



In Touch With Hope

Monthly Newsletter of Hope Church
Spencer, Iowa

January, 2022

By Pastor Perry DeGroot

THE WEEK AFTER CHRISTMAS (CON'T)

It's the week after Christmas, the celebration of Jesus' birth; how are you and I any different?

THE WEEK AFTER CHRISTMAS for the shepherds according to Luke 1:17-18, 20 meant telling everyone they met. They would never be the same.

In a delightful sermon entitled, "When the Angels Were Gone," G. L. Chappell emphasizes that when the angels announced the Good News to the shepherds they took action. They went to Bethlehem to see the Christ-child for themselves.

Chappell then sets up a hypothetical situation in which the shepherds respond quite differently. They simply sit around discussing the brightness of the angelic appearance and the wonder of the message.

Some 40 years later, one of the shepherds tells his small grandson about that eventful night. The youngster asks, "But Granddaddy, was what the angels said really true?" The shepherd continues telling him what he has heard about Jesus, even the reports of His resurrection. But when the lad keeps asking, all the elderly shepherd can do is shake his head and say, "I don't really know. I never went to see."

Many people are like that shepherd. They have heard moving sermons about Jesus. They have seen the changes Christ has made in the lives of some who believe on Him. But they have never come in faith to Christ themselves.

WHERE ARE YOU AT ON THE WEEK AFTER CHRISTMAS IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ONE WHO IS JESUS CHRIST THE LORD; THE SAVIOUR who has come to bring good news of great joy for all people?



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There is a story that I learned as child, which became imbedded in my memory. We had this story on a small 45 vinyl record; I listened to it often. Even now I can still recite some of it by memory without too much difficulty. IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE....

It is January 1, 2022 and it is THE Week AFTER CHRISTMAS. The following poem captures many of my thoughts, and also introduces us to some reflections and realities I believe we need to ponder.

It's the WEEK after Christmas and all through the house.
The paper, the toys, the bows, and the gifts are still strewn about.
Another Christmas has come and gone,

Now we can settle down for another year long! The excitement and fun,
OH! It was dandy,
But Ahhh, how I ache from way too much food and candy!
The scene in my mind now changes,
As I think of Joseph, Mary and Jesus the week after,
still among the animal mangers.
What transpired on Christmas was the miracle of Jesus' birth,
The shepherds visit and their story of angels; singing about peace on earth.
Joseph thought he came to Bethlehem to pay taxes,
Now a house he must find before much time elapses.
So Joseph set out to survey the town,
Because Mary and the babe can't stay here in these stables.
Maybe he could find a suitable place,
Where he could start making yokes, stools, and sturdy tables.
It's a week after the celebration of Jesus' birthday,
Has it made any difference in our lives in some way?
Jesus' birthday could become just another church event.
We can't let that happen, because it should be more,
than just sentimental time being spent!
Jesus' birthday is the greatest day of them all,
because it tells us that God is love and sent His Son,
to bring salvation for all...great and small!
May each Christmas celebration, lead us to understand better;
peace, hope, faith, joy, and love, so that we might look forward, to life
with the Lord above!

(CON'T)



Youth Pastor
Jay Van Gelder

YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATES

Youth Group resumes with a new series entitled "Good Things"!

WHOLE CHURCH

The Book of Colossians Series Kicks Off -- January 9th

"What we think about Jesus matters. Our perception of Him shapes us—what we say, how we treat others, even what we think. If we paint Jesus as any less than who He is as supreme over all creation and savior of the world, not only does our theology slip, but the working out of our faith also suffers.

In this 8-session series, Louie Giglio will take us through the book of Colossians to help us form a complete picture of Jesus. What we believe about Him influences everything from our corporate worship to our relationships to our attitude toward sin. Now alive in Christ, we can live a life worthy of God instead of falling back into the ways of the world."

Middle School: Wednesday Jan. 12th

High School: Sunday, Jan. 16th

"You know the saying, "good things come to those who wait"? It's true for Christmases now, but it was true on the very first Christmas as well. You see, the day Jesus came to earth wasn't a sudden surprise. It was the first step in a long-awaited plan. In this 4-week series, we'll hear the Christmas story from the perspective of the prophets in the Old Testament, who foretold and then waited for the good things God had in store. Christmas is a reminder of what the prophets proclaimed: that God has always had a plan, that Jesus completes God's plan, that God's plans bring joy, and that God's plans require sacrifice."



NEW YEAR, NEW CONTACT INFORMATION?!

Calling all Hope Church goers! Whether this has been your church home for a week, or 30 years we need you help in updating our database! We want to be able to serve you and communicate with you in the best way possible so please call, email, or stop into the church office to check that we have you and your families correct contact information on file!



Julia Andela

Children & Family Ministry News

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY UPDATES

Sunday School Kick-off for Preschool-5th Grade - January 9th

SPECIAL NOTE: K-5 families are invited to join us for our large group lesson and then stay for a parent meeting while kiddos are in small groups!

MINISTRY NEEDS

Children's Church Volunteers Needed -

1 service, 1 time per month! Contact Julia for more information!



Why Sunday School?

Have you ever wondered why churches have Sunday School? I mean most of us could give the cliche answer "to learn about Jesus", and that's obviously not wrong! But really, have you stopped and thought about why that's important? It is no secret that church Sunday School programs nationwide are losing their appeal. There are several answers to the question of why that's happening, but what if instead we focused on why those excuses pale in comparison to why our kids (and we adults, too) need Sunday School! Check out these 3 "whys":

1. No, "Sunday School" isn't in the Bible but the idea of teaching the Bible to our children sure is! Check out Ephesians 6:4: "Parents, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." In the 1800s teaching The Word was the core instruction at school, and we all know that isn't the case in public schools today. That leaves it up to parents to instill the truths of the Bible to their families, which can feel like an incredibly heavy weight to bear alone. Sunday School provides 1 hour of the week where children are taught these truths outside of the home!
2. Peer pressure is real, even in elementary school, so learning alongside and building relationships with other children who are like-minded will build up a child's Biblical knowledge and give them the strength and accountability to live the way the Bible teaches them to! "Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm." -Proverbs 13:20. Sunday School gives children the opportunity to walk with and grow alongside other children and families striving for Biblical wisdom!
3. Lastly, Sunday School is a great way to start the habit of studying God's Word with others! This "why" has huge implications!! Proverbs 22:6 says, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." If we as adults train our children in regularly studying God's word with others they will be more likely to desire spiritual growth when it becomes their own decision someday. This why matters eternally! It's our job as parents to teach our kids about God, share His Word with them and pray that they will choose Jesus as their Lord and Savior one day.

That is why Sunday School matters. We dedicate that one hour a week to build up children for their short earthly life and to prepare them to make the only choice that matters, an eternity with Jesus!

Consistory News

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

Present: Decons: Bob Graham, Levi Morris, Kyle Mechler, Eric Van Der Heide, Luke Lovin, Derek Bailey

Elders: Dean Mechler, Kurt Weeks, Arvin Druvenga, Cedric Winterboer. Pastor Brandon Morrow.

Absent: Darrell Todd, Pastor Jay Van Gelder

Dean Mechler opened with devotion and Kurt Weeks prayed.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

MMSC to approve the November 11, 2021 minutes

MMSC to approve the November financials as presented by the Deacons.

Discussed and voted to apply for forgiveness on the PPP loan

Arvin went over future pulpit supply schedule

Approved the hiring of Trish Halder as office administrator

Eric gave update that Trish will start on December 20

Dean gave an update on the pastoral care team

Staff management has sent times to meet with staff to go over 2022 contracts

Decided to recognize Lori Swanson on December 12 for her service to Hope Church

Decided to recognize Ray Meyer and Kathy Houseman for their service to the church at the congregational meeting

Approved a stipend for Pastor Perry, Ray Meyer and Kathy Houseman

Discussion on the agenda for the congregational meeting.

Discussion on potential names for pastoral search committee

Discussed and decided to hire Slingshot to help with the pastoral search

Arvin went over the tentative 2022 church schedule

Cedric closed with prayer

ELDERS MEETING

Brandon opened in prayer

Constitutional question asked and answered in the negative.

Approved requests for transfer of memberships

Finalized the membership classes on January 16 and January 23

Accepted the Profession of Faith request for Kayla Mol

Congregational concerns were discussed.

Darrell closed the meeting with prayer.

Elder and Deacon Installation

In accordance with the Constitution of the Reformed Church in America, unless there are reasonable spiritual objections presented to the Board of Elders, Darrell Todd, Cedric Winterboer, Barry Anderson, Arvin Druvenga, Bruce Groen and Jeff Helmink called as Elders and Derek Bailey, Levi Morris, Luke Lovin, Eric VanDer Heide, Ryan Christoffel and Terry Stevens will be installed as Deacons on the 2022 Consistory. Search Team 2022 will be Mike Bryan, Shelly Helmink, Eric Meeter, Marcy Nelson, Kim Rhode, Sean Sherrod, Doug Siepkes, Mary Van Drunen, Sandy Van Wettering, Jason Warren, Deb Wittrock and Gary Zeutenhorst.



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WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays

8:30 a.m. Sanctuary

10:45 a.m. Sanctuary

10:45 a.m.

Live-streamed online



www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer

At Your Convenience



Online:

www.spencerhope.com



Spencer Municipal Utilities

SMU Channel 3:

(on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.)

HOPE CHURCH STAFF:

Jay Van Gelder

Pastor of Student Ministries

Craig Cannon

Worship/Music

Josh Hamrick

Facilities

Austin Bryan

Youth Ministries Intern

Julia Andela

Children/Families

Trish Halder

Office Manager