

## ***This Week***

### **TODAY:**

**9:15AM:** Fellowship

**10AM:** Worship Service

**11AM:** Sunday School  
Bible Study

**11:30AM-8PM:** Youth Ski Trip

**4PM:** Family Movie Night

**Liturgist:** Maggie Johnson

**Ushers:** Larry Parsons & Mikaelynn Decker

**Greeters:** **Volunteers??**

**Accompanist:** Gail Keck

### **Monday, January 19:**

**NO SCHOOL**

**1-3PM:** Interfaith Caregivers' BINGO



### **Tuesday, January 20:**

**6PM:** Finance Meeting

### **Wednesday, January 21**

**7AM:** Youth Bible Study (*Cabin Coffee*)

**2PM:** St. Luke's BINGO

**2:30PM – 4:15PM:** Early Release

**7-8PM:** Confirmation

### **Thursday, January 22:**

**10AM:** Sermon Scriptures Bible Study

### **Sunday, January 25:**

**9:15AM:** Fellowship

**10AM:** Worship Service

**11AM:** Sunday School  
Bible Study

Baptism of Ruby Athey

Hot Dish Lunch (*after worship*)

Realm Session

(*see insert - online directory/giving*)

**Liturgist:** Maggie Johnson

**Ushers:** **Volunteers??**

**Greeters:** **Volunteers??**

**Accompanist:** David & Sandra Murray

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Don't forget Movie Night tonight!**



### **RESCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, 1/25/26**

(5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month Meal was 11/30/25)

After worship on Sunday, ~~11/30/25~~ **now January 25**, main dish casseroles/hot dishes will be provided. If you are able, please bring a salad or dessert to share. Free will offering to go towards Layne McCleary's medical expenses and all are welcome (whether you bring food or not)!

### **2025 Year-End Contribution Statements**

That time has come! The goal is to have everyone's contribution (giving) statements done by no later than January 23, 2026. Please make sure to reach out to Carolyn **ASAP** if you notice any discrepancies/errors in your statement.

### **2026 Radio Broadcast Sponsorship**

The 2026 Radio Broadcast sign-up list is posted in the Narthex! If you would like to sponsor/sign up for a particular Sunday, please fill out your name, message, and the sponsorship fee is now **\$30** per Sunday.



Sunday, January 18, 2026

Second Sunday after Epiphany

## Hope United Methodist Church

[www.behopeumc.com](http://www.behopeumc.com) | (507) 526-2144 | [hopeumc@bevcomm.net](mailto:hopeumc@bevcomm.net)

**Church office hours: Mondays 8:15AM-12:15PM & Wednesdays 8:15AM-4:15PM**

Pastor Godfrey Gakuru: (740) 803-6762 [hopepastor@bevcomm.net](mailto:hopepastor@bevcomm.net)

**Pastor Godfrey's Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9AM-4:30PM**

Administrative Assistant, Carolyn Kaiser: (763) 567-9004 [hopeumc@bevcomm.net](mailto:hopeumc@bevcomm.net)

Kids Coordinator, Megan Goshorn: (253) 592-5219 [kidscoordinatorhope@gmail.com](mailto:kidscoordinatorhope@gmail.com)

*For more information and to see what else is happening at Hope, visit us at [behopeumc.com](http://behopeumc.com) and our Facebook page, Hope United Methodist Church-Blue Earth, MN.*

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements

Pass It On

Praise Band

Rev. Godfrey Gakuru

\*Call to Worship

One: Children of God, who has God called you to be?

ALL: A light to all nations!

One: When confusion, disunity, and misinformation threaten to undo us, who are you called to be?

ALL: A light to all nations!

One: When wars and rumors of wars in our communities and around the world overwhelm us, who are you called to be?

ALL: A light to all nations!

One: When the vulnerable are left without care or hope for flourishing, who are you called to be?

ALL: A light to all nations!

One: Come! Let us worship God, who gives us as a light of good news to all the nations!

ALL: We come to worship God, who calls us and equips us to reflect God’s glory and abundant life into all the world. Amen.

\*Unison Prayer

Light of the world, Lamb of God, you walk before us even when our path is shadowed, shining grace upon us when we are quick to judge, slow to love, and cold in word and heart. For your sake, we face trials and are counted as sheep to be slaughtered; yet we thank you for choosing us to be children of the light. We confess that we do not always live into that calling, and that we often turn away from you and from our neighbors. Restore in us the light of Christ and lead us again to the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, that our lives may reflect your mercy and your courage. Amen.

\*Opening Hymn

Sanctity of Life

“Lamb of God”

TFWS 2113

Kim Webster

Children’s Message

First Scripture Reading

Second Scripture Reading

Sermon Series/Title:

\*Responsive Hymn

Offering

\*Doxology

Sharing of Birthdays, Anniversaries, Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Lord’s Prayer

\*Closing Hymn

Benediction

Exodus 12:1-14, 21-28

John 1:29-34

*Be A Star / Light to the Lamb of God*  
Rev. Godfrey Gakuru

*“To God Be the Glory”*

*(please put any written prayer requests & offerings in offering plates as they are passed)*

UMH 94

*This Little Light of Mine*

*\*Please stand if you are able.*

## BEHOLD THE LAMB: LIGHT TO THE LAMB OF GOD

*(Sermon Series: Be a Star)*

I have told you a few stories about my life, especially about growing up in a small village where we depended on farming and livestock keeping. Back home, I still have a few goats, and my mother keeps several animals as well—cows, goats, and sheep. Through my own experience with livestock, I have learned that sheep are the easiest and most manageable to raise. **Sheep are not complicated, they can be kept on a small piece of land, and even under zero-grazing systems, they do not eat as much as goats. Sheep are docile, meaning they are non-aggressive, gentle, and tranquil.** I consider them to be low-stress animals. They are highly observant and sensitive to their environment and can easily sense danger. They do not like loud noises, because loud sounds can cause panic and separate them into a group. When scared, they may jump, run fast, and scatter, but sheep feel safest in a group, which gives them a strong sense of community.

Their safety often takes the form of what is called the **selfish-herd theory**. Under threat, sheep instinctively move toward the center of the flock, a behavior known as **centralization**. In this way, they shield one another. A large, dense flock makes it harder for predators to single out and attack an individual sheep. This collective movement helps them survive, as predators struggle to identify a vulnerable member within the mass. However, this leaves sheep on the edges more exposed, even though it increases the overall survival of the group. For those of us who eat meat, we know that lamb provides food, and sheep skin is also used to make items such as rugs and cloth. Another characteristic of sheep is that they are known for obedience. Using the example of a good shepherd, Jesus says, **“My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me”** (John 10:27). While **sheep** is the general term for the adult animal—with differences in age, size, wool texture, and meat flavor—**lamb** refers to a young sheep under one year old.

In the scripture, a lamb is pictured as innocent, pure and helpless, yet this small delicate infant was required of God for a sacrifice. **As Abraham was on the way to offer the sacrifice, he said to his son, ‘God himself will provide the lamb for the sacrifice.’** (*Genesis 22:8*). During the Feast of Passover which the Hebrews celebrated in remembrance of God delivering them from

slavery in Egypt under Pharaoh, the sacrificial lamb was a symbol of redemption. God gave Moses instructions to pass on to the Hebrew people so they could be saved from the coming plague. Each family was to take a spotless lamb, kill it, and place its blood on the doorposts of their home. The entire family was to remain inside, under the covering of the blood. When the death angel passed over, he would see the blood, and that home would be spared.

The sacrificial lamb in the Old Testament often points out to Jesus Christ as the “Lamb of God.” In the Gospel of John, we read how John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). **Here Jesus takes the place of the animal the real sacrificial lamb in the Passover.** During His birth, flocks of sheep covered the fields of Bethlehem. Shepherds cared for lambs destined for sacrifice in the temple, and only spotless ones could be offered. This is why Jesus was born through Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit—so that, without human conception, He would be spotless and without sin. All who are born through human nature are born with sin. Shepherds kept watching over their sheep, and when lambs were born, they marked the spotless ones for temple sacrifice. Each spotless lamb was caught in the hands of the shepherd before touching the ground and carefully **wrapped in swaddling clothes as a sign of purity**. Therefore, when the angels declared that Jesus would be found wrapped in swaddling clothes, **this signified Him as the sinless Lamb of God.**

Jesus is the perfect, sinless Lamb—once foreshadowed by animal sacrifices—who offered a **once-for-all atonement** for the world’s sin. Born of the virgin Mary through the work of the Holy Spirit, and not through human union, he remained without blemish, fulfilling the promise of the Passover. What if we are like sheep, shielding one another? What if we apply the **selfish-herd theory** so that we are attuned to move toward the center? What if we chose to give ourselves for others, as Christ did by choosing to die for all. **Like the shepherds—or as good sheep that hear the shepherd’s voice—we can choose to follow God’s voice and become the star that leads others to the Lamb of God.**



Since starting our new software called **Realm** in late 2024 and having learned quite a bit over the past 12 months, we are ready to have our Hope

UMC members and friends start using this software as well as the staff!

Everyone in our church gets a unique profile. Your profile contains everything you want people in our church to know about you. Your profile also enables you to track your giving, update your contact information, change family details, set notification preferences, or replace that outdated family photo (which goes along with the new pictorial directory pictures being taken in January).

By keeping your information current, you are helping our staff, group leaders, and our church community. Privacy settings will be gone over in more detail once you create your profile.



Prior to meeting with me or creating your profile on your own, you will need to have a **valid email address on file with the church office** (with Carolyn). Once I have an email address

for you, I can send an emailed invitation to join our Realm world (please reach out to me if you do NOT have an email address/computer). Also, please start thinking of a password for your profile. I will work with those that need assistance to get their profile set up correctly.

**Current online contributors**, I will help you migrate your current online giving to the new system.

#### Password Requirements

- Between 8 and 15 characters
- Includes no part of your email address
- Includes no repeating characters such as **aaa**
- Includes none of the following: **< > & ^ \ ; % ` ' /**
- Includes no numeric or alphabetical sequences such as **12345** or **abcde**
- Also, no keyboard sequences such as **asdfgh**

**On Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, there will be time after the worship service to get more information from Carolyn and to ask questions on registering/updating your Realm profile!**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED...**

### **Valentine Trees at St. Luke's**

It is time to purchase a Valentine "in honor of" or "in memory of" loved ones for \$5.00. These will be placed on the trees at St Luke's, Moonlight, Friendship Court, New Life Manor, Southview Estates. **Deadline: January 25<sup>th</sup>**. Contact Marilyn Schaefer for more information.



### **Upcoming February Youth Event!**

Sponsored by the Area Churches: **Youth in Grades 6-12** are



welcome to attend an evening of fun at the **Lake Crystal Area Rec Center on Sunday, February 15, from 4-10pm** (no school the next day). Cost is \$20 per person – registration forms available in the Narthex. See Megan Goshorn or Pastor Godfrey for more info/details!

**Forms and fee are due no later than Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Minnesota Walk to Emmaus – Men's Walk #135**

March 12–15, 2026 - Lakeview Methodist Health Care Center, Fairmont

The Minnesota Walk to Emmaus Men's Walk #135 is coming up this March. Pastor Godfrey will be attending. The Walk to Emmaus is a 3-day experience set apart from our normal routines for prayer, reflection, and spiritual renewal. If you are interested in attending the Men's Walk or Women's Walk (October 8-11, 2026), please contact Pastor Godfrey.

<https://www.mnemmaus.org/>

