

Being People of Hope

*A hopefully helpful handbook for the mission and ministry
of Hope Lutheran Church, Homer City, PA*



2010 Edition

Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church

a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

35 Ridge Avenue
Homer City, Pennsylvania 15748
Church Phone: (724) 479-9431
www.findhopehere.net

Our Leadership

Pastor Stephen C. Bond
(724) 549-6094 (cell)
pscbond@gmail.com

Hope Congregational Council 2010

Meets 3rd Mondays at 7:00pm

Irv Kochel, *President*
Ed Ober, *Vice-President*
Bonnie Craft, *Secretary*
Marian Kensey, *Treasurer*
Jim Cook
Bill Dodds
Mary Pease
Mike Shaw
Ben Sink
Cindy Zundel

Music & Worship

Tom Bush, *Organist & Choir Director*

Being People of Hope
a hopefully helpful handbook
for the mission and ministry of Hope Lutheran Church

Table of Contents

Sunday Worship and Christian Education..... p. 4
Hope in the Midst.....p. 4
Sunday School for all ages.....p. 4
Fellowship Half-Hours.....p. 5
Sharing in Our Ministries.....p. 5
Rites and Life Passages.....p. 10
Worship throughout the Church Year.....p. 11
Affiliations and Associations.....p. 12
A Brief History of Hope.....p. 13
Glossary of Terms.....p. 14
Invitation to Commune (see *Sacrament*).....p. 15

Underlined, italicized words in this booklet are defined in the
Glossary of this booklet, found on pages 14-15.

Sunday Worship

Weekly worship at Hope is every Sunday at 11:00 AM. Our weekly *liturgy* includes the celebration of Holy Communion, readings from the Scriptures according to the Revised Common Lectionary, preaching, and hymns and songs with organ and keyboard accompaniment, along with the leadership of Hope's choir.

Our Sunday liturgy comes from the *Lutheran Book of Worship* for the first two Sundays of each month, and from *With One Voice* for the second half of each month.

Hope in the Midst: Contemporary Worship

On the fourth Saturday of each month, we share an additional liturgy of Holy Communion, using an original guitar-led liturgy and the leadership of Pastor Steve and other musicians from the congregation. Join us for "Hope in the Midst" at 7:00pm each *fourth Saturday of the month*.

Sunday School for all ages

Christian education opportunities abound every Sunday, September through May, beginning at 9:30am. An Adult Forum, which explores weekly Scripture passages, meets downstairs in the *Fellowship Hall*, and is led by Hope member Mary Ann McCurdy. Children's classes (for ages 3 and up) meet at 9:30 AM upstairs in the *sanctuary* with music before breaking into groups in the classrooms downstairs.

Fellowship Half-Hours

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday morning from 10:30 to 11:00am, join us for conversation over coffee, tea, and other refreshments downstairs in the kitchen and Fellowship Hall. All are welcome!

Sharing In Our Ministries

At any time of the year, you are welcome and invited to participate in our committees and ministries. Prayerfully consider how God is calling you to share your time and talents within our church and in our community, then see the contact person(s) listed for more information.

Worship & Music Committee

Plans seasonal themes and art in worship. Meets monthly on the third Saturday of the month to plan seasonal themes, music selections, and special worship and prayer services.

Council Representative/Contact: Bonnie Craft

Christian Education Committee

Coordinates the Adult and Children's Sunday School Classes and Vacation Bible School. Meets monthly.

Council Representative/Contact: Ed Ober

Evangelism Committee

Seeks opportunities for the people of Hope to share the Good News of Jesus with all, to create welcome within our congregation, and to be a public presence in our community.

Council Representative/Contact: Pastor Steve

This section continues on the next four pages.

Sharing In Our Ministries, *continued*

Property/Building Committee

Maintains the building and property so that it can be used for ministry.

Council Representative/Contact: Jim Cook, Ben Sink,
and Bill Dodds

Social Ministry Committee

Leads the congregation in outreach and mission activities, collections, and serving neighbors beyond our doors and around the world, including Hope's *fair trade* ministry. Meets 3rd Mondays at 6:00pm.

Council Representative/Contact: Mary Pease

Thrivent Financial For Lutherans

Connects with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to support wider service to the community through matching funds and other resources.

Contact: Rita Truitt

Shared Ministry Cabinet

Coordinates shared ministry with New Life Church, our sister congregation in Marion Center, including joint worship services, service and fellowship activities, and the pastoral ministry of the congregations. Meets quarterly.

Contact: Irv Kochel and Bill Dodds

Sharing In Our Ministries, *continued*

Acolytes (Youth Altar Servers)

Serve in Sunday worship by lighting candles, leading processions, and assisting the pastor and assisting minister.

Contact: Susan Zundel

Hope Adult Choir

Helps to lead music in worship through singing anthems, leading psalms, assisting in learning new hymns and songs. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM (schedule changes during Lent).

Contact: Tom Bush or Sheila Hilliard

Deacons

Adults who to prepare Communion and assist with the trays of Communion wine in Sunday worship.

Contact: Jane Foust

Lectors

Reads the first and second readings during Sunday worship.

Contact: Shirley Zundel

Sunday Worship Greeters

Greet worshipers and distribute worship bulletins, and assist visitors at Sunday worship.

Contact: Barbara Vetula

Newsletter by Shared Ministry

Writes and compiles articles for the bi-monthly newsletter which is mailed to all Hope and New Life members and friends.

Contact: Brianne Thomas

Sharing In Our Ministries, *continued*

W/ELCA

(Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America)
Meets September through May in the *Fellowship Hall* at 10:00 am on the second Tuesday of every month, beginning with Bible Study led by Pastor Steve. W/ELCA organizes service projects within and beyond the congregation, fellowship events, and prepares meals at funerals.

Contact: Jane Fletcher, President

Altar Guild

Prepares the Table and elements for Holy Communion for Sunday worship services.

Contact: Sheila Hilliard

Assisting Ministers

Share leadership with pastor in worship with portions of the liturgy, prayers, and serving Communion on Sunday.

Contact: Pastor Steve Bond

Envisioning Ministry Committee

Considers long-range planning needs, and through prayerful study, reflection, and conversation, visions future ministry ideas for the congregation. Meets about every six weeks.

Contact: Mary Pease

Contemporary Worship

Plans and leads worship at our monthly Hope in the Midst service on fourth Saturdays.

Contact: Pastor Steve

Sharing In Our Ministries, *continued*

Member Care

Coordinates care for members of Hope, including monthly distribution of Communion to homebound members.

Contact: Marian Kensey

Mutual Ministry Committee

Made up of members from both Hope and sister congregation New Life, the Mutual Ministry Committee is a two-way sounding board from the congregations to the pastor and for support of the pastor.

Contact: Marian Kensey

FindHopeHere—Website

Provides web content for Hope's home in the internet, www.findhopehere.net.

Contact: Angie Carnahan or Pastor Steve

Special Music

Individuals and ensembles are invited to share other musical gifts in worship, whether sung or instrumental.

Contact: Tom Bush

And watch Hope's Newsletter and weekly bulletins for information on other groups that gather and meet at Hope like Line Dancing, Knitting, Hope's Summer Book Club, and midweek Adult Education studies!

Rites and Life Passages

From our entry into the household of faith at Holy Baptism to the assurance of God's promise of resurrection at the time of death, we mark important milestones in the journey of faith at Hope in the following ways:

Holy Baptism

As Lutheran Christians, we welcome all to the waters of baptism, adults, children, and infants, believing that the gift of salvation spoken in the promise over the waters comes from God. If you are interested in receiving the sacrament of Holy Baptism, see Pastor Steve.

First Communion Instruction

At Hope, when children (even quite young children) ask to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion and their parents believe them to be ready to come to the table, several sessions of instruction in the practice, meaning, and blessings of the meal of Jesus are held with Pastor Steve. Depending on the number of those preparing to come to the Table for the first time, these sessions may happen on a household by household basis, or as a larger class.

Receiving the Scriptures

Out of our commitment to the promise made at baptism to place the Scriptures in the hands of our children, the congregation gives a Holy Bible to our second-graders each year in the fall (on Reformation Sunday), and then as they enter our two-year Confirmation program if they do not have a study Bible already.

Rites and Life Passages, *continued*

Confirmation

Youth in grades seven and eight participate in an in-depth study of the Bible, the Lutheran tradition, and being disciples of Jesus as part of a two-year program led by Pastor Steve.

Marriage

Hope's Council has adopted a set of policies and procedures governing weddings at Hope, which includes a strong commitment to pre-marital counseling and guidance leading up to every service of marriage held at Hope. Copies of the Wedding and Marriage Policy can be found in the Policy binder in the *narthex*.

Funerals and Celebrations of Life

In the hope of resurrection, the Lutheran service for the Burial of the Dead centers on the promises of life and belonging made in Holy Baptism. At Hope, meals are often hosted by the Women of the ELCA group for the family and friends following the committal at a funeral.

Worship throughout the Church Year

Advent

In the four weeks before the celebration of Christ's birth, our weekly worship is supplemented with midweek worship at noon and in the evenings, shared with sister congregation New Life Lutheran Church. Dates and locations of Advent midweek worship are printed in the newsletter and Sunday worship bulletin.

Church Year, *continued*

Lent

As Christians around the world look toward the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus during Holy Week, Hope again joins with sister congregation New Life for midweek worship and study as part of our 40-day Lenten journey. Also during Lent, Hope shares in the *Lenten Luncheon* series hosted by the Homer City Area Ministerium, which offers a short worship service followed by shared lunch each Wednesday in Lent.

Holy Week

Our Holy Week services (Maundy Thursday and Good Friday) rotate locations between Hope and New Life each year, but Hope always hosts the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday each year. On Easter Sunday, Hope holds worship at its usual time of 11:00am.

Blue Spruce

It's not a date on the liturgical calendar of the church year, but every year on the second Sunday of August, the people of Hope and New Life join for worship at a pavilion at Blue Spruce Park north of Indiana and share a covered dish lunch afterward.

Affiliations and Associations

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Hope is a congregation of the ELCA, a Lutheran church body that spans the United States and shares full-communion relationships with the Episcopal Church USA, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ.

Affiliations and Associations, *continued*

Northwest Pennsylvania Synod

Within the ELCA, Hope belongs geographically to the NWPA Synod, along with more than eighty other congregations. Within this synod, congregations partner for mission and ministry within our territory and around the world.

New Life-Hope Shared Ministry

For more than a decade, Hope Lutheran Church has shared a pastoral call with sister congregation New Life Lutheran Church between Dixonville and Marion Center. The partnership allows the two congregations to share a pastor and to work together on projects.

Homer City Area Ministerium

Hope belongs to this association of Christian congregations in the greater Homer City area and shares in its worship services, fellowship events, and service projects.

A Brief History of Hope

More than two thousand years ago, a crucified Jewish rabbi rose from the dead, and the universe has never been the same since....

All kidding aside, Hope's story really *does* look back to the resurrection of Jesus, as does the whole church's story. We are followers of the risen Jesus, who have been brought by grace into the community of disciples to live in the freedom of the love of God, and that community goes all the way back to a band of frightened fishermen and weeping women on the first Easter Sunday.

Continued on the next page....

A Brief History of Hope, *continued*

But in terms of this particular congregation's history, Hope has roots in two predecessor congregations in the area: Trinity Lutheran Church, whose building the present-day Hope occupies; and Brush Valley Lutheran Church, which merged with Trinity in the mid-1990s to become Hope Lutheran Church. Both predecessor congregations had their beginnings in the second half of the 19th century, and Hope is committed to continuing their legacy of being a Lutheran witness in southern Indiana County.

In 2002, Hope's building (note, the church is the *people*, not the walls inside which we worship!) was renovated, adding the elevator, pastor's office and secretary's office, sacristy, back restroom, and downstairs classroom.

Hope's current pastor, Rev. Stephen C. Bond, was called to the Shared Ministry of Hope and New Life in 2006.

And by the grace of God, the story goes on...

Glossary of Terms

Christians sometimes sound like they are speaking their own language—even more so when we talk about the structures and fixtures of the church! With that in mind, these few definitions are offered to help make things clear...

Fair Trade—A designation that a product has been produced with a commitment to giving workers/farmers a just price and fair wages for their work. Hope and other Lutheran congregations in our area organize purchases of fairly traded coffee, tea, cocoa, and other foods, as well as of fairly traded, ecologically sustainable palms on Palm Sunday.

Fellowship Hall—The large room downstairs at Hope where meals are shared, meetings are held, and the Adult Forum meets.

Liturgy—Literally, “the work of the people,” *liturgy* refers to the order and rhythm of our corporate worship. The pattern in Lutheran worship of *Gathering, Word, Meal, and Sending*, has roots in the early centuries of Christian practice.

Lutheran—A way of being Christian, Lutheranism is a tradition with roots in the teachings of 16th-century pastor and teacher Martin Luther, who redirected the church to the Good News of God’s free gift of justification by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, a message which had been shouting at us from the words of Scripture all along.

Narthex—The gathering space in the church building, which one enters through the red front doors; Hope’s narthex is both a gathering place and the location of bulletin boards, news items, and other resources (*including children’s activity bags, handouts from recent classes, and our fledging church library*).

Sacrament—Gifts of God in physical, touchable time-and-space forms in which God’s promise of forgiveness is made known; in other words, for Lutheran Christians, there are two Sacraments, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion (*also called the Eucharist or the Lord’s Supper*), as these two were commanded by Christ Jesus. It is our belief as Lutheran Christians that baptism is for all, and that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine shared at Communion. *It is also our practice that all who commune in their home congregations are welcome to share in the Meal at Hope.*

Sacristy—The room behind the sanctuary in which the elements of Holy Communion are kept and prepared.

Sanctuary—Technically, the sanctuary is the small area surrounding the altar/table in the front of the worship space, but loosely, the word can refer to our whole worship space (*also called the nave*), the main room on the first floor of Hope.

Finding Your Way at Hope

