

In Touch with Hope

Monthly newsletter of Hope Church, Spencer, IA

March, 2019

Pastor Russell Muilenburg

Heart Apps

My cellphone is old. Not “old enough to vote” old, but old by cellphone standards. I got it almost three years ago, and at the time it was the cheapest model available. Even when it was new, it was never really considered state-of-the-art. But, I paid it off more than a year ago, and it continues to do the two things I want it to do—namely: take calls and texts. So, I’m happy with it.

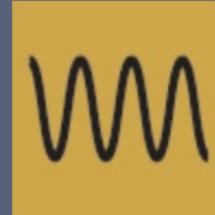
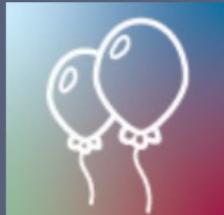
A consequence of my phone’s age and limited capacity is that I am unable to load many apps onto it. Currently, I have only one game on my phone (double-deck Pinochle, it’s a wonderful time-killer). If I go to the app store and attempt to load a new app I am told that I have to get rid of something in order to make space. Since I already have a limited selection of apps, it’s something I rarely do. So, when it comes to talking about apps and which ones are the best and most useful, I’m not really your guy. I do get the basic concept, however. Apps on your phone are supposed to be tools which make it easier to perform an activity. Apps include GPS and location-based services, exercise and fitness monitoring, order-tracking, ticket purchasing, mobile games, and so much more. It does seem as though there is a mobile app for nearly everything. But mostly, it seems as though apps are tools which are meant to aid in communication. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Pinterest, and more are apps that help you stay in touch, share stories with multiple people, post ideas to message boards, and so on. (I’m going to stop talking about cell phone apps now, because this really is the extent of my knowledge).

It is this idea of a tool that makes it easier to communicate that has prompted us to name our new sermon and small group series: *Heart Applications*. We’re not creating apps that you can download on your phone. It doesn’t really involve your phone at all. But we like the image of different tools that help our hearts connect with God.

That’s what we are going to be talking about at church for the next eight weeks or so: How does your heart best connect with God? Is it in times of **celebration** with a large gathering of people, or do you prefer the quiet and **solitude** of unplugging from the world and being alone with God? Are you inspired by the beauty of **nature**, or do you prefer the familiarity and **ritual** of memorized prayers? Do you feel closest to God when you are actively **serving** Him and others, or do you prefer to dig into His Word and learn more about Him through **study**?

Each of these approaches to connecting with God have been around for as long as the church has existed, and each is a legitimate way to grow your relationship with Him. We can all benefit from using each of these applications, and at various seasons in our life we might find ourselves drawn to one or two more than others. We are also going to contend during this series that at times we have tried to fit everyone into using one application above all others, even though our personalities and temperament might be better suited to a different approach to God.

The goal for this series is that we will all get to experience some new ways of connecting with God; and more importantly, that you will discover the Heart Application that suits you best and that you will use it to grow in your relationship with Him.





Pastor Jay Van Gelder
Youth News

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

NO APOLOGIES 2019



CORY NIKKEL



CADE THOMPSON

RESCHEDULED TO MARCH 13, 2019

CLAY COUNTY EVENTS CENTER

WEDNESDAY NIGHT 6:30-8:15PM | DOORS OPEN AT 6:00PM

TEENS (6th to 12th Grade) |

Parents & Youth Worker Training | 6:30-7:30PM

PRE-SALE VIP PACKAGE AVAILABLE

Satellite Locations | Orange City & Rock Valley - \$5 Admission

ADVANCED TICKET PURCHASE: \$5 per youth or adult
Pay Pastor Jay ~ he has your ticket

TICKET PURCHASE AT DOOR: \$10 per youth or adult

Pancake & Waffle Breakfast Fundraiser



Easter Sunday, April 21

7:30—8:30 a.m.

9:30—10:45 a.m.
free-will offering

Enjoy breakfast prepared & served by our high school youth.

Proceeds go towards our summer youth mission trips.

imitator

CHOOSING TO FOLLOW GOD

SR. HIGH
SPIRITUAL RETREAT

March 29, 30, 31
Ironwood Springs Christian Camp

Sign up deadline: March 10

GOD
has the most
amazing plan
for you.

God's Plan for Your Purity

MIDDLE SCHOOL
SPIRITUAL RETREAT

April 5, 6, 7
Lakeshore Center at Okoboji
Sign up deadline: March 13

Beth Muilenburg

Discipleship and Care

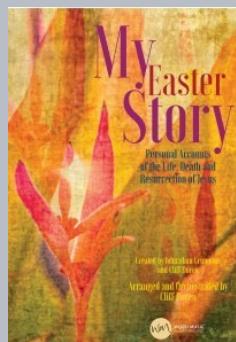
Small Groups

From March 3 - April 21, our small groups will be focused on our pre-Easter sermon series, *Heart Applications*. At Hope Church, we believe that there is only one way to salvation, through Jesus Christ. We want to know God more and worship Him with all of our life. Because our God is creative and we are all made uniquely, there is not one cookie-cutter way to connect with God. During this series, we will look at a variety of ways we can spend time with God. We can also learn to grow in grace with one another as we realize what is helpful to us may not be as meaningful to someone else and accepting that we all grow in different ways. Come learn what your heart application is and grow in new understanding of the way others can connect to God.



If you are not in a small group and would like to join one, let me know.

Bible Promise



Eric Meeter

Worship News

Easter Cantata

On Sunday, April 14 we will be hosting an Adult Musical/Cantata, *My Easter Story*, for Palm Sunday. We are inviting everyone 6th Grade through age 100+ who love to sing to join us for this great choral experience. The listen-thru will be on Sunday, March 10 at 4:00 p.m. Rehearsals will begin on Sunday, March 17 at 4:00 p.m. and run every week through April 7. Dress rehearsal will be held on Wednesday, April 10 at 7 p.m.

Volunteer Spotlight



Gloria Schmillen

Prayers and Squares

Can you explain the ministry of Prayers and Squares?

Prayers and Squares is a prayer ministry at Hope Church. This ministry combines the gift of prayer with the gift of a hand-tied lap-size quilt. A heavy thread is used to make stitches through the quilt layers, and the ends are left free to be tied in a knot. As each knot is tied by our church family, a silent prayer is said for someone in special need, who then receives the finished quilt. The Prayers and Squares ministry motto is: *"It's not about the quilt; it's all about the prayers."*

Prayer quilts may be requested by anyone for anyone from our church family. We also make baby quilts for our children being baptized. As the knots are tied prayers are said for the little ones and their parents.

Why is this ministry meaningful to you?

I believe that prayer is a very important part of our Christian lives. I also believe that we are called to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ especially for those in need. This ministry puts these two beliefs together for me. It also helps me to use what I can do and what I like to do to the glory of God.

How have you seen it minister to others?

I have been privileged to deliver some of the prayer quilts. Every time I see joy in receiving this gift. Some will immediately hug their quilt. There is nothing magical about these quilts, but it is a visual reminder that our church family is praying for them. This brings encouragement and hope. God answers prayer as His Word tells us. It is not always the way we would desire, but it is always for good for God is good and faithful. My husband received a prayer quilt five years ago. He covered himself with it while in the hospital. Recently, he is dealing with another health issue. Out came the prayer quilt again. It covered him in the hospital and now lies at the bottom of our bed at home. He's greatly encouraged as it reminds him that his Hope family is again praying for him.

Lenten Lunches

A community Lenten lunch and worship will be held on Wednesdays during Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 6, at First Pentecostal Church (across from Menards). Meal service begins at 11:30 a.m. with worship beginning at 12:20 p.m. The meal cost is \$4.00 and an offering will be taken for Feed Our Children.

Ash Wednesday Service of Prayer & Healing

On Ash Wednesday, March 6, we will be having a Service of Prayer & Healing at 6:30 p.m. This will be a special time of worship and prayers for healing—physical, emotional, and spiritual. Elders will be available to pray and anoint with oil those in need of God's loving and healing touch.

Baptism

The next baptism celebration will be on Sunday, March 17. If you would like baptism administered to yourself or a child, please contact Pastor Russell at 262-3016 or 346-8480 so arrangements can be made.

Telephone Directories

The 2019 church telephone directories are printed and can be picked up at the Information Desk.

Concerns for:

- Shelby Ranslow was admitted to the Spencer Hospital on February 21 for tests & evaluation.
- Ardell Durst had surgery on February 22.
- Betty Kaiser continues her recovery at St. Luke Lutheran Home following a heart attack.

Condolences to:

- the family of Connie Faulkner on her passing from time to eternity on February 13.

New Members:



Rick & Nancy Dean



Kristi Franker



Trenten Hansen



Stacey Hoffrichter



Dan & Abby Johnson

Sarah Kerns Children/Family News



CALLING ALL 4th & 5th GRADERS!

We will be presenting the Bible story found in Luke 24:
Road to Emmaus
on Easter Sunday

Performance: April 21st, 2019 (Easter)
BOTH services

Auditions: Sunday, March 3 during Sunday School hour (9:45)

Parts will be available for:

- Narration
- Acting (with memorization of lines)
- Stage assistants

Cast List & scripts will be given during Sunday School on March 10.

Palm Sunday

Preschool Participation

The preschool children will be performing at both worship services on Palm Sunday, April 14. They will be practicing during Sunday School, so we hope your child can participate and have fun celebrating with us! If your preschooler is unable to participate, please contact anyone on the preschool Sunday School team.

Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School is June 10–14 for children ages 4 through 4th grade (entering 5th grade in the fall). Registration for Hope families will begin April 7 through April 14. It will open up to the community on April 15 through April 29, or until we are full.

We are collecting newspaper (not shiny or coated) for a VBS project. Please place newspaper in the bin in the lobby. Thank you!



“... accept what I say,
and the years of your
life will be many. I instruct
you in the way of wisdom and
lead you along straight paths. When
you walk, your steps will not be hampered;
when you run, you will not stumble. Hold
on to instruction, do not let it go;
guard it well, for it is your life”

Proverbs 4: 10-13

Consistory News

The regular meeting of the Hope Reformed Consistory met at 7:00 p.m. in the Well. Present: Deacons Jason Warren, John Haak, Chris Swanson, Bob Graham, and Kyle Mechler. Elders Gary Zeutenhorst, Dean Mechler, Bryan Christoffer and Kurt Weeks. Pastor Russell Muilenburg. Absent: Deacon Craig Van Drunen, Elders Doug Siepkes and Brad Olson, and Pastor Jay Van Gelder. Pastor Russell opened the devotional time introducing a new video series, “Sticky Teams,” by Larry Osburne. He led the discussion on the scripture John 17:20-21 and the video. He closed the devotional time with prayer.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

- **MMSC** the January financials as presented by the deacons.
- Pastor Russell shared with the Consistory discussions he has had with Sarah Kerns regarding the current priorities for Children and Family Ministries. Those included VBS, Preschool and K-5th Grade programming.
- Pastor Russell updated the Consistory on a recent need to have staff stay out of the building due to carbon monoxide poisoning. One of the heating and cooling units in the Harbor was not functioning properly. This will need to be replaced and they are waiting on a quote for what it will cost to remove and replace that unit. He also shared that the church has been paying for a water meter that was no longer being used but was still sending a signal to SMU which resulted in the church still getting billed. Josh asked if one of the Deacons could talk to SMU about this to see if we could get credited for this.
- Pastor Russell shared with the Consistory some of the activities that Trent Hanson has been involved with as a result of being hired as the Communications Director. He has been trying to increase Hope Church’s presence on social media, and he has met with two individuals from other churches who have similar positions to get ideas about what they do. Also, Lori is now utilizing MailChimp to generate mass emails for the prayer chain and, when needed, to the whole congregation. This has been a positive change from feedback received since the change has been made.
- Pastor Russell reminded Consistory of the Consistory Retreat on February 22, at 6:00pm.
- Pastor Russell closed this portion of the meeting with prayer.

ELDERS MEETING

- The constitutional question was asked and answered in the negative.
- **MMSC** to approve the following membership requests. They will be recognized on February 24:
 - Rick and Nancy Dean, Letter of Transfer, Grace United Methodist Church, Spencer IA
 - Kristi Franker, Letter of Transfer, First English Lutheran Church, Spencer, IA
 - Trenten Hansen, Letter of Transfer, First Lutheran Church, Fremont, NE
 - Stacey Hoffrichter, Letter of Transfer, Faith Community Church, Milford, IA
 - Dan Johnson, Letter of Transfer, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Spencer, IA
 - Abby Johnson, Letter of Transfer, Bethany Lutheran Church, Spencer, IA

- Specific congregational concerns were discussed.
- Closed the meeting with prayer.

DEACONS MEETING

- Jason opened the meeting with prayer.
- Discussed the unexpected purchase of a new furnace for the Harbor. Josh is getting quotes and the purchase will come out of the Undesignated Building Fund.
- Josh also submitted for discussion improvements to the building including new office space for Trent, painting of the Sunday School rooms, outdoor trim replacement, painting of the building exterior and repair of bell tower. Until the cost of the new furnace is finalized, we are not ready to act on anything besides looking into obtaining quotes.
- Lori submitted a drawing of two minor remodeling projects to the office. We agreed with her suggestions and are asking her to obtain quotes to look further into the remodel.
- Hope Church has an ongoing problem with internet, so Kyle Mechler is taking initiative to look into upgrading our service.
- Chris closed the meeting with prayer.



BRING JOY. EXPERIENCE JOY.

919 Grand Avenue
Spencer, IA 51301
712-262-3016
www.spencerhope.com

WORSHIP

Sundays: 8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Service of Prayer & Healing
Ash Wednesday
Wednesday, March 6
6:30 p.m.

Sunday School: 9:45 - 10:40 a.m.
Ages 3 years old through Adult

schedule & sermons



*Heart Applications ~
Connecting with God*

March 3 *One-Size-Fits-All?*

March 10 *Ritual*

March 17 *Nature*

March 24 *Solitude*

March 31 *Action*

Hope Church Staff:

Russell Muilenburg, *Lead Pastor*; Jay Van Gelder, *Pastor of Student Ministries*; Josh Hamrick, *Facilities*; Trent Hansen, *Youth Ministries Assistant & Communication*; Sarah Kerns, *Children & Families*; Eric Meeter, *Worship/Music*; Beth Muilenburg, *Discipleship & Care*; Lori Swanson, *Office Administrator*