

HOPEFUL TIMES

A Publication of Hope Lutheran Church, Reading PA

Thoughts for May

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.”
Romans 12:12

Set your clocks for 12:12 each afternoon and say a special prayer for Hope and the world!

The Church is not empty. The church has been deployed!

Support Our Ministries

If you are able, please consider one of the following:

1. Mail in your offering using your giving envelopes.
2. Place your giving in our locked mailbox.
3. Go to our website at www.jcishope.org and click “Give Online”.

Thank you for your support in these uncertain times. Although the church has left the building, our ministries continue.

May Birthdays

- Nanci Taylor..... May 9
- Eugene Frymoyer.....May 10
- Mary Wolfe.....May 14
- Violet Schaeffer..... May 16
- Margie Wolf..... May 21
- JoAnne Kegerize..... May 25
- Betty Spencer.....May 26

Dear Hope Friends and Family

Many of you join me each day at 12:12 p.m. to pray, and it is an experience that makes me feel comforted in this time of distancing. It is a communion, of sorts, when we are connected to God and to each other. In case you don't remember why we picked 12:12, it is because this is one of Hope's signature verses, painted along the ceiling on the north side of the sanctuary. The NRSV version of the verse is “Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer”. This seems more pertinent than ever, doesn't it? Especially, the “be patient in suffering” part, and the recommendation to “persevere in prayer”. After all, in times of trouble, prayer is a reflex, isn't it? But what about that first part, “Rejoice in hope”?



Members Decorate Their Doors on Palm Sunday

I've been struggling a bit with this on some days. The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, the head of the Global Mission Unit of the ELCA, had this to say in a sermon the other day: “Faith is the ability to hear the music of the future. Hope is the courage to dance to its tune today.” This time of trouble will pass, and whatever the future holds, we know that we are held in the loving arms of the Creator, whose love will never let us go. So, with our future secure, let's keep dancing!

Peace,
Pastor Mary





Virtual Worship Comes to Hope

Although our building is closed, worship is alive and well at Hope. Each Sunday, we gather as a family of faith to worship our Lord, each from our own homes. Using special software called Zoom, we can connect to the service from our computers, phones, or smartphones. It's not like being together, but this gives us the chance to not only worship together, but also talk to each other both before and after the service. Please consider joining us for our worship. Here's how...

• From a Smartphone

1. Download the app "ZOOM For Meetings"
2. Open the app and click on "Join A Meeting"
3. It will ask for a meeting ID. The ID for Hope is: 650 095 9253. Enter the ID and tap Join.

• From a Computer

1. Go to your browser and enter: www.zoom.us
2. At the top of the screen, select JOIN A MEETING.
3. Enter the mtg. ID listed above.

• From a Landline or Non-Smartphone (audio only)

1. Dial 1-929-205-6099
2. Enter the meeting ID from above.

(Note: toll charges will apply if you don't have a long distance plan.)

In all cases, if the service (or meeting as it is referred to) has not started, you will get the "Waiting for the host to start the meeting". Just let that screen open and eventually the meeting will begin. Also, for security reasons, please do not share the meeting ID on social media.

Hope You Can Join Us!

Taking Care Of Our Neighbors

It's hard to believe, but Hope is busier than ever right now! For some time, the number of families visiting our food pantry each month has remained stable, hovering at about 200 twice each month. In March we saw a big increase; we served 250+ families on the first Tuesday of the month, then 350 on the second Tuesday. For our first pantry in April, due to decreased availability of volunteers amid safety concerns, we requested prepacked boxes of non-perishables and bags of dairy and produce. The Food Bank was able to provide only 200 of those,



and we made up an additional 16.

These were all gone by 11:30 that morning, leaving many families without assistance. In addition, as you may have seen in Saturday's Reading Eagle, staff from the Doubletree have reached out to us for assistance for their furloughed employees. The last



two Fridays we were able to serve an additional 130 families. We are bracing for our next pantry on Tuesday, to be held in the parking lot for safety reasons.

Of course, Café Esperanza was unable to celebrate its Grand Opening last month, but we are open for business!

Chef Angee, Hospitality manager Emily, and a crew of volunteers provide dinner each Tuesday and

Thursday evening at 5:30. Last week 120 people dined on Chili, fresh cornbread and dessert on Tuesday, and 144 received a tuna or ham and cheese hoagie and dessert on Thursday. Thanks to ATV bakery, Tropical Bakery, Brewers Pub, Grand Central Taproom, and so many local bakers, this is a community effort. We are truly all in this together!



Thank you to all who made generous contributions to the "Our Daily Bread" fundraiser. We raised \$2,000 and the ELCA Hunger Appeal matched the first \$500 for a grand total of \$2,500 to fund our feeding ministries!

A huge "Thank you" to so many friends of Hope who have expressed their desire to help us minister to the people of our congregation and the community we serve. Through their generous contributions, we are able to continue to reach out to our members and help families put food on their tables.