



In Touch with Hope

Pastor James Runcorn

Lead Pastor

Pray for Marriages??

But, I'm single! But, I'm widowed. This doesn't apply to me! You might not be married. You might have no intentions of ever getting married. Please allow me to share with you why your prayers are important, even with and through our marriage challenge this month. Paul writes to the church at Ephesus, "...always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" (Eph 6:18b). This would include married people. We are seeing a decline in healthy, faithful marriages across the board. This isn't something that only plagues our society. The crumbling of marriages has crept into the walls of the church and has devastated countless families. We need the hand of God to intervene in our brokenness and to restore what sin has destroyed. We also need faithful mothers and fathers who can walk arm-in-arm, following our Savior and leading their children in His ways. To take it a step deeper, look at how Scripture describes the relationship between us (the church) and Christ Jesus. The church is the bride of Christ and He is the bridegroom (Eph 5:22-32; Rev 19:7-9, 21:2, 9). The church – believers everywhere - need your prayers. Another aspect to a marriage prayer challenge is to commit to praying for believers. We need to remain faithful to the One who has always been faithful. Remaining faithful to Him, will allow His Spirit to cultivate His fruit within us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal 5:22-23). This will send a message of hope to a world in need of His love. Will you commit to pray?



**Scan to join the
Marriage Prayer Challenge**



Pastor Jay Van Gelder

Youth Pastor



Youth Trip Information

Registration for Middle School youth trips opens up February 1. If your student would like to attend either or both the Middle School Retreat in Dayton, IA or the Power Connection + Work Camp trip this summer, they can pick up a flyer at Youth Group or Sunday School.

Details for the Senior High Spiritual Retreat and Summer trip will be announced soon.

The date for the summer trip is June 22 - July 1.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT MEETING

February 7 by each Youth Group Time

5:30 pm - 6th Grade

6:30 pm - 7th Grade

7:30 pm - 8th Grade

Please plan to attend this meeting regarding registration for trips.



MSR 2024
april 12-14, 2024
dayton, iowa



July 23 - 28, 2024
St Paul, Minnesota



Watch the Game!

Eat Some Food!

BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

INFLATABLES

LAZER TAG & OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES!



COST

YOU = \$10

YOU + 1 FRIEND = \$5 + \$5

YOU + 2 OR MORE FRIENDS = ALL FREE!!!

Parents' Night Out

Hey, everyone! Julia here with a little bit of the "why" behind our upcoming Parents' Night Out event:

God tells us throughout the Bible how to prioritize our life:

1. God (Mark 12:30)
2. If married, your spouse (Ephesians 5:21-33; Genesis 2:24)
3. If a parent, your child(ren) (Deuteronomy 11:18-19; Ephesians 6:4)
4. Everything else...

However, culture seems to set a very different list of priorities for us and it's all too easy for the lines to get blurred. A blog from Genuine Christian Women shared this: "When it comes to your top priorities, they must stay where they are. Nothing should knock God out of his top place – not even your [spouse]. Additionally, children, although more needy should not usurp your [spouse]'s position. Likewise, careers and outside responsibilities mustn't creep in ahead of our children. We must keep these important priorities in order."

If reading this feels a bit like a punch to the gut, first of all, I'm with you. Every time I am reminded of this I feel that tinge of conviction! But, the best way to move forward is to talk to God. Repent of the ways you may have reordered His priorities, and then make a change.

- The best way to put God first is to get in His Word and spend time with Him in prayer daily. Here are some resources for some Bible reading plans: <https://www.ligonier.org/posts/bible-reading-plans>
- The best way to make your spouse your #2 is to pray for them and set aside time for them (ahem, the upcoming Marriage Prayer Challenge, Parents' Night Out).
- The best way to make your kid(s) your #3 is to pray for them and set aside time for them (anything from 15 minutes reading a book together to scheduled 1-1 dates).

Parents' Night Out comes from a desire to encourage parents to take time to prioritize each other by removing one big obstacle: childcare! We provide free, fun and safe care so you don't have to search for or pay for it. This night is not only for couples though. Single parents, this night is for you, too!! Enjoy some much deserved "me time" or connect with friends while we hang out with your kiddo(s).

Scan the QR code below, or follow this link (<https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/PNO2458>) to sign your child(ren) up for PNO on February 10th from 5-8pm. Care will be provided for children ages 0 through 5th Grade.

Scan to for PNO!



Missions Focus



Dear Hope,

It's not super often that I (Karen) am the main writer on our monthly newsletters, but Winter Conferences are wrapping up for the season, and I'm super eager to share all I've been working on for the past 9+ months!

Winter Conferences are an amazing opportunity for college students to gather, experience Jesus, grow together in their faith, and discover their place in the mission of God. It was such a privilege to spend the better part of 2023 redesigning this conference to appeal to this current generation and apply all of the designs to the slides, signage, promotional materials, swag, handouts, and more. This year we had six Winter Conferences to prepare for! Thankfully I didn't do this all alone, I was under the guidance and help of a coworker, Rachael. It was truly a team effort!

Not only that, but I had to balance redesigning Winter Conference with completely overhauling the visual brand of Summer Missions. In 2023 alone, Cru sent 1,151 students on mission stateside and overseas for the summer. With such a huge network of opportunities, Cru has needed a way to visually identify all of the opportunities as a whole, yet keep space for each culture to be reflected individually. This year, we are offering around 130 different trips students can go on, so I had to design 130 different designs to help promote each trip!

Because of your support and prayer, I am able to serve Cru on a national level with my unique, artistic giftings that will help draw countless students in to new places and experiences where they can learn, grow, and serve.

As always, we thank you for your generous love and support. If there are any ways we can be praying for you please let us know!

~ John & Karen Corrigan



The Armor of God and His Mighty Power Put on the Belt of Truth

Do you feel powerless as a Christian, weak, with little or no spiritual strength? Then the first thing we need to do is put on the belt of truth.

As a young boy of 8 or 9 years old, the longing desire and aspiration of my heart was to wear a belt. To wear a belt was a sign of manhood and maturity, but there was no way that a belt would keep jeans on my waist and hips. Three or four times a year I battled with tonsillitis, which left me thin and small in stature, therefore suspenders were a necessity to hold up my blue jeans or dress pants.

Our reflection in this moment for meditation will be about the belt of truth and spiritual power as a soldier for Jesus Christ in our struggle against the evil one and his schemes. *“Stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist.” Ephesians 6:14.*

The Apostle Paul is sketching a picture of a Roman soldier and comparing it to our battle against the devil and the spiritual forces of evil. There were four different uses or functions of a belt for a Roman soldier. First, there was the breech-like leather apron worn to protect the lower abdomen. Next, there was the belt which was buckled on together with sword as the last decisive step in the process of preparing oneself for battle. Then, there was the way the belt was designed or colored designating one as an officer. Finally, the immediate or practical use of the belt according to scholars, was to hold a soldier's tunic tight, so that he might be free in his movements.

The imagery here is that the belt of truth holds everything together to help the soldier to be as effective as possible in battle. Even though the last act of preparation for battle by a Roman soldier was to put on his belt; there is a particular reason the Apostle Paul mentions it first in the need to be strong in the Lord and putting on the armor of God.

The truth is powerful. It exposes lies and develops trust. What is the truth? Where can it be found? God's Word is the truth, and His truth has been perfectly revealed in Jesus Christ, who said, as recorded in *John 14:6*, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father (God) except through me.”* The truth is known through Jesus, His life, and His Words.

The truth is that we are sinners struggling with our selfishness and sin. We are weak regarding the devil's schemes appealing to our selfishness and the desires of our flesh. We cannot be strong in the Lord, put on the full armor of God and take our stand against the devil's schemes, unless we believe in Jesus Christ and receive the power of His Spirit in and over our lives. And we can know His power only through a consistent, persistent, disciplined reading of the Scriptures and by loving obedience to His truth.

Satan is a liar, take the time to read how he even twisted the truth and tempted Jesus. It is found in Matthew 4:1-11. Discover how Jesus himself used the truth of God's Word from the Old Testament to resist the devil.

A Roman soldier needed to keep his leather belt in good condition to support the weight of his sword. We need the truth of the Lord to support our stand against the devil's schemes. When you and I have a solid, strong, consistent grasp of the truth of God's Word; then we are strong in the Lord and can take a stand and resist when temptations and evil desires surface.

A Roman soldier was unprepared for battle without his belt. The same is true for us, we are unprepared and ill-equipped to battle temptation and the schemes of Satan without the TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD IN JESUS CHRIST.

In Jesus Christ we have strength and power; He has overcome the world. *“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”* said Jesus in John 16:33. *“We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.”* Philippians 4:13.

When Satan plants doubts that God does not love you, when our feelings of despair and despondency overwhelm us, we are upheld by the truth of God's Word. *“In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Neither death, nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height or depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 8:37-39.

When Satan fires his doubts that God does not care and no one else cares. The truth is, we can *“cast all our cares on Him, for he cares for us.”* 1st Peter 5:7. *“I will never leave you; I will never forsake you.”* Hebrews 13:5b.

May the truth of God's will and ways be firmly, buckled In place in your mind and heart!

Consistory News

Present: Pastor James Runcorn, Pastor Jay Van Gelder
Elders: Arvin Druvenga, Barry Anderson, Doug Siepkes, Gary Zeutenhorst,
Kevin Vander Stoep
Deacons: Eric Van Der Heide, Ryan Hoskins, Ryan Christoffel, Luke Lovin

December 14, 2023 • 7 pm

Opening prayer & Devotion on Heidelberg Questions #86-91 by Pastor James

REGULAR BUSINESS

Reviewed and approved November minutes MMSC (Eric VH, Doug S)
Eric reviewed November financials and they were approved MMSC (Barry, Luke)
Eric reviewed November 2023 giving and Arv the attendance analysis
Congregational Celebration follow-up: discussed comments, not typed up yet.

Pastor's report

Sunday service schedule reviewed through and of the year.

Galatians serice to start in January, installation of new consistory members.

Discussed TVs being hard wired in coffee and open area for people who need to step out

Staff Management Report

Discussed staff management structure. MMSC to discontinue structure (Arv, Eric) James as chair and Vice Chair of consistory will work together moving forward

Other Business

Upcoming congregational events, next Consistory meetings set

ELDER MEETING

Opening prayer by James Runcorn

MMSC (Arv & Barry) Baptism request approved - Kunzmann Twins Christmas Eve 10 am service

Closing prayer

DEACON MEETING

Guests: Jason Warren, Pastor Jay

Luke Lovin opened with prayer

Insurance policy update

Live feed for Lobby discussed

Year-end deposit by Alex and Luke

Offering pairings for 2024 determined.

Jason Warren/Alex Johnson new check signers.

Eric Van Der Heide and Luke Lovin to be removed as check signers.

Geothermal update approved

Youth budget discussed

Director of Adult Discipleship salary discussed

Eric Van Der Heide closed in prayer



Concerns for

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

Kathy Houseman who is recovering from surgery.

Ray Ohrtman who suffered a small stroke and had a fall. He has returned home and will need 24 hour care.

Joyce Lemke who is in the hospital.

Terri Wiese who had hip replacement on January 31.

Charlene Hamrick who was hospitalized and is now home recovering.

Bob Faulkender who is hospitalized with pneumonia.

Shelly Helmink's sister, Tiffany Cole, who had surgery and is home recovering.

Terri Groen's sister, Lori Hermstad, who will undergo chemo for breast cancer.

Congratulations to

Sam and Kellen Madison on the birth of their daughter, Makenna Lynn, on January 17.

Condolences to

Tim and Missy Yeager on the passing of Tim's brother, Mike on January 24, from time to eternity.

Joe and Joyce Klein on the passing of Joe's brother, Darrell on January 26, from time to eternity.

Keep Us Informed

If you have moved, have a new phone number or email, please let us know so we can update our database. We also want to celebrate with you if you have a birth, or pray for you and your family if there is a death, hospitalization or other need in your family. You can contact the church office at 262-3016 or by email at hrc@spencerhope.org.

Marriage Prayer Challenge

Join us during the month of February for this daily marriage prayer challenge and see what God can do in your marriage, in your home and in your faith journey!

Scan to join the
Marriage Prayer Challenge



3RD ANNUAL
Chili
COOK OFF

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25
5:30 PM in the Harbor

All are welcome to join in the cooking & tasting of some great chili & enjoy fellowship with your church family!

Prizes awarded!

FREE TO ENTER & FREE TO TASTE **SIGN UP** AT THE INFORMATION DESK



919 Grand Avenue
Spencer, IA 51301
(712)262-3016
hrc@spencerhope.org

Worship Services

SUNDAYS: 8:30 am and 10:45 am in the Sanctuary
8:30 am services live-streamed online: 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	Children & Families Director
Ryan Hoskins	Worship Director
Austin Bryan	Youth Ministries Intern
Perry DeGroot	Pastor Emeritus/Congregational Care
Josh Hamrick	Facilities Manager
Jill Lowe	Office Administrator
Tim Yeager	Maintenance
Levi Morris	Treasurer
Missy Lair	Nursery

