

# In Touch with

# Hope

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOPE CHURCH

APRIL 2025

**James Runcorn, D. Min.**

Lead Pastor

## Pray for Me

I've said this too often, "I'll pray for you." *What do you mean you've said this too often? You're the pastor. It's your job.* Yes, praying is a part of the job description...for the pastor, the office administrator, the janitor, the nurse, the doctor, the teacher...for anyone actually, who calls Jesus LORD. We all have been instructed and invited to pray.

What I mean by my first statement is this: At some point in the future, I intend to pray for you. That's good and all, but it doesn't always work out. Sometimes I get distracted. Sometimes something unexpected comes up that changes what I've intended on doing.

I was in the church office the other day and a friend was sharing about his struggles. Inside, I hurt for him. I told him, "I'll pray for you." Then we said our goodbyes and he left the building. Immediately, conviction hit me. Why didn't I pray for him right then and there? What prevented me from lifting him before God in that very moment? I stood in the way. For whatever reason, I decided it would be best to pray at some later point in the day.

Thankfully, the conviction moved me to respond. I quickly went into the parking lot and caught him just before he got into his vehicle. "Can I pray for you now?" He said, "Sure." I then lifted him before the throne of grace.

Did it do anything for his immediate pain? Not that I'm aware of. What it did accomplish was this – He was prayed for. He was not forgotten. He knew that I actually obeyed God's Word. He knew that I wasn't just feeding him a line, simply to be 'nice.'

May God give me the motivation and the courage to pray whenever an opportunity arises. May He do the same for you.

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

Ephesians 6:18

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## QUAKE 2025

March 21-23, our Sr. High Youth Group had the incredible opportunity to attend the Quake event in Minneapolis, Minnesota. From the moment we arrived, we knew this was going to be a special experience, one that would challenge us, strengthen our faith, and bring us closer together as a group.

The theme of the weekend was centered around John 3:16, reminding us of the unfailing love God has for each of us. Throughout every session, worship set, and conversation, we were reminded of a simple but powerful truth: We are enough. It was a message that resonated deeply with all of us, encouraging us to see ourselves the way God does; loved, chosen, and worthy.

“Packer” Dave, our speaker for the weekend, brought this message to life with energy and passion, sharing stories that were both inspiring and relatable. He had a way of making us laugh one moment and think deeply the next, helping us see that our faith isn’t just something we talk about, it’s something we live. And Echelon, the worship band, filled the room with powerful music that made it impossible not to feel God’s presence moving through us. Whether we were singing or standing in quiet reflection, the music became a way for us to connect with God in a meaningful way.

In addition to the main sessions, we took part in breakout groups that focused on different aspects of our faith. From leadership and prayer to hands-on service projects like packing meals for children in need, these moments gave us a chance to apply what we were learning in real ways. It was incredible to see how everyone engaged, stepping out of their comfort zones to grow both individually and as a group.

This trip felt different from others we’ve taken together. Maybe it was the way we worshiped, the conversations we had, or the way we saw God working in each other’s lives. Whatever it was, we left Minneapolis feeling renewed, encouraged, and closer than ever, not just as a youth group, but as a family in Christ.

The quake reminded us that we are enough. Not because of anything we’ve done, but because of who God is. And as we returned home, we continued to carry that truth with us, ready to live out our faith!

~ Colby Sherrod





# let's play **BUNCO**

Adults 55+ *and* Sr. High Youth Group  
Sunday, April 6, 2025

6:00 pm | Hope Church Harbor

*Pizza Provided | Adults bring a dessert to share*

## CHILDREN & FAMILIES

**Julia Andela**

Director of Children & Family Ministry

We are SO excited to Discover the **BIGNESS** of God in the **SMALLEST** of Things!

### VBS DATES

June 9-13 • 8:30 am - 11:45 am

### AGE GUIDELINES

#### PRESCHOOL

4 years old (by June 10, 2024) - KinderKids  
(current 2024-2025 school year)

#### ELEMENTARY

Kindergarten - 4th grade  
(current 2024-2025 school year)

#### VOLUNTEERS

Adults and 5th-12th graders  
(current 2024-2025 school year)

**QUESTIONS?** CONTACT JULIA  
[jandela@spencerhope.org](mailto:jandela@spencerhope.org)



## VBS REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 6

Community Registration begins April 14

# ROOTED

Terry Stevens  
Director of Adult Discipleship

Exciting news—Rooted has officially kicked off! A huge thank you to everyone who signed up; your participation means so much! If you missed out this time, don't worry! Just reach out to me, and I'll make sure to add you to the list for the next round.

And hold on tight—because we have something incredible in the works! We're launching a brand new Men's Ministry, and it's going to be phenomenal! Get ready for more details coming your way soon! Stay tuned!

Together we can make a difference!

## MISSIONS

### CHASING THE SIGNAL

**Reaching the people of Nepal where even cars and trucks are not seen.**

Pastor Maahir, a recent Nepali Bible College graduate and local church leader, shifts the phone to his other ear and keeps listening. The voice on the line sounds young and hesitant. "I am not a Christian," she quickly adds. **"No one in my family is a Christian. We are very strict Hindus."** In Nepal, more than 80% of the population practices Hinduism, while Christians make up less than 2%. Government policies have become increasingly restrictive, making evangelism illegal and punishable by fines or imprisonment. Yet, despite these challenges, the gospel continues to spread. Words of Hope Ministry produces gospel radio programs that air across Nepal, offering a safe way for seekers to hear the message of Christ. The programs provide contact information so that listeners can connect with local pastors when they have questions. Pastor Maahir asks the young woman if she listens with her family. She explains that the radio signal isn't strong in her home, so she climbs to a high point nearby whenever the program airs—listening in secret, but hungry for truth. **"I want to go to church,"** she says, **"but my family does not allow me to."** For now, she texts the pastor after each program, seeking answers. **"When I listen to the sermons on the radio, I feel blessed,"** she says.

Despite Nepal's restrictive policies, Christianity is growing—and you are part of the story! Pastor Maahir explains how radio is fueling this movement: **"Here in Nepal, we don't have many experienced church leaders. I studied at Bible college, but there was still much I didn't know."** Words of Hope partners with a Nepali church congregation with theologically trained leaders who are passionate about equipping pastors across Nepal. Their sermons are adapted into radio programs that reach people in cities and remote villages alike. **"I listen to the broadcasts myself,"** says Pastor Maahir. **"I learn, I preach what I have learned, and more people come to know the Word."** Believers gather in homes, fields, and workplaces—listening together, sharing what they've heard, and inviting others to tune in. The message of Christ is multiplying!

Hope Church provides funds annually to Words of Hope Ministry as part of our Missions giving. You can also give directly to this ministry as well by visiting [woh.org](http://woh.org). Join the Missions Ministry Team at Hope Church. We meet the third Monday of every month at 7:00pm.



We are pleased to announce we have hired Eric Meeter as our new Tech Director.

**Welcome Eric!**

# EASTER GARDEN



**A colorful Easter Garden is planned for Easter Sunday, April 20**

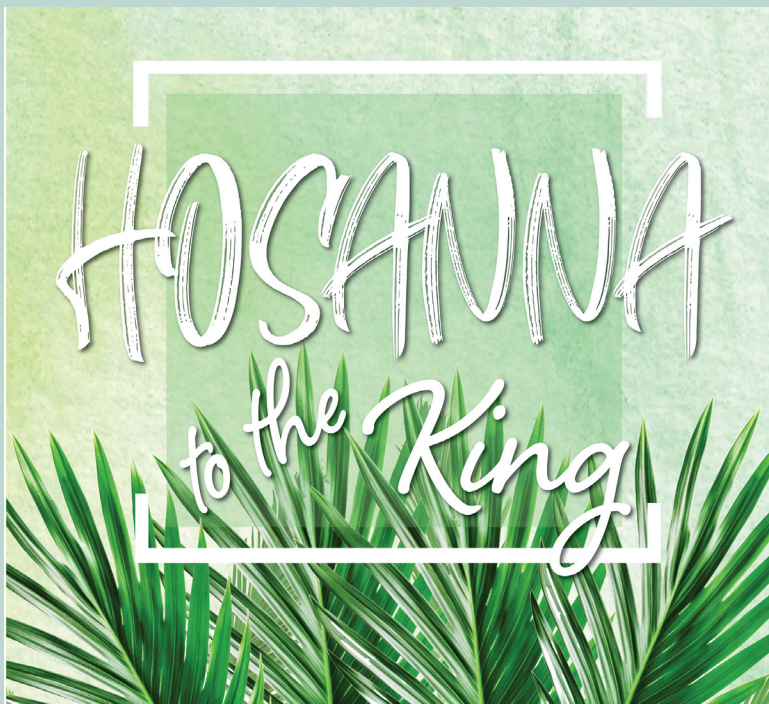
To purchase a flowering plant in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one(s), pick up an envelope at the Information Desk and return it to the office by Sunday, April 13.

**Cost is \$25 per plant**

*Invite your family and friends to our*  
**Palm Sunday and Easter Services**  
8:30 am and 10:45 am

**April 13**  
*with Kids' Program*

**April 20**



# DATES TO REMEMBER

## WEEKLY

### PRAYER & PRAISE

Wednesdays 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary

### MS YOUTH GROUP

Wednesdays: 5:30 pm - 6th Grade  
6:30 pm - 7th Grade  
7:30 pm - 8th Grade

### SR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

Sundays: 7:00 pm - 9-12th Grade

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

Elementary Palm Sunday Practice  
5:30 - 6:15 pm

## SUNDAY, APRIL 6

Communion - both services  
VBS Registration Opens - HOPE FAMILIES  
Bunco - 55+ with Sr High Youth  
6:00 pm in the Harbor

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Elementary Palm Sunday Practice  
5:30 - 6:15 pm

## THURSDAY, APRIL 10

MOM Connect 11:00 am in the Nursery

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY, APRIL 11-13

Middle School Retreat

## SATURDAY, APRIL 12

Women's Conference *(register at top right of page)*  
8:30 am - 3:30 pm

## SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Palm Sunday - Kid's Program

## MONDAY, APRIL 14

VBS Registration Opens - COMMUNITY

## TUESDAY, APRIL 15

Prayers & Squares Quilting Ministry  
1:00 pm in the Well

## MONDAY, APRIL 21

Missions Team Meeting  
7:00 pm in the Grace Room

## THURSDAY, APRIL 24

MOM Connect 11:00 am in the Nursery

## SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Young Adults Ministry  
6:00 pm in the Well

Join Us!

# WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

April 12, 2025 | Hope Church  
8:30 am - 3:30 pm



▼ REGISTER HERE ▼

<https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/WomensConference2025>

## CONCERNS FOR

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

- Velma Boonstra - is now at St Lukes and in hospice
- Marilyn Winterboer as she continues to heal
- Charity Winterboer as she heals from her knee surgery and prepares for shoulder surgery April 23
- Harold Anderson for answers for his back pain
- Laurie Gifford as her arm heals
- Linda Maxson who fell on her bike and is in the hospital with multiple injuries
- Mike Prange as we waits for biopsy results
- Mark Jensen and his up-coming tests
- Kent Kilpatrick and his ongoing health issues

## CONDOLENCES TO

Bob and Angie Graham, Laura Hallgren and their families on the passing of Bob and Laura's dad, Jim, who passed from time to eternity on March 7.

Shirley Ohrtman and family on the passing of her sister, Gladys Zweifel, from time to eternity on March 13.

## THANK YOU

We praise God for our wonderful Hope Church family! Thank you for loving and supporting us in so many ways all throughout our dementia journey and with Dave's passing. We appreciate you so much!  
~ Anita Donaldson & Family

# CONSISTORY MINUTES

**Present:** Pastor James Runcorn.

**Elders:** Bob Campbell, Doug Siepkes, Dean Mechler, Kevin Vander Stoep, Mark Lockey, Gary Zeutenhorst.

**Deacons:** Knut Brown, Jason Warren, Kelley Geerdes, Kevin Goeken, Ryan Murry.

February, 2025 • 7:00 pm

Eric Meeter met with the consistory to talk about his meeting with the Wadsworths, consultants hired to address Tech upgrade as a part of the Building Hope Campaign. Eric discussed some of the recommendations and revisions to the initial bid after their walk through of the building.

Opening prayer: James Runcorn

Devotional: Kelly Geerdes covered questions 120-121 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

## REGULAR BUSINESS

Approved January 16, 2025 meeting minutes-MMSC (Mark/Doug)

Approved January financials-MMSC (Kevin/Bob)

January 2025 giving and attendance was reviewed by Jason

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

Team reports: (Purposeful Living) Dean reported a good turnout for the Superbowl party. Numbers were similar to last year and students were fine with not having all extra activities due to space restrictions.

(Passionate Worship) Jason indicated that they are excited about the new changes regarding the sound system and tech upgrades.

They are talking about recommending a stipend position to manage the tech aspects. Jason stated that they are looking at ways to try and recruit more people to play the drums. Jason indicated that they are starting to work on Easter service.

(Meaningful Fellowship) Doug reported that there was a good turnout for the greeters and ushers in-service. Had good feedback and was helpful.

(Wholehearted Service) Kevin stated that they have been talking to Michael about other projects to address once the basement has been finished.

(Holy Living) Women's ministry will be having an all-day conference on Saturday April 12th with 3 different speakers.

(Loving Outreach) Bob reported that the missions committee gets end of the year funds from the deacons, reflecting 11% of the budget.

Bob indicated that the funds were allocated to Travis Abrahamson, to Craig and Cristi Gabhart, to UCI, and miscellaneous.

Questions came up regarding who is responsible for making the decisions about spending of year-end allocation of mission funds.

MMSC that the missions committee at the beginning of the year will present for approval to the deacons who the missions committee recommends to support for the coming year. Any additional funds allocated at the end of the year the missions committee will present their recommendations to the consistory as approved by the deacons.

## PASTOR'S REPORT

James stated he will continue the series on Romans.

James has asked Chris Anderson to preach on the 23rd of March.

James will start the new sermon series March 30th covering each book of the bible.

Baptism Question and Answer meeting 2/16 in between services for those who may have questions/interested in baptism.

Discussed how James would handle situations where people would come forward to be baptized and had not met with the Elders.

We will be doing baptism on 2/23.

James stated he will be speaking at the Okoboji Bible Conference this year.

Discussed highlights of the retreat. Discussed scenarios that can come up in ministry settings and the importance of being vigilant and having safeguards in place to reduce the risks. Discussed the importance of being willing to address the small things when we see them rather than ignoring issues and they continue to get worse. Scripture was Ephesians 6:10-20 wearing the armor of God.

Discussed the sample radio spot sent out in email. James will bring more information regarding costs.

Closing prayer- Kevin Vander Stoep

Closing Prayer - Bob Campbell

## ELDER MEETING

Opening Prayer - Mark Lockey

Discussed issues of congregational care.

Follow up on offering communion to shut ins in the congregation. Several members were provided communion in the past month.

Discussed the idea of following up and having another visit to the Highlands. James set a tentative date of April 9 at 9:00 am.

Discussed issues and ideas around low attendance at Prayer and Praise on Wednesday nights.

Discussed ideas of how we could celebrate in some way as a part of the baptism process.

Closing prayer - Doug Siepkes

## DEACON MEETING

Opening Prayer - Kelly Geerdes

Discussion/Approved - a few requests about rental fee and church appliances/tables to active church members. MMSC (Knut/Kelly)

Discussion and approval about issuing credit cards to Terry and Abbey. MMSC (Kelly/Kevin)

Discussion/Decision about placement of \$2500 check.

Discussion about creation of a Sound Technician position at a part time level. More discussion with Ryan Hoskins next week.

Continued discussion about ideas for use of excess Building Hope Campaign funds. Approved the design team to get quotes for harbor and sanctuary carpet.

Closing Prayer - Kevin Goeken



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## Worship Services

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

Live-streamed online:  
[www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer](http://www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer)

## Sunday School

**SUNDAYS:** 9:45 - 10:40 am  
Preschool through Adult

## Hope Church Staff

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