

# In Touch with *Hope*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOPE CHURCH

MARCH 2025

**James Runcorn, D. Min.**

Lead Pastor

## Don't Be Afraid to Ask

Faith can be challenging sometimes. Living out the life God calls us to, as revealed in His Word, stands in direct contrast to the ways the world expects us to live. Sometimes, the challenges come from within, by way of questions. Have you ever had questions about your faith? Have you ever wrestled with doubt? God doesn't hate those who doubt or who have questions. In fact, He demands a specific response, "Be merciful to those who doubt" (Jude 1:22 NIV). Whatever questions you've got, He can answer. No question is too difficult for the Creator of the universe. I guarantee that you will not blindside God, catch Him off-guard or stump Him with your questions. His design for the church is perfect for those who struggle. We are not only to be merciful to people who doubt, but we are called to, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). If you carry a doubt or two, or you are wrestling with difficult questions, please speak up. Contact the church office. I would love to make an appointment with you and work through the challenges together. We also have a fabulous board (consistory) of elders and deacons who are in place to help out with things like this. Our new Young Adult's Ministry launched with a series called, "Can I Ask That" by Jim Candy, Brad M. Griffin and Kara Powell. We wanted to help equip young adults with a foundation of support from the church to engage and work through difficult questions and topics. In this way, we will build one another up and be fully equipped to walk through life with confidence in Christ and in His Word.

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**Thank you so much Hope Church for sending me on a Sabbatical.** I just want to say thank you for the time away for growth, renewal, and refreshment. Time alone and time with family. It has been 28 years of doing youth ministry and I have been at Hope Church now for 16 years. I have loved my position here as a Youth Pastor so much. My Sabbatical was a great time spending time with God, and reconnecting with old alumni youth, mentors, and new people I got to meet along the way.

Here's a recap if you wondered what all took place. I started the first week in Des Moines at the Christian High School and Middle School. I got to meet with youth and ask them questions about their faith journey and how adults can assist them in their walk with Christ. It was a great listening time as students shared what their needs were and how a youth group can help them grow in their faith. The second week was out in Denver Colorado where Shantel and I were able to meet with a Counselor named Tom. Tom helped us identify great things that we are doing in our marriage and family. It was a time of reflecting and seeing how God is writing and how He has written the story of our lives together. The third week Shantel went back home and Tom and I looked at how God has wired me and what my passions are and how He has gifted me in the area of youth ministry. It was very interesting as he unpacked stuff from how I grew up and how that has shaped me in who I am today. I have never had an intense counseling session like this and I really enjoyed my time in Denver at Quiet Waters. The last week we went to the Carolina's and got to hang out with Shantel's brother's family and get to see where they work at the Univ. of North Carolina. I really thought I was going to be bored for being gone for a month and not being around people that I love, but it was so rewarding on all the past relationships that I was able to connect with in each city that I was in. It was also really cool to stop at 5 different church's youth programs and see what God is doing in each one of them, which were very different from each other. It was fun to make new relationships, spontaneously stopping and meeting youth pastors when I felt God was prompting me to pull into a Church parking lot and walk in the front door.

Lastly, I am finishing out the Sabbatical; I will be gone in the beginning of March because the cost was a lot over Christmas break, so the Consistory decided I could finish it out by hanging out with my girls and wife over Spring Break. This will be a time of family fun and just enjoying each other.

Again, I can't thank you all enough for the support you have given me and my family over the years and I pray that God can continue to use me as I continue to serve in the Youth Ministry Program at Hope Church. Thanks for being a blessing and loving the youth at Hope alongside with me.







## let's play **BUNCO**

Adults 55+ *and* Sr. High Youth Group

Sunday, April 6, 2025

6:00 pm | Hope Church Harbor

*A FUN night when 2 generations get together to eat, fellowship and play Bunco.*

*It's packed with good laughs and great conversations as well as prizes!*

Pizza provided by the Youth Ministry. Adults please bring a dessert to share.

## JOIN US FOR YOUTH GROUP EACH WEEK!

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

Wednesdays

5:30 pm - 6th Grade

6:30 pm - 7th Grade

7:30 pm - 8th Grade

### SENIOR HIGH

Sundays at 7:00 pm

## Summer Trips!

**Registration for summer trips will be closing soon!** Flyers for youth trips have been handed out at Youth Group. Contact Jay at [jvangelder@spencerhope.org](mailto:jvangelder@spencerhope.org) or 712-363-0885 if you have questions.

**Middle School Retreat**

April 11-13

**Senior High Work Camp**

June 20-30

**Middle School Power Connection**

July 22-27

**Julia Andela**

Director of Children & Family Ministry

## CHILDREN & FAMILIES



Magnified! VBS will encourage kids to look closely at the details of God's amazing world and magnify, or proclaim, the greatness of God. God made us, cares about us, loves us, forgives us, and is faithful to keep all His promises to us.

*We can praise God together! We were made to magnify God!*

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

**HOPE KIDS** opens Monday, April 7

**COMMUNITY** opens Monday, April 14

## QUESTIONS?

**CONTACT JULIA**

[jandela@spencerhope.org](mailto:jandela@spencerhope.org)

# MISSIONS

Hope Church has supported JeanJean and Kristi Mompremier as missionaries in Caiman, Haiti for many years. Recently their organization, United Christians International, began a fund drive with forty days of prayer and devotion. I know that some members of Hope Church have participated in their daily devotionals. The goal of the fund drive and devotionals was title "I am blessed to be a blessing". JeanJean & Kristi began their ministry simply by feeding people. Over time their ministry has been blessed and has grown to include feeding programs, elementary schools, a high school, pastor training and even a college teaching students agriculture skills, education and theology. Soon medicine became part of their mission under the umbrella of UCI college. During this season of prayer, UCI now turns its focus of prayer to action. The campaign to build the Surgical Center at UCI's Teaching Hospital is off to a strong start. Hope Church has had a part in helping fund this needed project. If you wish to help UCI reach their goal personally, visit <https://ucihaiti.org/healing-for-haiti>.



## ROOTED

**Terry Stevens**

Director of Adult Discipleship

I am thrilled to share that our recent movie night featuring "The Forge" was a resounding success! This film highlights the importance of discipleship, the value of our church community, and the need to support one another during challenging times. As stated in Galatians 6:2, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ." This is our calling as Christians.

If you haven't had the chance to watch the movie yet, I highly encourage you to do so. It is available on Netflix, YouTube, Apple TV and Amazon Prime. It is sure to inspire and motivate you to get involved in small groups.

Speaking of small groups, we are excited to announce that we will be launching another session of Rooted this March, with the official launch date set for March 16!

If you have any questions about the Rooted program or are interested in signing up, please stop by the kiosk in the lobby on March 2nd or 9th. I will be there to help with registration and answer any questions you may have. If you're ready to sign up now, you can use the link below:

**ROOTED SIGN UP:** <https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/RootedMarch2025>

***Important dates to remember:***

- March 16: Launch of Rooted at 12:30 PM in the sanctuary. You will pick up your books then, and groups will be assigned.
- May 4: Finance Week meeting at 12:30 PM in the sanctuary. Danny Decker will be presenting.
- May 20: Celebration Dinner. More details will follow.

I look forward to seeing you and witnessing how God works within our church community.



# JOIN US!

FOR OUR

4TH ANNUAL

## Chili COOK OFF



### SUNDAY, MARCH 9 | 5:30 PM

FREE TO ENTER | FREE TO TASTE

Show off your culinary skills - enter your best chili!

PRIZES AWARDED FOR 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE  
IN EACH CATEGORY

SIGN UP AT THE INFORMATION DESK

#### TASTERS:

**TASTING  
STARTS @  
5:30 PM!**

#### Judging Criteria:

- Presentation
- Best Flavor
- Most Unique
- Staff Choice (Terry)

#### COMPETITORS:

1. Set-up begins at 4:30 pm  
Be completely set up by 5:15 pm  
Tasting starts at 5:30 pm
2. Chili needs to be prepared prior to arrival
3. Please provide:
  - TWO (2) - large CrockPots (7 qts ea) OR a Roaster of your chili for sampling (*many have run out in prior years*)
  - Additional toppings you prefer
  - Ladle for serving
4. We will provide:
  - tables, chairs, sampling bowls & spoons
5. Decorating your station is encouraged!
6. Have fun!!



## Hope Church is looking for a Tech Director!

Do you enjoy audio/visual tech?

It is a vital part of our Worship ministry. The position is part-time and will oversee all worship services and special events.

Please send your resume to the office at [hrc@spencerhope.org](mailto:hrc@spencerhope.org).

### REMINDER

## CLOCKS SPRING FORWARD



MARCH 9, 2025



# EASTER GARDEN

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

Beginning mid March, you will be able  
to purchase a flowering plant in memory of,  
or in honor of, a loved one(s).

Envelopes will be available at the Information Desk

**Cost is \$20 per plant**



# DATES TO REMEMBER

## THURSDAY, MARCH 6

Red Cross Blood Drive 12-5 pm

## SUNDAY, MARCH 9

Chili Cook Off 5:30 pm

## THURSDAY, MARCH 13

Mom Connect 9:00 am

Consistory Meeting 7:00 pm

## SUNDAY, MARCH 16

NO Sunday School Spring Break

Rooted Launch 12:30 pm

## MONDAY, MARCH 17

Missions Team 7:00 pm

## TUESDAY, MARCH 18

Prayers & Squares 1-5 pm

## FRI-SUN, MARCH 21-23

High School Spiritual Retreat

## SUNDAY, MARCH 23

NO Sunday School Spring Break

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

Elementary Palm Sunday Practice

5:15 - 6:30 pm

## SUNDAY, MARCH 30

CAAPP Training 12:00 pm

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

Elementary Palm Sunday Practice

5:15 - 6:30 pm

## SUNDAY, APRIL 6

Communion

## MONDAY, APRIL 7

VBS Registration Opens - HOPE FAMILIES

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Elementary Palm Sunday Practice

5:15 - 6:30 pm

## SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Palm Sunday - Kid's Program

## MONDAY, APRIL 14

VBS Registration Opens - COMMUNITY

## CONCERNS FOR

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

- Marlis Kuiper as she continues to heal from her knee replacement
- Velma Boonstra who was hospitalized and is now at St Lukes
- Charity Winterboer as she heals from her knee surgery and prepares for shoulder surgery
- Marilyn Winterboer who is recovering from surgery
- Terry Wiese as she is dealing with an abnormality in her heart and waiting for clearance for shoulder surgery
- Harold Anderson who is recovering from surgery
- Gladys Zweifel who fell and broke her hip and is recovering from surgery
- Laurie Gifford who fell and broke her arm and hoping surgery will not be needed

## CONDOLENCES TO

Ken, Stacy and Kayla Mol on the passing of Ken's mom, Bertha, who passed from time to eternity on February 6.

Anita Donaldson on the passing of her husband, Dave, from time to eternity on February 18.

## CELEBRATING WITH

Jolene Hollingsworth who was baptized on February 23.

Greg Meeter on his retirement after 35 years with St Luke Homes and Services on February 28.

THE MORE  
YOU READ  
THE BIBLE,  
THE MORE  
YOU FALL  
IN LOVE  
WITH THE  
AUTHOR.

TOBYMAC #SPEAKLIFE



# 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, Alex Johnson, Kelley Geerdes, Kevin Goeken, Ryan Murry.

January 16, 2025 • 7:00 pm

Opening prayer: James Runcorn

Devotional: Jason Warren covered questions 116-119 regarding prayer from the Heidelberg Catechism.

## REGULAR BUSINESS

Approved December 12, 2024 meeting minutes-MMSC (Dean/Kevin)

Approved December financials-MMSC (Kelly/Bob)

December 2024 giving and attendance was reviewed by Alex

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

Assigned roles Head/Heart/Hands...Whole Hearted Service (Mark-Kevin G) Purposeful Learning (Dean/Knut) Holy Living (Gary/Ryan) Loving Outreach (Bob/ Alex) Passionate Worship (Kevin VS/Jason) Meaningful Fellowship (Doug/Kelly)

Vote VP- Dean; secretary-Gary

Executive Team; James, Jay, Dean, Gary, Alex, Jason

Deacons: Chair (Alex) Assistant Chair (Jason) Secretary (Knut), Grounds Liaison (Kevin G) Local Needs liaison (Kelly & Kevin)

Communion; Kevin Vander Stoep, Gary

## PASTOR'S REPORT

Will be continuing in Roman's sermon series

Consistory retreat 2/8 9-12 at Del's Garden Center meeting facility.

James will be meeting with new Executive Director of Okoboji Bible Conference to talk about how Hope can be more involved in the Bible Conference going forward.

James has been talking to Greg Alderman from the Alliance of Reformed Churches about building up the resources available through the Alliance. James indicated that the Horizon network has started to develop their own resources. As they start using these resources, they may recommend to the Alliance their use on a larger scale within the Alliance network.

Discussed some ideas to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Hope Church.

Closing Prayer - Bob Campbell

## ELDER MEETING

Opening Prayer - Pastor James

Bob reviewed the information he put together regarding providing communion to members who are no longer able to attend church.

Discussed the distribution of Elder care lists and letters that go out to members at the beginning of the year.

Discussed some congregational care concerns.

Jay, Kevin, Doug, Gary and Dean met with and approved Megan Van Drunen's request for Profession of Faith.

Closing prayer - Doug Siepkes

## DEACON MEETING

Opening Prayer - Jay Van Gelder

Covered 2024 and 2025 Ministry Plan

Jay gave an update on Youth. Next Youth Auction will be in Nov 2025. Estate gift will cover the missed auction in Nov 2024

Discussion on Building Hope Campaign, Cash Flow, and CD's

Motion Warren, 2nd by Goeken to move funds for Sabbatical Fund, Mortgage, and Undesignated Capital Improvement Fund. Open Doors 2.0 Campaign will be paid off. Motion passed.

Discussion about making Samaritans Purse temporary electrical panel a permanent fixture. Action item to pursue.

Discussion on local needs and in person requests

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

Ryan Hoskins, Worship Director

Terry Stevens, Director of Adult Discipleship

Michael Fujimoto, Facilities Director

Jill Lowe, Office Administrator

Tim Yeager, Maintenance

Levi Morris, Treasurer

Missy Lair, Nursery

Abbey Fujimoto, Media Specialist