

In Touch with *Hope*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOPE CHURCH

OCTOBER 2026

James Runcorn, D. Min.

Lead Pastor

Why Are There So Many Churches?

In John 17:20-23, Jesus prays for the church—not just for the believers in His time, but for all believers, including us today. He specifically prays, “That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you” (v. 21). This is a picture of unity. So, I ask: Are we unified with other Bible-believing, Christ-centered churches? I would like to think we are. If we are, then why are there so many different churches (or church buildings and denominations)?

I like to think of other denominations as relatives in the same family. Within the walls of our building and denomination, there are directed focuses and secondary passions that drive us forward. Some denominations focus on serving certain communities, while others focus on their expression of worship or style of teaching and preaching. None of these distinctives separate or divide us but rather present a beautiful and diverse expression of collective faithfulness to our LORD and Savior, Christ Jesus.

Let's look at a couple of examples within our community where unity can be seen and experienced. For two years now, we have gathered at East Leach Park toward the end of June to worship together. Multiple churches came together to form the worship team, tech team and even the preaching team (with, believe it or not, each pastor sharing the pulpit within the time constraints of five minutes or less)! LORD willing, we will continue this rich tradition in June of 2027.

Some children right here in Spencer go without food. The day-to-day struggle is profound. Several churches support a ministry called “Feed Our Children.” Nonperishable food items are collected and packed into bags every Wednesday evening. Those bags of food are then taken to the schools and distributed to children in need on Fridays. For some of those children, it will be the only food they have access to all weekend.

These are just a couple of examples where His church, regardless of denomination or physical location, comes together to do His work. That same spirit of unity and service is something we want to cultivate here at Hope Church. So, let's look at a couple of things coming up right here at Hope.

In October, Hope Church will host Trunk or Treat. We are shifting a couple of things around in order to be even more intentional with the way we love and serve our community. Stay tuned for updates!

In November, RISE with Rob & Friends will be coming to Hope Church with several well-known Christian artists: Jordan Feliz, Micah Tyler and Patrick Mayberry. This event will be open to everyone. Tickets will be available soon, so stand by!

Great things are happening here and in our city. We pray that as we continue to intentionally Gather, Equip and Grow in Christ, the vision of Hope Church will be fully realized: Jesus will be made known, lives will be changed and disciples will be made in Spencer and to the ends of the earth.

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

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

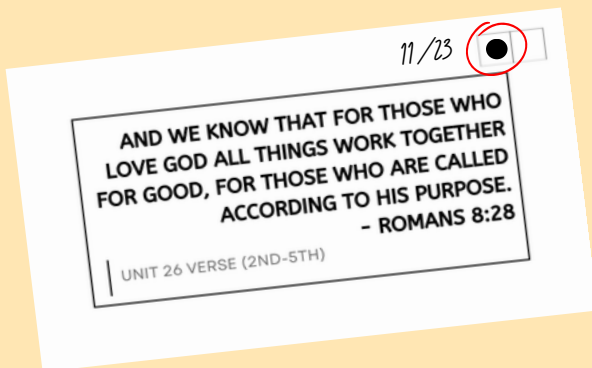
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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

HOPE KIDS YEAR-LONG BIBLE MEMORY CHALLENGE

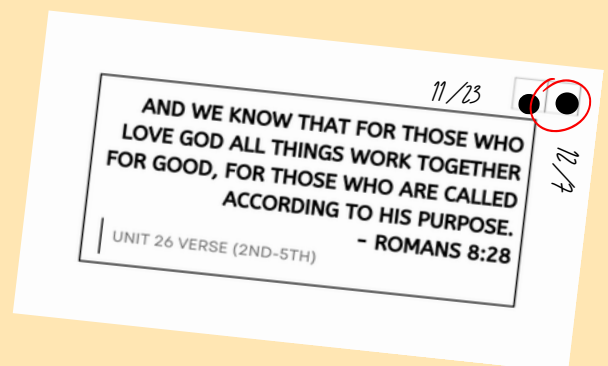
The goal of this challenge is to help kids “hide God’s Word in their hearts” (Psalm 119:11) for life! Here are the details:

For each of the 7 verses, students will need to practice saying the verse *from memory* at least 10 times. Each time they recite it correctly to an adult, they’ll get a sticker/mark on the back of their verse card. They could call someone to say it, say it to a neighbor or teacher, etc. Get creative!



Once they’ve recited the passage at least 10 different times, they can say it to their Sunday School Small Group Teacher for the opportunity to get their 1st punch marked on the front of their card.

After at least 2 weeks of continued practice, students can say it to their Small Group Teacher one more time to receive their final check off - proving they didn’t just store the verse in their short term memory, but that it’s stored in their hearts for God to remind them of His Truth and His Goodness for whatever lies ahead in life!



Of course, there will be fun prizes for the achievement of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or all 7 of the verses by the end of the year! We hope this challenge will be exciting, meaningful and rewarding for Hope Kids!

YOUTH

Tire Moving Party

Jay Van Gelder

Youth Pastor

Yes, we got to be farm kids for about 3 hours. On Wednesday Night we got to move 9000 tires in 90 minutes. Kevin Vander Stoep invited us to come to City View Farm that he manages and move tires to get ready so they could cover their brand-new silage pile that they were building in the background as we were moving the tires. It was a very fun time that they youth had. Our muscles were a bit sore the next day, but it was worth it and can't wait to do it again sometime. Angie Vander Stoep was also so nice and ordered us Pizza Ranch pizza to finish off the night. The students who came this night are able to use the money that we earned to go on either a Spiritual retreat or a summer Work Project trip this upcoming year. Thanks again to the Vander Stoeps on helping youth provide away to cover the costs of the out-of-pocket cost for the youth's families.



Welcome Ellie!

My name is Ellie Steinhelper and I am from Altoona, Iowa. I am joining Hope as the youth intern through a joint partnership between Ingham Okoboji Bible Camps and Hope Church. I will be working with the youth program here at Hope and helping with year-round programming at camp! I have had it on my heart for years to work within youth ministry since I was in high school. I am super excited to see everything that the Lord will do within Hope Youth and myself throughout this next year!

DATES TO REMEMBER

WEEKLY

PRAYER & PRAISE

Wednesdays (2nd - 4th weeks) 6:00 pm

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

Sundays

Freshmen 5:00 pm

Sr High: 10-12th Grade 7:00 pm

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Wednesdays

6th Grade 5:30 pm

7th Grade 6:30 pm

8th Grade 7:30 pm

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

Communion - Both Services

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Chick-Fil-A Food Truck 11:00 am

Midweek Service 6:00 pm

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Consistory 7:00 pm

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Bethesda Christian Counseling

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

Prayers & Squares 1:00 pm

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25

Trunk or Treat 4:30 pm

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

Bethesda Christian Counseling

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

If you've been looking for a Bible study,
you are invited to join any of these!

MONDAYS

Men's Morning (Well) 8:00 am

WEDNESDAYS

Women's Morning (Nursery) 9:00 am

Women's Evening (Grace) 6:30 pm

SUNDAYS

Women's (Well) 9:45 am

Adults - (Grace) 9:45 am

CONCERNS FOR

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

The following as they navigate their cancer journeys

- Keith Fliss
- Carl Johnson
- Hannah Dibble
- Cindy Fliss
- Chery Haden

- Haleigh Kulhman - FSHD health concerns
- Helen - Terri Wiese's friend - health concerns
- Tiffany Baird - Inflammatory Arthritis

CONDOLENCES TO

Dawn and Ivan Crane and family on the passing of Dawn's mom, Ruth Hansen, who passed from time to eternity on September 28.

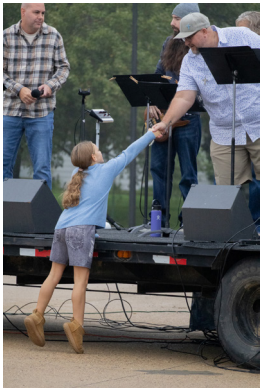


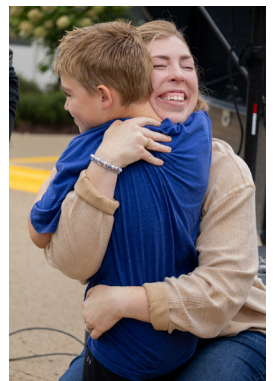
LIBRARY

MaryAnn Lockey

Many of you have mentioned the tv series "The Chosen" to me and recommend I watch it. Well, I'm a firm believer that the book is always better - at least read the book first. The book "The Chosen I Have Called You by Name," sets you in Galilee in the first century.

The people are everyday people trying to make ends meet when He comes into their lives and calls them to follow. Did you ever stop to think what Simon's wife thought of him leaving to follow Jesus? I know I did. Well, the book takes us there when Simon tells his wife. Some of you don't like historical fiction because it's not actually stated in the Bible. That's ok. But for me it had me thinking a lot more about these disciples on a human level and what Christ has called me to do personally. Remember it's fiction, you can find the book in our back -to -school display case.





MISSIONS

OCC

Sam & Marykathryn Maertens Update



Sam and Marykathryn & family continue to serve and share the love of Christ in their community. They are investing in relationships with friends from nearby countries, encouraging those who are growing in their faith and helping connect them with other Persian-speaking believers. They have also

been building relationships with Bedouin friends from the desert, who have heard many stories about Jesus. The family is praying that the truth they have heard will take root in their hearts and that God will continue to open doors for Biblical conversations.

They recently attended a regional conference that provided encouragement, refreshment, and opportunities for fellowship with other missionaries and families serving in the region. Through everyday interactions—including meeting Persian-speaking mechanics while having their vehicle repaired—they continue to find opportunities to connect with people and build relationships. They are especially grateful for the prayers and financial support that make their ministry possible and **ask us to pray that they would abide in Christ, grow in language fluency, have wisdom and unity in their relationships, and faithfully make Christ known.** Please also pray with them for open doors to share the Gospel and for God to raise up more laborers for the harvest.

If you would like to send them mail, their mailing address is: Maertens, 2306 Marti Dr, Milford, IA 51351



Operation Christmas Child

Soon the lobby will have empty cardboard boxes waiting to be transformed into a spirit filled gift! Please consider adopting a box.

Every shoebox represents a child and an opportunity to share the Gospel. A quality shoebox communicates, “You are loved. You are valued. Someone cares enough to think about you and pray for you.”

A \$10 donation is asked to accompany each shoebox. This money is used to not only transport these gifts, but also to provide bible translation into their native tongue. So when we give \$10, we’re simply not paying to ship a shoebox; We’re helping carry a Gospel opportunity around the world — from our hands to the heart of the child who will receive it — even into the remote jungles of the Amazon, the far reaches of Asia, or the plains of Africa.

But the shoebox isn’t the end of the story— it’s the beginning. Through The Greatest Journey book, children have the opportunity to hear the Gospel, learn what it means to follow Jesus, and therefore grow in their faith. Then they can share what they’ve learned with their families and friends.

That is evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication.

So, as we pack shoe boxes, let’s remember: We’re not just packing shoeboxes, we’re investing in eternity.

“Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations...”
Matt 28:19

~ Ruth Rodie

He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Luke 10:2

OUTREACH

Join Us for Trunk or Treat

Abbey Fujimoto

Media Specialist

October 25 | 4:30 - 6:30 PM | Hope Church Parking Lot

Fall is here and we are getting ready for our annual Trunk or Treat event. As we continue to reflect on how to be the most effective in our faith and serve the Lord, we are excited to bring some new things to the event this year!

Looking into what we are called to do as Christians; Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples, we found some room for the event to grow. We love God really well, and we love others really well but, are people being moved by the Gospel at Trunk or Treat? Some may have been but, this year, we would like to be more intentional in sharing the Gospel and making connections with others. So how are we doing that?

This year, we will have Bible Story Bingo as kids go through the cars. When they get to a story on the list they will get a stamp - when they have a full card, they will be entered into a raffle for a prize! The card will also have QR codes so they can learn more about those stories at home.

All the cars will be biblically themed to further share God's big story. A few more things may look different as well, but it is all with the intention to spread God's love and let His gift of salvation be known!

That being said, we invite you, the congregation, to join us in this outreach opportunity. An event like this cannot be done without the amazing volunteers who serve. There are so many opportunities from providing a biblically themed car, handing out popcorn, praying over the event and more. We ask that you come ready to share God's light whether you are volunteering or attending. Know where your HOPE comes from and be ready to share it!

Sign up for a volunteer position or bring a car in the lobby. Pray for the overall event, those who will be giving their time to make the event happen and most importantly, please pray that all who attend will see God's love and have open hearts to His truth.

See you there!

Take Them a Meal Ministry

The Take Them a Meal Ministry is looking for more volunteers! If you enjoy cooking and serving others, we would love to have you join us in blessing our Hope families through this ministry.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Kristal Jensen at 712-260-6724 or email her at lennyslady1995@gmail.com.

For those who are already serving in the ministry, let Kristal know if your email address has changed. We have had a few meal-delivery emails returned, and we want to make sure everyone is receiving the information they need. If you are no longer able to serve with the ministry, please let Kristal know as well so she can update the volunteer list.

Thank you to everyone who is considering serving through this ministry, and a special thank-you to those who are already volunteering. Your time, care, and service are a wonderful blessing to our Hope families!

~ Kristal Jensen



CONSISTORY

Meeting: August 13, 2026

Pastors: James Runcorn, Jay Van Gelder **Elders:** Arv Druvenga, Cedric Winterboer, Dean Mechler, Gary Zeutenhorst, Kevin Vander Stoep

Deacons: Eric Van Der Hiede, Jason Warren, Knut Brown, Ryan Murray **Opening prayer:** James Runcorn **Devotional:** Psalm 90:12

REGULAR BUSINESS

Approved June 11, 2026 minutes, MMSC (Ryan/Jason)

Approved June 11, 2026 financials, MMSC (Cedric/Dean)

Giving and attendance analysis by Jason.

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

TEAM REPORTS

(Purposeful Learning) Dean/Knut, Julia reported they will be praying for the students returning to school on 8/23. They have 41 preschoolers, 60-80 elementary students. Still need some volunteers for the children's church. Jay reported he is looking forward to starting the freshman youth group to assist with 8th graders making the transition into high school. Jay reported the youth had good experiences at Rocky and Immerse in Lincoln.

(Holy Living) Gary/Ryan, Gary reported the Women's Ministry had 27 women attend the Women's Luncheon at the Okoboji Bible Conference. Bible studies will begin again in September.

(Wholehearted Service) Mark/Eric, Eric stated that Jill has been getting more requests for gas cards. She has given 62 so far versus 39 for last year. Discussed options regarding having some contact with one of the pastors before being given a gas card. Michael stated the harbor update has been completed.

(Passionate Worship) Kevin/Jason, Eric presented to the consistory his plans for a once-a-month Prayer and Praise program starting in September.

(Meaning Fellowship) Arv/Mike, Arv stated that he had met with Steve and Kim Rhode about having a meal for the volunteer greeter and ushers. Date has been set for November 15th. Discussed the importance of talking to the group about an emphasis on recognizing new people and how to make that a priority.

(Loving Outreach) Cedric/Kevin G. No Report

PASTORS REPORT

James shared that he, Jay, Knut and Dean interviewed a candidate interested in a Youth internship at Hope Church. This would free up time for Jay to do some consulting with other Youth programs in the Alliance network who need assistance and support. The intern would be here 2 days a week Sundays and Wednesdays. MMSC(Eric/Jason) to move ahead with the internship position.

OTHER BUSINESS

Horizon Network Board letter regarding board nominations for the coming year was discussed. The network was recommending Chris Godfredsen for a second term on the board. MMSC(Dean/Arv) to nominate Chris Godfredsen for a second term.

Cedric closed in prayer.

ELDERS MEETING

Dean opened with prayer.

Discussed congregational concerns.

Discussed issues around the coverage for Prayer and Praise for the other 3 weeks per month.

New members' classes will be August 30th and September 6th.

James closed with prayer.

DEACONS MEETING

Opening prayer by Knut Brown

Okoboji Bible Conference is seeking \$7500 for materials to remodel. Good News to provide Labor. Deacons are sending a recommendation of \$2500 to the Missions Team to use from their budget. Hope Church received an estate check that has been requested to be used for Local Needs for Hope Church members. Inspiration Hills has a Capital Campaign for another building. It is a \$5 million dollar campaign. Deacons will update Missions 2026 YTD budget to review and visit with Missions Team on what a multi-year pledge could be. Topic of moving Library to Fireside room. Deacons received a quote from Michael for \$1100 in materials and about 1 week of his time. The Deacons did not get information on the timeline of what the current Library will turn into and what that budget proposal is. Deacons are waiting for an updated budget on 2026 and will continue to look at Building Hope pledges. Deacons would like numbers on what the current Library remodeling would cost as well. Once these numbers have been reviewed, a decision can be made on approving the move. Discussion around a request for a Local Need. Approved based on person getting pastoral counseling before receiving financial help.

Jay Van Gelder closed in prayer



Thursday, November 19 | 7:00 PM | Hope Church

General admission entry begins at 6:00 PM

Get ready for an unforgettable night of live music, meaningful stories, and the hope we have in Jesus. Rob Roozeboom will be joined by singer-songwriters **Micah Tyler**, **Jordan Feliz**, and **Patrick Mayberry** as they share their music, the stories and inspiration behind the songs, and the faith that connects it all.

Come for the music. Hear the stories. Leave encouraged.

Tickets: General Admission: \$25 **Child Ticket:** Free

All minors must have their own ticket and be accompanied at all times by a ticketed adult.

DON'T WAIT—grab your tickets today (click link below)

Visit www.riseministries.com/rise-event for more information



TICKETS

> <https://www.ticketweb.com/event/rise-with-rob-and-friends-hope-church-tickets/14337124?theme=echomin>



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



Worship Services

SUNDAYS: 8:30 am and 10:45 am

Live-streamed online:

www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer

Sunday School

SUNDAYS: 9:45 am

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