

# In Touch with *Hope*



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOPE CHURCH

JULY 2026

**James Runcorn, D. Min.**

Lead Pastor

## Our Power, or His?

This week, I shared a quote on social media from A.W. Tozer, a 20th century influential pastor and author. Tozer said, "If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop and everybody would know the difference...We are over-organized and under-empowered."

That hit me pretty hard. Are we operating at a level that relies too heavily upon our own power, skills and abilities? Our staff does a great job. Lay leaders within our church are highly skilled and reliable. Is that the crutch we trust and fall back on when bumps in the road emerge? A danger in the 21st century, especially in the western culture is the arsenal of books, seminars and other leadership tools at our disposal. We are overeducated in human systems to the point we have no need for the Holy Spirit.

If there is a vision for future ministry, let's create a plan. If there is a need, let's figure out how to meet that need through our budget. If there is a concern, let's address it reasonably and work things out. Now, please don't get me wrong. There is nothing inherently wrong with working through issues by way of reason, logic and common sense. But, where is the application of faith?

Even if the outcome seems easily achievable, should we take time to fast and pray before formulating a plan? Or do we just dive in and take care of business ourselves? Or are we treading water and avoiding tasks and ministry items that seem too challenging at face value because we feel ill-equipped by our own strength?

The power of the Holy Spirit, that dwells within the heart of the believer, is the same power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead (Romans 8:11; Ephesians 1:19-20). That is the same power that created all matter within our universe. Yet we either ignore or neglect the power of the Holy Spirit as a part of our daily lives. It has become routine.

Let's shift the status quo. Let's remind ourselves who we belong to. We are His church. We are His people. Let us boldly allow Him to lead us into uncharted territory and equip us by His Spirit to do the very things He is calling us to do.

*Our Mission is to  
Gather, Equip, and  
Grow in Christ.*

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# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

## Julia Andela

Director of Children and Families Ministries

## VBS Recap

Thank you so much for your involvement in Vacation Bible School; it truly is a whole church body effort! It's hard to put into words how big of a blessing it is, from my vantage point, to see the fruit of Hope Church's faithfulness through prayers prayed and the generosity of your time, talents and donations. It's a beautiful picture of The Body of Christ that results in one great week of sharing the Good News of our Savior!

Here are a few stats to give you a glimpse of what God provided through this event:

- ★ 244 VBS attendees
- ★ 180+ volunteers who gave of their time, and some even their PTO, to serve at VBS!
- ★ 225+ food items provided for yummy VBS snacks
- ★ 70+ Amazon Wish List needs met for awesome, Christ-centered crafts
- ★ 6 Bible verses memorized by VBS attendees
- ★ 5 Bible stories (true stories!!) shared via fun skits
- ★ 1 goofy Professor Bible Memory and his good friend DJ Bright making the daily Bible points relatable
- ★ And, best of all: 25 CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE BY CONFESSING JESUS CHRIST AS THEIR LORD AND SAVIOR!

Please continue to pray for all who attended VBS. Pray that the Gospel seeds sown would be fruitful, that families would continue to seek and follow Jesus after VBS, and that those who received Jesus as their Lord and Savior would have a deep desire to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and be surrounded by Christians willing to walk alongside them!





# YOUTH

**Jay Van Gelder**

Youth Pastor

## High School Work Project/Rocky Trip July 19-29, 2026

Sr. High Youth will be leaving on their summer trip July 19th heading to Colorado Springs, Colorado, then heading to Estes Park, Colorado.

This year's mission trip brings us to the beautiful state of Colorado. We will be going to Colorado Springs first to help with some service organizations and build some teamwork in our youth group with Trinity Reformed Church in Orange City. The group will be around 100 of us sleeping and living in the Springs Community Church in Colorado Springs. Some of the sites we will be working with are Partners in Housing, Care and Share, Therapeutic Riding Center, Goodwill E-Commerce, Good Steward Farms, Salvation Army, Dream Center, Solid Rock Food Pantry, and Marion House. The work we will be doing varies from each site around the area which includes jobs like serving food to the homeless, working at the shelters, landscaping, home repair, painting, building bunk beds, harvesting food, serving at grocery stores, cleaning horse stalls and many more projects still being worked out.

Second part of our trip will be heading to Estes Park YMCA, for Rocky Mountain High. The Rocky 2026 Theme is "ONE Story - His Victory, Our Hope". *The theme One Story asserts that the four Gospels, despite their varied perspectives, present a single, unified narrative centered on Jesus. This singular story is the central thread that runs throughout the entire Bible, connecting and giving meaning to all our individual lives. Much like the cross-references that link biblical passages, our personal stories are intricately woven into and find their ultimate purpose within God's overarching narrative. Rooted in the victory of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12-15), this profound truth offers strength and meaning, assuring us of God's ultimate triumph and compelling us to live with the hopeful certainty that we know the end of the story.*

Rocky exists to provide a large group encounter with the transformational truth and love of Jesus for students and leaders. Rocky Mountain High is an event held every 3 years sponsored by Cultivate Co-op. We will be joining around 3,000 youth and adults at this event as we grow in our Faith and enjoy worshipping God all together.

Please continue to pray for our students and staff that are going to serve as well as be filled with the Holy Spirit on this trip. Sr. high Group to be praying for: Paisley Atherton, Jackson Bailey, Gunner Brandenburg, Hallie Brown, Sydney Burns, Janey Carey, Azra Edwards, Abbey Fujimoto, Michael Fujimoto, Deegan Grady, Hudson Grady, Robert Graham, Sophie Kabrick, Jill Lowe, Jaycee Mathis, Avery McEntee, Averie Nelson, Cameron Pick, Eli Reiman, Jolie Robbins, Judah Runcorn, Bailey Schuster, Emalynn Seaman, Halle Sears, Colby Sherrod, Lillian Sparks, Noah Spieker, Lotti Thiesen, Cameron Van Der Heide, Eric Van Der Heide, Jay Van Gelder, Wyatt Van Otterloo, Brayden Warren, Cade White, Debra Wittrock, Aaron Zinn and Tate Zinn.

## Dates to Remember

### August 5

**6th, 7th, 8th Grade Youth Group Year End Party**  
6:00 pm • Location TBD

### August 9

**Mission Trip Sunday: 6th - 12th Grade**  
8:30 am & 10:45 am

Youth that attended a Summer Trip will lead service

### August 9

**Senior High Youth Group Year End Party**  
6:00 pm • Jay & Shantel Van Gelder's House

### August 26

**Middle School Youth Group KICK OFF**  
6th Grade - 5:30 pm  
7th Grade - 6:30 pm  
8th Grade - 7:30 pm

### August 30

**Senior High Youth Group KICK OFF**  
**Freshmen** 5:00 - 6:30 pm  
**Sophomore - Senior** 7:00 - 8:30 pm

# DATES TO REMEMBER

## WEEKLY

### MEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Mondays

8:00 am



#### MONDAY, JULY 6

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

#### TUESDAY, JULY 7

Bethesda Christian Counseling

10:00 am

#### WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

6th, 7th, 8th Grade  
Youth Group

6:30 pm

#### SUNDAY, JULY 12

Parent/Youth Meeting  
for Rocky Trip

7:00 pm

#### MONDAY, JULY 13

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

#### WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

6th Grade Youth Group  
7th Grade Youth Group  
8th Grade Youth Group

5:30 pm

6:30 pm

7:30 pm

#### SUNDAY, JULY 19

Sr High Youth/Adults Leave for Rocky

#### MONDAY, JULY 20

Missions Team Meeting

1:00 pm

#### TUESDAY, JULY 21

Prayers & Squares Quilting

1:00 pm

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS JULY 20-29

**Mon - Fri: 8 am - 12 noon**

Jill is going on the High School Rocky trip.  
Office hours will be covered by  
Kathy Houseman and Jane Gude.

# CONCERNS FOR

Please continue to lift up the following people and families in prayer:

The following as they navigate their cancer journeys

- Keith Fliss
- Hannah Dibble
- David Stephens
- Chery Haden
- Carl Johnson
- Mark Lockey
- Martha Oskvig

- Toby & Nyleen - Men's Ministry helped them with a move to SF due to Nyleen's neurological disorder
- Joyce Klein's son, Matthew - motorcycle accident
- Randy Christoffel - Ryan's dad - healing from heart surgery
- Kodie Borchers - healing from surgery
- Lucy Gadsby's nephew - health concerns
- Missy Lair's friend - going through a rough time
- Haleigh Kuhlman - healing from surgery/health concerns
- Tom Volkert - Cheri Prange's dad - healing from a broken leg/surgery
- Linda Mann's daughter-in-law - health concerns
- Terry Wiese - healing from a fall
- Jim Vermeer - healing from spinal surgery
- Brenda Fliss - healing from knee surgery
- Teri Van Wattering - health concerns
- Viktor Campbell - Bob and Cindy's grandson - surgery on July 1
- Todd Brockshus - healing from spinal neck surgery

# CONDOLENCES TO

Linda Mann and family on the passing of Linda's daughter-in-law, Raquel Mann, who passed from time to eternity on June 24.

Anita Donaldson and family on the passing of Dave's mom, Beverly Stewart, who passed from time to eternity on June 27.

# LIBRARY NEWS

There are some big changes coming to the library . . . stay tuned! I have ordered some new books and am excited to share them with you. Please take advantage of this wonderful perk we have at Hope Church. Pack a book for vacation, take one to the beach, or snuggle in on a rainy day. There is something for everyone!

~ MaryAnn Lockey

# CONSISTORY MINUTES

Meeting: May 14, 2026

Pastors: James Runcorn, Jay Van Gelder

Elders: Arv Druvenga Cedric Winterboer, Dean Mechler, Gary Zeutenhorst, Kevin Vander Stoep, Mark Lockey

Deacons: Kevin Goeken, Knut Brown, Mike Bryan, Ryan Murray

Opening prayer: James Runcorn

Devotional: James discussed the danger of being quick to look at others "issues/sins" before we look at our own shortcomings in our efforts to do evangelism.

## REGULAR BUSINESS

Approved April 9, 2026 minutes, MMSC (Mark/Kevin)

Approved April 9, 2026 financials, MMSC (Kevin/Arv)

Giving and attendance analysis done by Mike.

Around the room check in with each of the consistory and the pastors.

## TEAM REPORTS

**(Purposeful Learning)** Dean/Knut, Dean reported that Jay has been exploring and setting up work experiences for those in Sr. High who will be attending Rocky Mountain High. Julia is busy working on VBS.

**(Holy Living)** Gary/Ryan, Women's Ministry reported 110 people attended the conference in May. 50% were not members of Hope Church. They had 20 people attend the May Basket event in May. Library committee has been entering new books into the computer and labeling and getting them on the shelves. They have seen an increase in books being checked out. Men' ministry has been doing Evangelism 101 for 4 weeks in-between services in the month of May.

**(Wholehearted Service)** Mark/Eric, Mark stated that Jill has been giving out more gas cards this year 23, significant increase over last year (9).

**(Passionate Worship)** Kevin/Jason, Kevin reported that Eric had auditions for Praise and worship and will be adding 4 new people to the praise and worship rotation.

**(Meaning Fellowship)** Arv/Mike, Arv stated that there was some miscommunication regarding the Youth Sunday and the scheduling of ushers and greeters.

**(Loving Outreach)** Cedric/Kevin G., Kevin stated that the flights had all been arranged for those who will be going on the mission trip (18). Other outreach activities coming up VBS and service in the park, June 21st.

## PASTORS REPORT

James reported that they had gotten a call back from someone in Spencer who had been listening to the radio show. They indicated they had been looking for a church home. James is meeting with staff one on one outside of the regular staff meetings once a month  
Kevin Goeken closed with prayer.

## ELDERS MEETING

Kevin Vander Stoep opened with prayer.

Constitutional question was asked and answered in the negative.

Discussed congregational care issues.

MMSC-(Arv/Cedric) to approve the membership requests of Brad and Sydnee Lindgren, Pat Olson and Jennifer Johnson.

James Runcorn closed with prayer.

## DEACONS MEETING

Meeting started at 9pm with opening prayer by Jay Van Gelder

• Confirmed Building Hope plans and quotes- Carpet is \$25,500, Drywall repairs are \$4200, and painting quote is \$12,000. All of this aligns with pledges to come in and the balance we have in the account. • Went into closed session to discuss staffing. • Deacons were presented with a bid for replacing the speakers in the harbor. Motion and 2nd by Goeken/Bryan to replace speakers for \$12,000. All in favor. • Reviewed an estimate for repairing the Harbor stage. Estimate is \$8700. Deacons will review in August after carpet and painting is done. • Library relocation- Deacons were presented with ideas on the library. Deacons tabled to allow Consistory representatives time to talk to library committee. • Water fountain- Presented a quote for \$800 to replace broken water fountain. No vote required as this is in building budget but shared because it is over \$500. • Closed session to discuss staff benefits. • Discussion around the quantity and quality of our wheelchairs. Jay will look into and report back next month. • Elevator and Chair Lift quotes. Deacons have been presented with a request to investigate ways to help kids get down to the basement. Elevator quote is around \$142k plus prep expense. Will look at moving the class upstairs if the need arises that a Sunday School kid is needing a room on the main floor. • Wheelchairs - Discussion about the quality and quantity of our wheelchairs. Jay to seek some recommendations from medical connections and report back to Deacons.

Knut Brown closed in prayer at 9:35pm

# SUPPORT OUR ESWATINI MISSION TEAM

A team from Hope Church will be traveling to Africa August 1-10. As they prepare for this opportunity to serve, they will be conducting their final fundraising efforts during July.

**All orders must be placed by July 26. Order forms are at the Information Desk.** Please make checks payable to **Hope Church** and write "**ESWATINI MISSION FUND**" in the memo line.

*Thank you for supporting them with your purchases and your prayers!*

## KWIK STAR CAR WASH CARDS

\$36 each - 5 Ultimate Car Washes

*Makes a great gift and valid at any participating Kwik Star location.*

## TIEFENTHALER SKINLESS BRATWURST FUNDRAISER

\$12.50 / pkg of 6 brats

*Tentative delivery date: August 28*

# WOMEN OF HOPE

## Join Us for the Okoboji Bible Women's Conference

**WED, AUG 5 | 1 PM**

Okoboji Bible Conference Women's Luncheon

*1+ tables are still available (9 at a table).*

*Call the Church Office at 712-262-3016 to reserve your seat. Tickets are \$35.*

Keynote Speaker: Barb Van Wyk  
Musical Artists: Shelly & Michaela Brown



<https://www.okobojiconference.org/>



919 Grand Avenue  
Spencer, IA 51301  
(712)262-3016  
[hrc@spencerhope.org](mailto:hrc@spencerhope.org)

## Worship Services

**SUNDAYS:** 8:30 am and 10:45 am

Live-streamed online:

[www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer](http://www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer)

## Hope Church Staff

James Runcorn, Lead Pastor  
Jay Van Gelder, Youth Pastor  
Julia Andela, Director of Children & Family Ministries  
Eric Meeter, Worship/Tech Director  
Michael Fujimoto, Facilities Director  
Jill Lowe, Office Administrator  
Abbey Fujimoto, Media Specialist  
Tim Yeager, Maintenance  
Levi Morris, Treasurer  
Missy Lair, Nursery Coordinator