

in touch with Hope
monthly newsletter of
Hope Church, Spencer, IA

August, 2019

by Pastor Russell Muilenburg

Engaging with Joy

We are here to bring joy to Jesus and to experience joy in Him. That's the Hope Church mission statement. We often shorten it to four words: Bring Joy, Experience Joy. Those words are a part of our church logo. We put it on our bulletin cover. It's the headline on our website. It's printed on our business cards and our church polos.

We try to reference it from time to time, and when appropriate we make mention of it in a newsletter article, a sermon or in an announcement during a worship service. However, it occurred to us that many people in our church were not around a dozen years ago when the mission statement was first introduced and studied. Moreover, many who have been here since that time may have gotten so used to seeing the statement that they have stopped thinking about what it means.

So, we did a survey. Back in May we wrote some questions and put them on SurveyMonkey and then we emailed the link to the congregation and put it on Facebook. 151 people took the time to answer the questions, for which we are very grateful. The results were encouraging. One of the questions we asked was, "What three words or phrases would you use to describe Hope Church?" SurveyMonkey then sorted the responses into a Word Cloud, where the words and phrases used most often appear in a larger and darker font. The Word Cloud for this question is pictured below. The responses were overwhelmingly positive.

Another question asked you to put our church's mission statement into your own words. Here too, the answers were positive. The Word Cloud of the most commonly used words and phrases for this question is also pictured below. Those of you who answered have a good understanding of why the church exists.

The church staff was curious, however, as to whether your explanations of our mission statement matched up with our understanding of it. So, we went through each response and scored it with a "yes" or a "no" according to whether it matched the intention of our mission statement. Here, our results were mixed. Of the 151 responses, 79 were scored as a "yes." (52%) That doesn't mean the other answers were bad, or unbiblical. But they did not show a clear understanding of the words "Bring joy to Jesus and experience joy in Him." And so, we thought it would be a good idea to re-visit our mission statement. Not to change it, but to remind ourselves of what we mean by these words and re-commit ourselves to living them out as a church.

Beginning on August 18 we will be "Engaging with Joy." We will have three Sunday sermons on the meaning and intent of our mission statement. Also, during the time between services on those Sundays we will have three workshops for ages 6th grade through adult in the Harbor (there will also be activities for pre-school and elementary students during this time). These workshops will be a time for table discussions about our mission statement and how we can best live it out as a congregation. These three weeks will be the prelude to the beginning of our new church year on September 8.

"What three words or phrases would you use to describe Hope Church?"

Open God word place Jesus church enlightening sermons feel Good
Christ-centered youth Bible Biblical great Fun encouraging Loving
connected friendly uplifting Welcoming focused
caring oriented Family Positive active Child Outreach
Christ centered Bible based Word community Big inviting Friendly joyful
Home God Faith Growing

"How would you explain our mission statement in your own words?"

things teachings Hope Church hands feet find think means believe make happy
sharing part word serving others know receive serving means
bring joy Jesus live life show walk bring joy relationship Jesus
experience
people better joy enjoy lives gives
worship everyone joy joy Jesus Jesus make love
together God share love us glory want blessings bring spread
church God love praise glorify life follow feel honor others Everything
Christ happiness experience fun Will reflect Lord Praise lord Hope



Pastor Jay Van Gelder Youth News

On Sunday, August 11, the youth who went on the summer work trips will be leading us in worship!



Sr. High Work Trip

HIS (Hands In Service) Work Camp ~ Maryville, TN
June 22-29, 2019

34 senior high students and adult leaders attended a work camp through the Synod of the Heartland in June. The theme was *Linger* where we learned to have the desire to stay in the presence of God, and to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

On our way home we stopped in St. Peters, MO to attend worship services at Christ's Church where Milan Johnson preaches.



6th, 7th, 8th Grade Work Trip & Power Connection

Bethel University ~ St. Paul, MN
July 23-28, 2019

45 middle school students and adult leaders attended the Power Connection Work Camp, *Encounter*, where we had hands-on service project experiences. We then attended Power Connection where the theme was *Aware*. One thing we learned is that we need to heighten our spiritual senses and be aware of who God is and what He is always doing in our lives.



Sarah Kerns Children & Family News

Family Game Night

Come join us at our Family Game Night on Sunday, August 4 at 6:30 p.m. in the Harbor. Families of all ages and all stages of life are invited! Bring your favorite game(s) and a snack to share.

Notes From Jesus

As a follow up from VBS this year, we delivered the book, *Notes From Jesus*, to 98 children who said “yes” to knowing more about Jesus and having him as their forever friend. A group of 12 adults (Russell Muilenburg, Beth Muilenburg, Jay Van Gelder, Jill Lowe, Shelly Helmink, Mike Barr, Cody Kerns, Shelby Reese, Debra Wittrock, Jason Holt, Charity Winterboer and myself) paired up with youth (Tate Zinn, Cohen Roth, Gavin Timmer, Gabe Rieman, Shayler Van Gelder, Gretchen Haak, Averie Nelson, Rylee Hamrick, Kaylee Rosacker, AJ Zinn, Colby Sherrod, Kiera Brown, Shaylee Brown, Dylan Timmer, Jaida Essick, Millie Hemann, Ellie Muilenburg, Noah Rieman, Dylan Connor, Paige Orosco and Graycelyn Hameister) and set out to connect with these kids. What an experience it was! We have so many stories of God’s perfect timing, intentional love, and divine pairings during this fun outreach activity! We continue to pray for all of these kids, many that already attend Hope Church, that they may continue this excitement and curiosity as they get to know Jesus!

J.O.Y. Kids Workshops

We are thrilled to partner with the student & adult workshops that will be held in the Harbor during the three-week sermon Series, *Engaging With Joy*, focusing on our church mission. Guess what? This mission applies to our kids, too! Nursery will be available, and children 3 years old through 5th grade will have an interactive experience to learn right alongside what everyone else is! Please mark your calendars for August 18, 25 and September 1 from 9:45—10:40 a.m. for this fun opportunity!

Sunday School

Can you believe it’s almost time to go back to school already? We are excitedly planning for the Fall and have some fun things in store! Stay tuned to announcements for further updates!

Beginning Sunday,
August 18, our worship
services go back to
8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School resumes
September 8 from
9:45-10:40 a.m.
for ages 3 years old
through adults.



Engaging with JOY

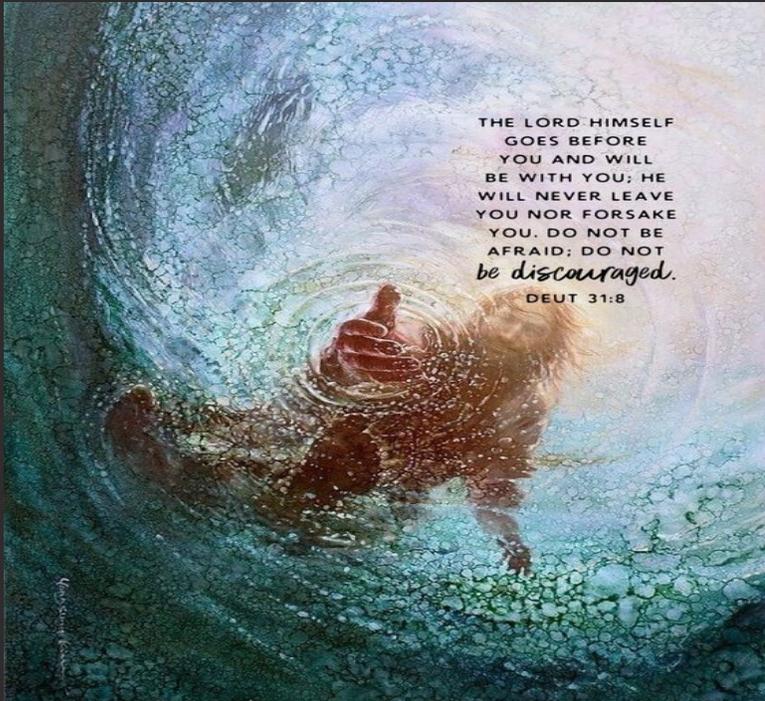
Sunday Morning Workshops
August 18, August 25, September 1
9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Children ages 3–PK: Preschool Hall
K–5th Grade: Harbor Basement
6th Grade–Adults: Harbor

Nursery will be provided.

Beth Muilenburg
Discipleship & Care

Bible Promise



Celebrating with:

- Trevor Kunzmann and Rachael Oziomek who were united in marriage on June 29.
- Brody Groen and Mikaela Bahlmann who were united in marriage on July 14.
- Kyle & Mallory Rehnstrom on the birth of their son, Tucker Matthew, on July 6.
- Keith & Karissa Begeman on the baptism of their daughter, Liza, on July 14.
- Alex & Mackenzie Johnson on the birth of their son, Milo James, on July 16.

Concerns for:

- Bill Hughes had pace-maker surgery on July 8.
- John & Elaine Weir as they are both experiencing some health issues.
- Shelby Reese as she continues to struggle with getting her health and medications regulated.
- Betty Kaiser who is in the Spencer Hospital with congestive heart failure, pneumonia and a leg infection.
- Klaas Groen who is in the Spencer Hospital with an infection and will begin physical therapy soon to regain his strength.
- Tom Steinkamp who is on Hospice in the Spencer Hospital.

Condolences to:

- the family of Dawn Tripp on her passing from time to eternity on June 24.
- the family of Brady Hare on her passing from time to eternity on July 2.

Volunteer Spotlight

Char Maertens
Library Coordinator



Why do you like to volunteer in the church library?

I like to volunteer in the library, because I enjoy reading and discovering new great reads. Our library has a great selection of books and videos, and it's fun to watch kids and adults discovering a new series or a new author and methodically check them all out. We have a great team working in the library to keep the new books on display and keep up to date on checking them in.

How many items are checked out in a month?

I'm not sure how many get checked out on a monthly basis, I would guess between 50 and 75.

How often do new things get ordered?

We put in a big order in the fall and spend about \$600, but also order a few here and there during the year. We also have all the books and videos on the computer in the library where you can search by title, author or subject to find what you're looking for.

How does our library bring joy to Jesus?

I think the library brings joy to Jesus, because everything in there should draw you closer to Him, whether it be fiction, biographies, videos or children's books. That's our goal anyway. Check us out!

New Members to Hope Church



Keith & Karissa Begeman
Nora, Eli, Liza



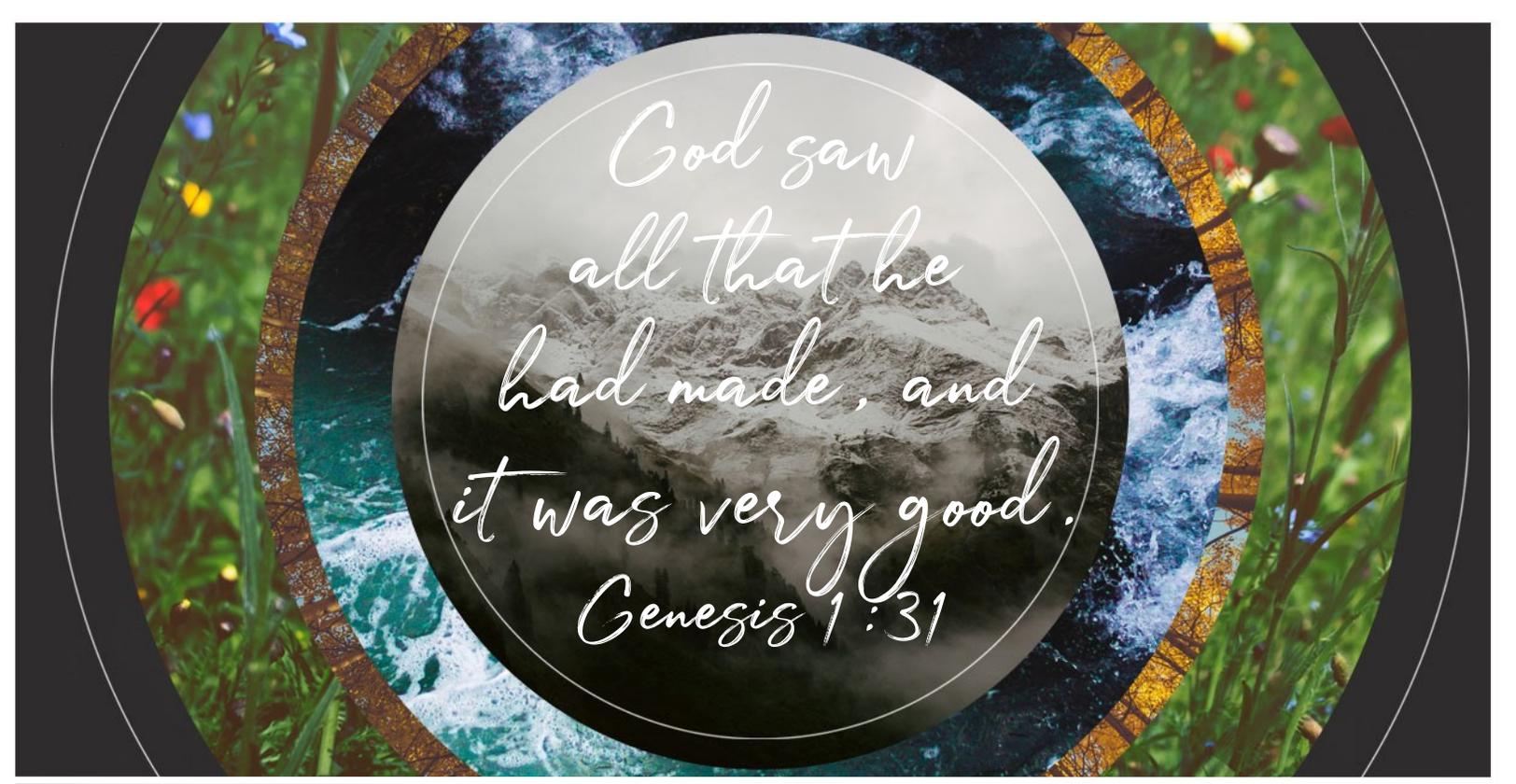
Duane Harris



Michelle Howard



Aaron & Katie Techen
Aaden, Maxx, Nolan



God saw
all that he
had made, and
it was very good.
Genesis 1:31

Consistory News

The regular meeting of the Hope Reformed Consistory met at 7:00 p.m. in the Well. Present: Deacons: Bob Graham, Kyle Mechler, Craig Van Drunen. Elders: Gary Zeutenhorst, Dean Mechler, Brad Olsen, Bryan Christoffer, Kurt Weeks and Doug Slepkes. Pastors Russell Mulenburg and Jay Van Gelder. Absent: Deacons John Haak and Chris Swanson. Pastor Russell opened the meeting with reading from Hebrews 13:7 and led the discussion on the scripture and video regarding *Sticky Teams*. He closed the devotional time with prayer.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

- **MMSC** to approve the minutes of June 13, 2019.
- **MMSC** to approve the June financials as presented by the Deacons.
- The Consistory broke up into small groups and reviewed one section of recommendations by the General Synod 2020 report and then gathered together again to share thoughts generated by their small group discussions.
- Pastor Russell discussed with the Consistory a special meeting of the East Sioux Classis at the First Reformed Church in Hospers on July 23, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss entertaining the First Hospers request to enfold with Trinity Reformed Church of Orange City. Pastor Russell invited Consistory members who were interested to join him in attending the meeting.
- Pastor Russell and Staff Management shared the progress on filling the vacancy for the Worship Director position. Pastor Russell informed the Consistory that the candidate that had applied initially decided to withdraw his application. Pastor Russell shared that they had two other candidates apply and he and members of the Staff Management committee interviewed the two candidates. After discussion **MMSC** to approve offering to fly both candidates out for interviews as soon as can be scheduled.
- This portion of the meeting was closed with prayer.

ELDERS MEETING

- Pastor Russell opened this portion of the meeting with prayer.
- The Constitutional Question was asked and answered in the negative.
- **MMSC** the membership requests of the following people:
 - Keith & Krissa Begeman - Letter of Transfer from First Christian Reformed, Sioux Falls, SD.
 - Duane Harris - Letter of Transfer from Faith Lutheran Church, Spencer, IA.
 - Michelle Howard - Profession of Faith
 - Aaron & Katie Techen - Letter of Transfer from Sibley Presbyterian Church, Sibley, IA.
- **MMSC** the Baptism request for Liza Begeman, daughter of Keith & Krissa Begeman.
- Congregational concerns were discussed.
- The meeting was closed with prayer.

DEACONS MEETING

- Jay opened in prayer.
- Discussion the recent hailstorm insurance claim.
- **MMSC** to accept the bid from Custom Design Coatings to paint the building exterior.
- Craig closed in prayer.



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Worship

Sundays:

Through August 11
9:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Beginning August 18
8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

First Wednesday
Worship & Prayer ~
Senior Recognition Night
August 7, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Schedule & Sermons



*Legendary:
Heroes of the Bible*

August 4: David



August 11: Youth Trip Reports



Engaging with Joy

August 18: Bring Joy to Jesus
August 25: Experience Joy in Jesus

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*; Beth Muilenburg, *Discipleship & Care*; Lori Swanson, *Office Administrator*