



in touch with Hope

monthly newsletter of Hope Church, Spencer, Iowa

August, 2020

By Pastor Russell Muilenburg

Be Thirsty

I've started running again. Not a lot. I don't think I will ever train for a marathon again. But three or four times a week, I'm getting up a little earlier and putting three or four miles in before I start my day. It feels pretty good. Not while I'm running mind you, but later in the day when I can tell I've put some exercise in and I can enjoy those endorphins.

I don't know if you've noticed this or not, but it has been really, really hot lately. Like, even at 6:30 a.m. it can be really steamy outside. When I get back even from a two mile run, and run at a pretty leisurely pace of 10 minutes a mile, I am just soaked with sweat. And thirsty? I feel like I can just stand at the sink and drink straight from the faucet.

That's real thirst. I've heard all the advice about drinking eight glasses of water a day, and I try to be mindful of it. But frankly, most days I have to force myself to drink even a couple of glasses of water as I'm just not all that thirsty. After running in the July heat, though? Or after spending a couple hours doing yardwork? Or after golfing nine holes in the hot, summer sun? I can drink glass after glass of water and not even feel like I've made a dent in my thirst.

One of the final verses in the Bible talks about being thirsty. Revelation 22:17:

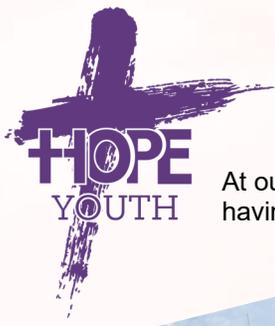
The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Whoever is thirsty. Whoever wishes. They are invited to come to the throne of Jesus and receive the free gift of the water of life. The key is we must be thirsty.

We must long for the restoration that Jesus gives. We must recognize that as things are now we are spiritually-sick beings living in broken down bodies on a sin- scarred planet who are woefully separated from God. As things are, our mouths are full of cotton and our brows are dripping with sweat, and we feel the heat of the sun beating down on us. As things are, we will never slake that thirst or find the refreshment we need from the wells that that world offers. We must be thirsty.

We must see that we need to be made new, and then we must come to the Lord Jesus to drink. We must accept Him for what He says He is: the living water. The way, the truth, and the life. We must take from His hand the offer of forgiveness earned at the cross and we must set ourselves to live—with the things above in mind—to live for Him here on earth.

And so, my invitation to you today is this: Be thirsty. The way you feel on a hot summer day, the need for a cool drink of clear water. Let that be the way you feel about Jesus. Be thirsty for the things of heaven. Long for this great renewal. Then come to Jesus and drink.

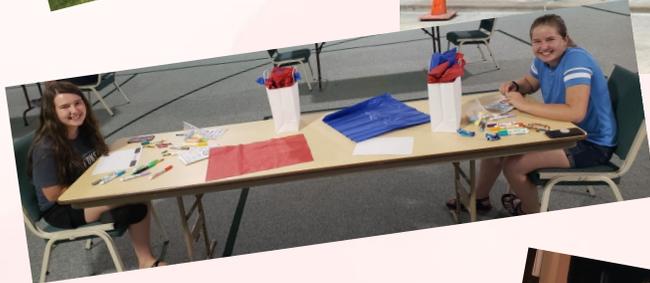


Pastor Jay Van Gelder Youth News

At our youth group meetings in July we were able to do a few special activities and be outside. We are done having youth group for the summer months, but be watching for our fall kick-off dates!



6th, 7th & 8th Grade Youth Group



Sr. High Youth Group



We honored our senior students at a cook-out before they leave for college. Some were not able to attend, but they will all be missed! Blessings to you as you begin your next chapter!

Craig Cannon
Music News



concert & cookout

Sunday, August 16th
6:00-8:00 p.m. / Church Parking Lot
burgers, chips, popcorn & sno-cones will be served

enjoy listening to the talented musicians from Hope Church perform some of your favorites

Bottled water provided. Bring a lawn chair if you would like to sit outside your car.



2020 VBS Stats

- 648 Individually wrapped snacks & drinks
- 300 Water balloons for game time
- 215 Pieces origami paper for a craft
- 180 Cups of soil for a craft
- 110 Googly eyes for a craft
- 80+ Hand tie-dyed t-shirts for children and volunteers
- 54 Children signed up (63% do not attend Hope, 37% attend Hope)
- 51 2-liter plastic soda bottles for a craft
- 40 Music CDs
- 40+ Kids who said "yes" to following Jesus!!!
- 22 Volunteers
- 15 Bottles of blue hair gel for a craft
- 7 Bibles given out
- 5 Incredible host families
- 5 Large bottles hand sanitizer
- 3 Brand new VBS songs learned
- 3 Awesome Bible stories told
- 1 Pandemic
- 1 VERY successful VBS where Jesus was shared with our community!



A special shout out to these Host Families as they sacrificed their time, not just during the VBS days, but also for set-up & planning, and opening up their homes and their hearts to serve in an incredible way during a difficult and uneasy time.



Kenyon & Amanda
Brown & daughters,
Shaylee & Kiera



Cody Kerns & kids,
Lexi & Cohen



Angie Murray



Christy Prenzlou



Bill & Valerie Tulip

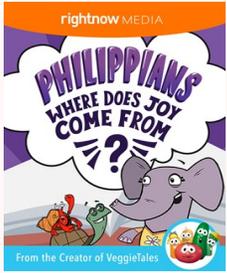
Jason Holt also offered to be a host; However, a sixth site was not needed so he volunteered at other sites. If you see these families please thank them for being the hands and feet of Jesus, and representing Hope Church this summer!

If you were unable to participate in backyard *BOLT* VBS this year, it can still be done in the comfort of your own home with your family! There's minimal preparation, easy to follow instructions and a video that leads you step-by-step through each of the three days. Please contact me at 712-240-0516 or skerns@spencerhope.org if you would like more information and instructions.



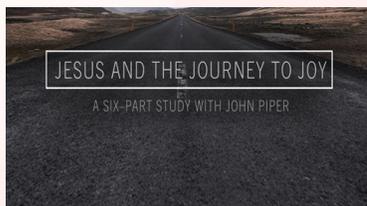
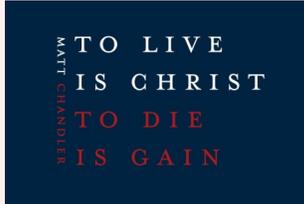
Beth Muilenburg

Discipleship and Care



Pastor Russell's next Sermon Series will be on Philippians. Parents, if you are looking for something to help your younger kids, check out RightNow Media's study, *Philippians: Where does joy come from?* by Phil Vischer, the creator of VeggieTales.

Adults looking for a study, try Jo Saxton, Matt Chandler or John Piper. If you need free account access to RightNow Media through our church's fee subscription, contact Beth.



I know from talking with many of you that you miss being inside our church building, so I thought I would bring it to you. See if you can figure out what these items are from the inside of Hope Church.

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



Celebrating with:

- Kylee & Chad Seaman on the birth of their son, Carson James, on July 7.
- Olivia & Taylor Huseman on the birth of their daughter, Holland Grace, on July 16.
- Theresa Mitchell and Dick Seeley who were united in marriage on July 18.
- Leah Moore and Tony Sparks who were united in marriage on July 18.
- Lisa Robbins and Kris Webber who were united in marriage on July 25.
- Molly & Luke Lovin on the birth of their daughter, Malin Ann, on July 26.
- Terry & Eileen Johnson who celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on July 26.

Condolences to:

- Bill Craig on the passing of his wife, Marilyn, from time to eternity on July 6.
- Kolesa Kier, Amanda & Kenyon Brown & family, Tammy O'Brien & family and Mindy & Austin Wells & family on the passing of Kolesa's husband (Amanda, Tammy & Mindy's father), Steve Kier, from time to eternity on July 17.
- The family of Merrill Schoer on his passing from time to eternity on July 21.

1. Communion Set 2. Sound Board
3. "Praying Hands" painting in the Grace Room 4. Pillows from the Children & Worship Room 5. Metal fish artwork behind the Information Desk 6. Dishwasher in the Harbor Kitchen

Answer Key





Consistory News

The regular meeting of Hope Reformed Consistory met at 7:00 p.m. in the Well.

Present: Deacons Bob Graham, Derek Bailey, Levi Morris, Craig Van Drunen and Kyle Mechler. Elders Brad Olsen, Cedric Winterboer, Darrell Todd, Dean Mechler and Kurt Weeks. Pastors Russell Muilenburg and Jay Van Gelder. Absent: Deacon John Haak and Elder Gary Zeutenhorst.

Pastor Russell led the devotion by reading from 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 and opened in prayer.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

- **MMSC** to approve the minutes as presented for June 8, 2020.
- Pastor Russell led the discussion in reviewing the financials for June. There continues to be a shortfall of about \$22,000 for the year.
- Pastor Russell informed the Consistory that Greg Meeter is stepping down as church treasurer. Levi Morris has indicated he would be interested in filling the position.
- Pastor Russell led a discussion concerning the Payroll Protection Program. The discussion led to three potential options of what to do with the money received from the Payroll Protection Program. The options are:
 - 1) to pay the loan off or give the money back
 - 2) keep the money as a low interest loan
 - 3) keep the money and ask for forgiveness.Since the government has extended the program from 8 weeks to 24 weeks there will be more discussion at next month's meeting.
- **MMSC** to approve the June financials as presented by the Deacons.
- Pastor Jay led a discussion on social distancing guidelines the staff should use for planning future programs and events. It was decided the staff should use the guidelines already set for social distancing.
- Pastor Russell gave us an update on VBS. There were five host sites that offered VBS on either July 10-12 or July 12-14, and about 50 children total attended.
- Pastor Russell discussed the Vision 2020 report. There are three recommendations:
 - 1) Restructure. Classis would be reorganized as affinity based rather than geographically based.
 - 2) A new mission agency. Create a new non-profit independent of the RCA to house the international missions
 - 3) Mutually separate. The report has set up guidelines for a church to leave the RCA. Russell has sent letters to the greater Consistory to meet on Aug 4 to discuss the Project 2020 report.
- Dean Mechler led a discussion concerning a sabbatical for Pastor Russell. Dean presented an outline and costs for a potential sabbatical for Pastor Russell to take next year.
- **MMSC** for Pastor Russell to proceed with researching sabbatical options.
- Pastor Russell closed this portion of the meeting with prayer.

ELDERS MEETING

- The congregation question was asked and answered in the negative.
- Pastor Russell shared that Beth has continued to make phone calls to the congregation during the pandemic.
- Pastor Russell indicated he would be having a Starting Point Class on July 26.
- **MMSC** the baptism request for Greyson Wetrich, son of Andrew and Breanna Wetrich.
- Congregation concerns were discussed.
- Pastor Russell closed the meeting with prayer.

DEACONS MEETING

- Pastor Jay opened the meeting with prayer.
- Levi accepted the church treasurer position with Greg stepping down.
- **MMSC** to give a thank you gift to Greg Meeter for his years of service as church treasurer.
- We will look into an audit and talk to Danny Dekker about this.
- Bob closed the meeting with prayer.

HOPE CHURCH

BRING JOY. EXPERIENCE JOY.

919 Grand Avenue

Spencer, IA 51301

(712)262-3016

www.spencerhope.com

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays

9:00 a.m.

Drive-In Service

Hope Church Parking Lot

10:45 a.m.

Livestream & In-Person Worship Service

Sanctuary

SERMONS



No Turning Back

*The Letter to the
Philippians*

- August 2 *He Will Complete the Work that He Has Started*
Philippians 1:1-11
- August 9 *They Can't Imprison the Message*
Philippians 1:12-26
- August 16 *Live Worthy of the Gospel*
Philippians 1:27-2:11
- August 23 *We Work, God Works*
Philippians 2:12-18
- August 30 *Joyful Embrace*
Philippians 2:19-30

Hope Church Staff:

Russell Muilenburg, *Lead Pastor*; Jay Van Gelder, *Pastor of Student Ministries*;
Craig Cannon, *Worship/Music*; Josh Hamrick, *Facilities*, Trenten Hansen,
Youth Ministries Assistant/Communications; Sarah Kerns, *Children/Families*;
Beth Muilenburg, *Congregational Care*; Lori Swanson, *Office Administrator*