



In Touch with

Hope



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOPE CHURCH

AUGUST 2026

James Runcorn, D. Min.

Lead Pastor

Who Were the Pharisees and Am I One?

A friend shared an article with me from ChurchLeaders.com. The article is titled, "What Is a Pharisee? Here Are 12 Signs You Are One." It immediately grabbed my attention. Why? Because my immediate, knee-jerk reaction was, I hope I'm not a Pharisee! So, between my own defensiveness (Did he read something that reminded him of the leadership at Hope Church? Did he see these qualities in me?) and good old-fashioned curiosity, I clicked the link and read the article.

Frank Powell penned an article that was easy to read and equally convicting. I don't want to restate something Powell already articulated beautifully. But if I were to summarize the article as a whole, it speaks to a recurring theme we have seen as we've examined various books in the Old Testament: Are we living in complete submission to, and love for, our Heavenly Father (with all our heart, soul, mind and strength), or are we simply putting on a show?

My heart's desire is to live with complete integrity from the depths of my soul to every fiber of my being. That is also the desire of my heart for Hope Church. My favorite quote from Powell's article is this: "The issue isn't hypocrisy about any one behavior. It's a faith that only shows up when an audience does."

Now, I invite you to read the article for yourself and to consider the implications for a life lived with absolute surrender and submission to the LORDSHIP of Jesus, even when nobody is looking.

You can either search for "Church Leaders What Is a Pharisee? Here Are 12 Signs You Are One" and click on the ChurchLeaders.com link, or, if you're reading the digital version of this newsletter, follow this link directly: <https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/263528-12-signs-you-are-a-modern-day-what-is-a-pharisee.html>

*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



**Sunday School will resume
Sunday, August 23 at 9:45 am!**

PRESCHOOL (Age 3 - Kinderkids)

ELEMENTARY (K - 5th Grade)

Nursery is available to any parent that is teaching
or attending a Sunday School class.

We will also be praying for our students and teachers
as they head back to school at both services.

You are invited to bring your backpack/bag
on this day as well.

YOUTH Dates to Remember

Jay Van Gelder

Youth Pastor

August 5

6th, 7th, 8th Grade Youth Group Year End Party
6:00 pm • Hope Church

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 23

Sunday School Resumes (6-12th Grade)
9:45 am

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
Sr High (10-12) 7:00 - 8:30 pm

DATES TO REMEMBER

WEEKLY

MEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Mondays

8:00 am

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

Communion

Both Services

MONDAY, AUGUST 3

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4

Bethesda Christian Counseling

10:00 am

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

6th, 7th, 8th Grade

6:00 pm

Youth Group Year End Party

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9

Youth Mission Sunday

Both Services

Sr High Year End Party

6:00 pm

MONDAY, AUGUST 10

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12

Horizon All Staff Meeting

10:00 am

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13

Consistory

7:00 pm

MONDAY, AUGUST 17

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

TUESDAY, AUGUST 18

Bethesda Christian Counseling

10:00 am

Prayers & Squares Quilting

1:00 pm

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19

Women's Bible Study

6:30 pm

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

Back to School Sunday

Sunday School Resumes

MONDAY, AUGUST 24

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

6th Grade Youth Group

5:30 pm

7th Grade Youth Group

6:30 pm

Women's Bible Study

6:30 pm

8th Grade Youth Group

7:30 pm

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

Freshmen (9th) Youth Group

5:00 pm

Sr High (10-12th) Youth Group

7:00 pm

MONDAY, AUGUST 31

Men's Ministry Bible Study

7:00 pm

CONCERNS FOR

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

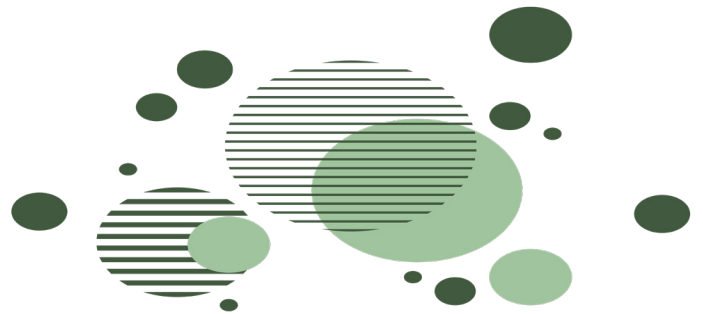
The following as they navigate their cancer journeys

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

- Todd Brockshus - healing from spinal neck surgery
- Pray for the team on the Eswatini Mission trip
- Continue to pray for Viktor Campbell (grandson of Bob and Cindy Campbell) his healing and future procedures for his cleft palate
- Linda Dickson (Katrina Howard's mom) after her stroke
- Haleigh Kuhlman - Continued prayers as she heals
- Bob Peters (friend of Norb and Kim Manwarren) after his heart surgery
- Jean Blok (former member) with health concerns
- Clarion (friend of Terry Wiese) healing from surgery
- Chelsea Johnson - suffers from gastroenteritis disease
- Tom Volkert (Cheri Prange's dad) healing after surgery
- Linda Klett (friend of Cindy Fliss) health concerns

CONDOLENCES TO

Brian and Greta Rouse and family on the passing of their brother-in-law, David Stephens, who passed from time to eternity on July 19.



THANK YOU



Missy recently celebrated 10 years as Hope Church's Nursery Coordinator!

Thank you, Missy, for your loving care for our littles at Hope. You have brought joy, safety, and God's love to the nursery every week.

On Mission with the Shermans

The first 2 weeks matter!

Every August, thousands of freshmen pull up to campus to begin a brand new chapter. For the first time in their lives, they are learning how to navigate the world on their own, finding new friends, tracking down classrooms, and locating the dining hall, all while discovering who they are. No longer guided step-by-step by parents or high school routine, they must now make every daily decision for themselves.

The first two weeks are what we call MIDOY: the Most Important Days of the Year. By the end of their first month, most students have already found their friend groups, chosen their clubs, and settled into a routine. Our goal during this critical window is to step into as many freshmen's lives as possible. We want to relieve their anxiety with a warm conversation and an invitation to a Cru event or Bible study. More than anything, we want them to feel seen as individuals, not just numbers, to know that there is a place where they can truly belong and be known. Through these initial events, we hope to share the gospel, cast a vision for a college experience with purpose far beyond a degree, and invite them into something bigger than themselves.



Prayer Requests

- Pray for freshmen hearts to be open to the gospel
- Pray that our staff and leaders would have the energy to reach as many students as possible in the first month of school
- Pray that our leaders across the state would come back from summer recharged and deeply connected to Jesus
- Pray for incoming freshman Christians to get connected and have a desire to be trained to lead and join us in reaching their campus

Get our updates

If you'd like to get our monthly updates and stay up to date with what God is doing on campuses across Nebraska scan this QR code and we will get you on the list!



Our 2026/27 Student Leaders

CONSISTORY MINUTES

Meeting: June 11, 2026

Pastors: James Runcorn, Jay Van Gelder

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

Deacons: Eric Van Der Hiede, Jason Warren, Kevin Goeken, Knut Brown, Mike Bryan, Ryan

Opening prayer: Ryan Murray

Devotional: Dean Discussed James 1:5-8.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Approved May 14, 2026 minutes, MMSC (Kevin/Mike)

Approved May 14, 2026 financials, MMSC (Cedric/Mark)

Approved Giving and attendance analysis. MMSC (Dean/Ryan)

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

TEAM REPORTS

(Purposeful Learning) Dean/Knut, Dean stated the big push is VBS this week. Jay discussed thoughts about starting a separate freshmen youth group. There are 30 8th graders this year. Jay discussed some issues that would warrant doing it this way before they would be incorporated into the Sr. High Youth group. Jay will be taking 8 Sr. High to Rocky and 40 + middle school youth group members to Immerse in Lincoln Nebraska June 23rd-28th.

(Holy Living) Gary/Ryan, Gary stated that the Woman's Ministry had no report. The Men's Ministry just finished their Evangelism 101 for the month of May. Library committee met with James regarding moving the library to another location.

(Wholehearted Service) Mark/Eric, Mark stated that Jill has been involved in VBS and will be going on Rocky. Kathy Houseman and Jane Gude will be covering for her while she is gone. Michael has been making plans for when VBS is over that they will begin work in the Harbor. Replacing carpet, drywall and painting.

(Passionate Worship) Kevin/Jason, Kevin reported that once Eric is done with VBS he will be working with James on coming up with a monthly Prayer and Praise starting in the fall as well as working with Michael on renovations in the Harbor.

(Meaning Fellowship)) Arv/Mike, Arv no report at this time.

(Loving Outreach) Cedric/Kevin G., Kevin G. stated that they are doing Meals on Wheels this month. Next week Worship in the park 10:00 service.

PASTORS REPORT

Discussed reviewing roles and responsibilities of Elders and Deacons to clarify functions and responsibilities.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussed not having a consistory meeting the month of July MMSC-(Mike/Eric) no consistory in July. James stated they will be assisting at RiseFest and doing Baptisms for the first time. They will be doing follow up on those who receive baptism to get them connected to a local church.

Kevin closed in prayer.

ELDERS MEETING

James opened in prayer.

Constitutional question was asked and answered in the negative.

Discussed congregational concerns.

Discussed ideas regarding future Prayer and Praise.

Arv closed with prayer.

DEACONS MEETING

Opening prayer by Eric Van Der Heide

An update was provided on the wheelchairs. A member of Hope Church offered to buy a wheelchair so we could have more than one.

After letting the consistory know of this topic, two were found and donated to the church!

Went into closed session to discuss staff benefits.

The worship team received a donation from completing a wedding. This donation was put into the worship team budget.

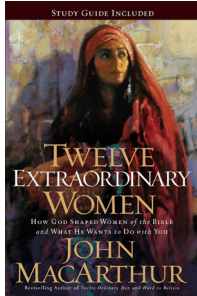
Approved the facility rental for two requests

Rise Fest is seeking bibles or donations for bibles. Approved giving \$500 for bibles.

Kevin Goeken closed in prayer

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesday Night Bible Study
August 19 | 6:30 pm | Grace Room



12 Extraordinary Women in the Bible
by John MacArthur

The book will cost approximately \$10.
If you would like Kristy Connor to order a book for you, you can email her at kconnor1423@gmail.com

Sunday Morning Bible Study
September 6 | 9:45 am | The Well

What Is Love by Kelly Minter
(1st, 2nd, and 3rd John)



Contact Ruth or Tatum with any questions:
Ruth Rodie (rkaterodie@gmail.com)
Tatum Geerdes (tatum.geerdes@outlook.com)

NEW | MEMBER CLASS

Come find out more about our church!
August 30 & September 6 - 9:45 am

Contact the Church Office if interested:
hrc@spencerhope.org

MEN'S MINISTRY

Monday Nights in August
7:00 pm | The Well

1 JOHN STUDY AIDE

Chapter 1: Christ	Chapter 2: Non-believers	Chapter 3: Believers	Chapter 4: S.L. (Spirit & Love)	Chapter 5: O.W. (Obedience & Whoever)
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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

STARTS AUGUST 23!
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