the world to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ and receive what may be their very first Christmas present. We will be collecting gift-filled shoeboxes now through November 12th. Here's how: Grab a donation pamphlet and box from the back of church, or use your own box. Mark the label in the pamphlet based on gender

and age of the intended recipient and attach to the top of the box. Complete the form in the pamphlet and insert in the box along with \$9 to cover shipping fees. Drop off the box to the right of the mailboxes in back of church on or before Sunday, November 12th. **Changes this year:** It now costs \$9 for shipping and ministry expenses. No toothpaste or candy. Due to custom regulations these items are no longer able to be shipped.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for the generous donation of backpacks and school supplies. It helps students and their families know that our community cares about each other. Plus, the students feel good about having the things they need to start the school year right! Thanks again, *Colby Elementary*

Thank you so much Women of Hope Lutheran Church for the lovely bingo prizes for our residents. We greatly appreciate them and they will be put to good use for bingo. This was a very thoughtful gift. Thanks again
Atrium Activity Department

We would like to thank you so much for all of the lovely bingo items that were donated by the Women of Hope Lutheran Church. The snack items are sure to be a treat. The figurines will also be a huge hit! The residents will greatly enjoy all of the items. Thank you so much for thinking of us! Have a wonderful day and God Bless
All of us here at Benedictine Living Community of Wausau

Thank you so much for the great bingo prizes I know the residents will love them. We really appreciate it! Without your generous donations we would not be able to do what we do, so thank you!
Wausau Manor Staff

Thank you all so much for all the great prizes for bingo. The residents do appreciate them all and helps our department out! Many thanks from you guys!
Three Oaks Team



Join us on Sunday, November 5, 1:00 pm for the Edgar Holiday Parade featuring Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus. Donations for the Circle of Joy will be accepted along the parade route. Also, we are in need of costume people to be in the parade and volunteers to help. If interested, call Karen 715-352-2577. Thank you