

HOPEFUL TIMES

A Publication of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church - Reading, PA

Thought for Our Times

Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, to deliver their soul from death, and keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and shield. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.

Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you. (Psalm 33:18-22)

March Birthdays

Delani Walker.....March 11
 Anita Evans.....March 12
 Judy Schaeffer.....March 20

April Birthdays

David Hassler.....April 1
 Lillie Rauch.....April 1
 Elizabeth Epler.....April 2
 Scott Schaeffer.....April 2
 Mark Hassler.....April 4
 David Klein.....April 5
 Josephine Torres.....April 11
 Phillip Mengle.....April 14

Anniversaries

Judy & Scott
 Schaeffer.....April 22



Lent in the time of Covid.

Here we are in the beginning weeks of the season of Lent, the part of the church year that begins on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17 this year) and ends at sunrise Easter morning (April 4). The origins of this season of 40 days are hazy in the mists of time, but many traditions have become attached to the season. Fasting, alms-giving and prayer are the three main spiritual practices associated with Lent. The idea is that we are preparing ourselves spiritually to celebrate the resurrection of Christ on Easter. This all sounds very pious and even helpful, but it seems to me that we have been following these practices for a year now—not just 40 days. And I'm not sure that more sacrifice is going to make us spiritually healthier. I don't know about you, but fasting from so many of our accustomed activities, coupled with plenty of prayer, and lots of extra generosity in giving these last many months, has left me feeling, well, spent. I think this season of Lent (the word itself means Springtime!) we might do better to fast from those things that drag us down. Fast from self-criticism. Fast from judgement. Be generous with yourself—times are tough! You are enough! By all means continue in prayer: "Thank you, God, for the lengthening days, the vaccine, and the light at the end of the tunnel. Help us hold on. We see you in the beauty that surrounds us as Spring arrives. Amen."

Pastor Mary

Dear Hope Members and Friends,

Thanks to the help of so many partners, we have been able to continue to provide meals for our neighbors each Tuesday evening. We served over 10,000 meals last year with the help of Café Esperanza staff. This year, meals have been provided in various ways. A crew from Hope cooked at home and delivered food to the church. Thanks, Judy, Margie and Anita! We also have a new and very promising partnership with Atonement Lutheran Church, including the frequent presence in our kitchen of Jillian who wants to help coordinate meals for Hope's Table. If anyone is interested in preparing a meal, we need enough food for 80-90 people, and we always need help serving food from 4:30-6:00. Of course, we also ask for your continued prayer for this ministry that helps to build relationships in our neighborhood.

We are...**Hope Evangelical
Lutheran Church****Hope For the Neighborhood**

601 N. Front St. Reading, PA 19601
610-374-2071
www.jcishope.org

All Are Welcome!

Pastor: The Rev. Wolfe
Music Director: Scott Schaeffer
Secretary: Margaret Wunder
Sexton: David Troche

A Special Thanks...

During Lent, it has been our tradition to use *Holden Evening Prayer* for our mid-week service. Since we could not be together, Scott and our Praise Team decided to try to do the service from a distance! Each member listened to the accompaniment for the music, recorded just their voices singing the parts, and sent them back to Scott. Using a computer program, all the parts were put back together and added to the accompaniment. A final recording was made and will be used each Wednesday during Lent at our 6:30 service. Please join us to experience the talents of these young adults!

Thanks to:

Brandon and Kelsi Kegerize
Hannah and Ben Knox
Hannah and Lauren Wolfe-Blatt
Chris Hassler

**Rejoice in hope,
be patient in suffering,
persevere in prayer.
(Romans 12:12 NRSV)**

Faces of Hope - Raymond Snyder

Address: 31 Devonshire Dr, Wyomissing PA

19610

Age: 93

Occupation: Retired from Cartech after 37 years.

Family Members: Wife: Linda; sons: Rick & Jim; daughter Joanne; 2 step-daughters Jennifer & Michele. Grandchildren: 9; Great-grandchildren: 8



How long have you been a member at Hope? Approx. 20 years

How do you serve the congregation, past or present? Served as an usher in the past

What is your favorite worship song? "In the Garden"

What is your favorite Bible Verse? Psalm 23..."The Lord is my Shepherd"

What do you enjoy about Hope? The friendliness of the people, Scott's music, Pastor Mary's sermons, and singing hymns.

What would you like to tell the people of Hope? I feel I have been blessed to have reached 93. Don't take life for granted. Look at each new day as blessing from God and a new beginning.

A Message from Council

I hope this newsletter finds everyone healthy and staying safe! I'd like to let you know who your council officers and members are for this year.

Officers
Margie Wolf - President
Bill Knox - Vice President
Judy Schaeffer - Secretary
Chris Hassler - Treasurer

Brandon Kegerize
Deb Maley
Jonetta Printz
Gloria Mengle
Phil Mengle
Anita Evans

Please reach out to anyone on council if you have any questions or concerns that council can address. We continue to discuss our ability to return to in-person Worship. God willing, the numbers of virus cases in Berks County continue to stay down, and MAYBE we can return for Holy Week. This certainly isn't a sure thing and you will all be notified when a decision is made. Let's just remain HOPEful!!!!

Margie Wolf - Council President

Zoom Opportunities

*Sunday Worship - 10:00 am

*Bible Study - Wednesdays at 10:00 am

*Hope Mid-Week Service (Holden Evening Prayer) - 6:30 pm

(Meeting ID: 650 095 9253)

*West Berks Mission District Worship / Zoom - Wed. 7:00 pm

(Meeting ID: 885 5323 5621 Passcode: 321147)