

# Visions of Hope

July 3, 2016



4356 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**

**July 10**  
July 17

**Ushers**

**John Hamann**  
**Keith Bauman**  
Gary Bauman  
Gary Ludwig

**Greeters**

**Scott Bauman**  
Debbie Bauman

**Readers**

**Michelle Bauman**  
Rachel Ludwig

FROM THE  
PASTOR 

Dear Hopers,

I hope you had a good Fourth of July celebrating the independence of our nation. We are a free country and we love to emphasize that during this celebration.

Freedom is also a huge topic in the Biblical book of Galatians. Paul wrote this letter out of concern for the members of this church who had some people come and teach them that, in order to be true followers of Jesus, these mostly non-Jewish people had to essentially become Jewish with males getting circumcised, keeping much of the kosher food rules and so on. So Paul basically says, "No, you were told lies. You do not become superior Christians by keeping these laws. Keeping these laws will actually be detrimental to your faith. Rather, you are justified before God by faith." Here's what Paul writes in Galatians 5:13,

*For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

Fast forward 2,000 years or so and here we are, still free from such rules, free to lovingly serve each other. Let it be so among us.

God's Blessings,  
Pastor Dave

In the presence of God is a most holy place. It is the place where we come and in essence remove the sandals from our feet. For how we clothe ourselves to walk in this world is not fitting as we tread upon the holy ground to approach the presence of God. And entering into His presence causes us to realize our need. We see ourselves for who we really are in comparison to Him, and we see our imperfection and inadequacy. But this does not spur us to retreat in shame, but instead, we confidently approach the throne of grace because of the work of Christ.

But how do we approach Him? His presence is overwhelming. We need to do more than just touch the spiritual, how do we bring it down to earth? How can we bring closeness to God to be an everyday, normal thing? A very comfortable habit so to speak.

To begin with, we know that sin keeps us from coming into the presence of God, sin--and even more so--the desire to cling to sin. Our sins have been forgiven are no longer a wall that separates us from God's Salvation (Jesus tore down that wall). Instead, they separate us from His fellowship, and become a greater barrier when we refuse to let go of them.

Clinging to anything in this life will keep us from moving forward in the next. Hebrews 12:1 says, "*let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles*". This is our act of repentance: to turn away from what is holding us back from God and to press on toward the Holy place of God. The kingdom we belong to is not of this earth, and so we shake the dust of this earth from our feet and set our focus on the Kingdom of God. Our goals, ambitions and dreams for a life on this earth will fade, and our desires will be transformed and our hearts will no longer cling to the treasures of this world.

While letting go (of sin, the world, our wants, etc.) is the first step to drawing near to God; clinging to Christ as Lord and Master is the second step. *Jesus tells us, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Lk.9:23)*. We move away from our past that is wrapped up on self-fulfillment, and we follow the path of Christ that leads to righteousness (or right living).

The path that leads to righteousness is where we bring being closer to God down to earth. While drawing near to God is a spiritual matter, there are several things we can physically do to help us draw closer. But to put it simply, we can say it in one statement, "be like Christ." The writer of Hebrews encourages, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (12:2). Christ is the physical representation of God. He is our example to follow.

To be like Christ is to draw close to God. Christ prayed, therefore we must pray. He knew scripture and we too must not only read, but gain understanding of and memorize scripture (not the entire bible of course). He served others more than self, we must do the same. He sacrificed His rights to anything from this life. He was fully devoted to the work of God. If we are to draw near to God, this is the path we must follow. It will not do us any good to wish we could be more Christ-like if we are not willing to follow in His path. Wishing and hoping don't mean diddly squat when it comes to walking in Christ's footsteps.

Christ Jesus, while on earth, walked each day fully in the presence of God the Father. He has come to dwell in each of us who believe in Him, to provide to us all we need to follow God as He did. But, the truth be known, the reason so many of us struggle with step two (following Jesus), is because we have failed to accomplish step 1 (giving up control). As long as we refuse to let go of our self-pleasures in this life, we cannot fully draw closer to God. The song says, "I surrender all." How much have we given up so others might find life?

In considering the vague ideas of the spiritual calling in our lives, we realize we need to find ways to bring it down to earth so that we can better understand what we can do to draw close to God. But God understands all of our needs better than we do, and He has already brought it down to earth within the physical manifestation of His Son--Jesus. To follow Jesus, we must learn to let go of this life. **If we are to be the agents of change we must be willing to be changed.** This lost world is counting on us. If not us; then who?

**Philippians 3:7-14**

*"But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.*

*Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus".*

God bless your week.  
Your servant in Christ



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

- John Hamann— broke hip—Marshfield Hospital
- Jerry Harmon—aneurysm in stomach that burst—brother-in-law of Rose Schilling
- Kim Heller—breast cancer—cousin of Jodi Krause
- Gloria Everhard—breast cancer (sister to Kim Heller) - cousin of Jodi Krause
- Don Hansen—Bladder cancer—undergoing chemo treatments in Florida
- Paulette Kroll—Myleloid Leukemia—receiving chemo treatments in Milwaukee
- Bill Brayton—DeEtta's brother
- Jim Decker—chemo for lymphoma—friend of the Streckert's
- Amy—cancer—friend of Barb Mohr-Borchardt
- Dylan, Logan Weichelt—sons of Bryan & Stacey
- Sawyer Mueller—microcephaly—Daryl & Beth's son
- Annette Schultz—breast cancer—Tom Kirsch's sister
- Jennifer Bohman—prayers of healing
- Pete Cornaggia—cancer and treatment—friend of the Streckert's
- Dennis Bohman—Colby Nursing Home

# Hope's Happenings

Sunday:	July 3	Attendance	92
Offering:	Regular		\$1800.00
	Building		\$420.00
	Loose		\$15.00
	Sunday School		\$1.00
	Total		\$2236.00



- Council will meet Sunday, July 17, 8:00 am
- Quarterly meeting will be held Sunday, July 24 immediately following worship

## BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE



During the months of July and August, we will be collecting school supplies, and backpacks to be given to our Local school children. Also, we will be collecting school supplies to fill kits sent to needy children through Lutheran World Relief. The list includes both projects: Please put supplies in container next to coffee counter. Any questions contact: Audrey Kamenick (715-352-2714) or Gayle Werner ((715-352-2971)

#2 pencils, pens (blue and black), notebooks (wide or college) large erasers, folders, baby wipes, kleenex, theme paper (college and wide), book covers (medium and large), sharpie, blunt scissors, crayons (16 or 24), paper plates, sandwich bags (Quart and Gallon) ,rulers with centimeter and inches), post notes, colored pencils, washable markers, 8oz.white glue, pencil sharpeners, glue sticks, highlighters, pencil case or pencil box, dry erase markers, erase boards, hand sanitizers, and backpacks.\* ALL ITEMS DUE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 21. Thank you. "An intelligent mind acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge" Proverbs 18:15



Vacation Bible School will be the week of July 25-29 from 5:30-8:00 pm. There will be a light supper served from 5:00-5:30 pm. All children 3 years old through 5th grade are welcome. Your child will have fun hearing Bible stories, singing upbeat songs, making crafts, while getting to know Jesus Christ.

Please also watch for a sign-up for volunteers in the upcoming weeks.



**Christian Women**  
will meet Tuesday, July 12  
6:30-8:00 pm  
at Belvedere Supper Club



Hope's Brat Fry will be held  
**Friday, July 15**  
**9:30-4:00**  
at ProVison in Stratford

There is a sign up sheet in back of church for needed supplies and also to help work. Thank you