

## **This Week**

### **TODAY:**

**9AM:** Choir Practice  
**9:15AM:** Fellowship  
**10AM:** Worship Service w/Communion  
**11AM:** Sunday School  
Bible Study

### **MEALS ON WHEELS THIS WEEK!**

**Liturgists:** Pastor Godfrey Gakuru & Steve Scheid

**Ushers:** Larry Parsons & Mikaelynn Decker

**Greeters: Volunteers??**

**Accompanist:** David & Sandra Murray

### **Tuesday, March 3:**

**2PM:** St. Luke's Communion  
2PM: UWF Meeting

### **Wednesday, March 4:**

**7AM:** Youth Bible Study (*Cabin Coffee*)  
**2:30PM – 4:15PM:** Early Release  
**7-8PM:** Confirmation

### **Thursday, March 5:**

**10AM:** Sermon Scriptures Bible Study  
**1-3PM:** Mat Weaving

**5PM:** Happy Hour w/Jesus at Pete's Bar & Grill (*formerly Average Jo's*)

### **Sunday, March 8**

**9AM:** Choir Practice  
**9:15AM:** Fellowship  
**10AM:** Worship Service  
**11AM:** Sunday School  
Bible Study

**Liturgists: Volunteers??**

**Ushers: Volunteers??**

**Greeters: Volunteers??**

**Accompanist:** David & Sandra Murray

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**Communion Note:** We now have gluten-free individually wrapped communion cups (*includes gluten-free wafer & grape juice*) for those that would like it! ***Just find an usher prior to Communion service starts to request the gluten-free option.***



The **LORD'S ACRE** group will be meeting March 15 after the worship service. There is still time to be part of this group, just sign up! A new 2026 sign-up poster will be coming later this month. ***Please get Lord's Acre payments into the church office ASAP. Thank you!!***



**"Happy Hour with Jesus" is returning and will be starting on this Thursday, 3/5/26! Weekly at 5pm**

**"ODD DATES - Pete's Bar and Grill"**

115 E 6th St, Blue Earth, MN 56013  
(formerly Average Jo's)

**"EVEN DATES - Lost Saint Brewing"**

317 S Grove St, Blue Earth, MN 56013

Order your beverage-of-choice and enjoy a casual group conversation about life, struggles, celebrations... and how faith, church family, and community fits in. No RSVP required!

**To be added to the text group for reminders, please contact Mark or Megan Hanson-Haase.**

### **2026 Radio Broadcast Sponsorship**

The 2026 Radio Broadcast sign-up list is posted in the Northex! Sponsorship fee is **\$30** per Sunday.



Sunday, March 1, 2026

Second Sunday in Lent

# 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)

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**

*Rev. Godfrey Gakuru*

**Announcements**

**\*Call to Worship**

*Rev. Godfrey Gakuru*

One: Children of God, in Lent we remember that our salvation is an unearned gift, that new life is a matter of faith, not of works.

**ALL: We gather to lay down the burden of trying to earn our salvation.**

One: Like Nicodemus, who met Jesus in the dark of night, we struggle to accept that new life is not just possible but given as a free gift of grace.

**ALL: We gather to bring our struggles into the light and embrace God’s grace with open arms.**

One: Like Paul writing to the Romans, we remember God’s promise of new life

**ALL: We gather to receive the promise of salvation by grace through faith.**

One: Like the many who have followed, questioned, and grown in the faith, we submit ourselves to be formed by grace as we work out our salvation day by day.

**ALL: We gather as people guided by the promise of new life, a promise fulfilled by Christ, whose path we follow.**

**\*Unison Prayer**

*Rev. Godfrey Gakuru*

**Loving God, on this second Sunday of Lent, we gather to honor you with praise and thanksgiving for loving us even when we turn our backs on love. We thank you for letting your face shine upon us, for filling us with your peace, and for healing our wounds. Forgive us when we are selfish and when we ignore the cries of others. Give us courage, strength, and hope, so that we may be steadfast in prayer and in faith. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*“Be Thou My Vision”*

*UMH 451*

**First Scripture Reading**

*(read by Steve Scheid)*

**NIV John 3:1-17**

*Jesus Teaches Nicodemus*

*<sup>1</sup> Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. <sup>2</sup>He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”*

*<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”*

*<sup>4</sup>“How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”*

*<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. <sup>7</sup>You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ <sup>8</sup>The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”*

*<sup>9</sup>“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.*

*<sup>10</sup>“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? <sup>11</sup>Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. <sup>12</sup>I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup>Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”*

*<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

**Children’s Message**

*Karen Davids*

**\*Hymn**

*“Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies”*

*UMH 173*

**Sermon Series: Renewed Mercy**

**Sermon Title: Guided by the Promise**

*Rev. Godfrey Gakuru*

**HOLY COMMUNION**

**Offering** *(please put any written prayer requests & offerings in offering plates as you go up for Communion)*

**\*Doxology**

*UMH 94*

**Sharing of Birthdays, Anniversaries, Joys & Concerns**

**Prayer**

**Lord’s Prayer**

**\*Closing Song**

*Praise Band*

**Benediction**

*\*Please stand if you are able.*

## Renewed Mercy – Guided by the Promise

Today is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent and we are exploring the theme: *Guided by the Promise*. In our new sermon series, *Renewed Mercy*, which will carry us through this Lenten season, we reflect on how God calls us to be transformed, renewed, and guided by His promises. Before we turn to Scripture, let me share a story of birth. The journey of having a child comes with many unique moments — conversations with doctors, hospital visits, and regular appointments. During this season, mothers are often advised on what to do and what to avoid ensuring the baby’s safety. Some may be placed on a special diet and asked to carefully monitor their health, all to protect themselves and their child. When we were expecting our firstborn, my wife Christine and I did not know the baby’s gender until about a month before she was born. Even on the day of the baby shower, we still did not know. When we finally had the scan and learned that we were having a girl, we were filled with joy and excitement, and we began imagining how to raise her. That moment marked the beginning of a new chapter in our lives.

In many ways, the experience of physical birth reflects the spiritual truth that Jesus teaches in **John 3**. Jesus meets a man named Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a teacher of the law, and a member of the Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin. This was the highest religious court in Israel, a body of respected leaders who interpreted the law and guided the people. It consisted of 71 members, and this number included the High Priest and the 70 other elders and rabbis who comprised the council. The high priest was always president of the council. The Sanhedrin served as the supreme court of the Jews. It was not an appellate court but handled special matters of importance that the lower courts cannot resolve.

In the cover of night, one lone member of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus, came to Jesus. Perhaps cautious and fearful of the judgment of the other council members, he approached not only for himself but possibly on behalf of others. He said to Jesus, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God.”

In private, Nicodemus acknowledges what he cannot yet confess in public — that God is at work in Jesus. Jesus moves immediately to the heart of the matter: “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

**Nicodemus thinks in physical terms... How can a grown person be born again?** But Jesus is speaking about spiritual rebirth. He explains that there are two kinds of birth: **natural birth, which gives physical life, and birth of water and the Spirit, which gives eternal life. One is of the flesh; the other is of God, and this Spiritual rebirth requires humility. Nicodemus had to put down his pride and face Jesus to know the truth about salvation, and being a follower of Jesus Christ calls for such courage.**

Nicodemus came in the night, uncertain and cautious, to encounter truth. Later in the Gospel, we see him defending Jesus and even helping prepare Jesus’ body for burial. **The one who came in darkness was moving toward the light. That is the journey of faith.** In [John 7:51](#), Nicodemus showed cautious, guarded sympathy for Jesus when Jesus went before the Sanhedrin. He asked, “Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?” In [John 19:39](#), Nicodemus purchased 100 pounds of spices to be placed in the folds of the burial cloth of Jesus. Christian tradition states that Peter and John baptized Nicodemus, and He also suffered persecution from hostile Jews before losing his place in the Sanhedrin. His Christian faith led to his exile from Jerusalem.

Lent reminds us that transformation begins with courage, just like Nicodemus, but not by what we do ourselves, but with what God does in us. Guided by the Promise of salvation, we are called to lay aside pride, power, privilege, authority, fear, ego, and status; to acknowledge our need for God, and to allow the Spirit to lead us into new life. Just as the birth of a child brings a family into a new chapter, the new birth in Christ brings us into a life of purpose, grace, and hope. This is why our Bishop, in her Lenten message ***To Be Made Well***, reminds us. That **“Lent is the season when the church pauses for 40 days, a pause long enough for us to listen, to assess the truth about our inward and outward lives, and long enough to notice where God longs to bring healing into each of us and into the world.”**

**So today, God invites us — like Nicodemus — to come as we are: curious, searching, perhaps hesitant, yet open.**

**To learn from the Teacher, to be healed by the Great Physician, and to receive the new life that only the Spirit can give. Guided by the Promise, may we be born anew into hope, joy, and mercy.**

**Amen.**

## Bishop Lanette's 2026 Lenten Message:

### To Be Made Well: Healing Stories in the Gospels

Beloved friends from across the United Methodist Connection and beyond. Lent is the season when the church pauses for 40 days, a pause long enough for us to listen, to assess the truth about our inward and outward lives, and long enough to notice where God longs to bring healing into each of us and into the world. This year, your cabinet is inviting congregations across the Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area into a shared Lenten journey called "To be Made Well."

This phrase comes from the question Jesus asked a man who had suffered for many years. Do you want to be made well? That is a hard and holy question, because being made well often asks us to be honest about where we are, where we are weary, where we are hurting, where we are causing pain, where we are wounded, and where we are ready for God to do something new within us.

Throughout Lent, we will center on the healing stories of Jesus, stories that reveal Christ as healer, as counselor, as Great Physician, and so much more. Again and again, Jesus moves toward human suffering, with compassion, with mercy, with intent for justice, restoring people not only to health, but to community, dignity, and hope. And this is our hope for you, that this season would be more than something we observe, that it would be something we enter into.

Entering into Lent requires intentionality and humility. That 40-day season in the Christian year prepares us for Easter by inviting us into honesty, repentance, and renewal rooted in Jesus time in the wilderness. Lent calls us to slow down, to pray, and to pay attention to what needs healing within us and around us.

#### Through prayer, through fasting, and acts of love.

Lent reorients our lives toward Christ, so that we may be made ready to receive the new life God promises at Easter. So I invite you to engage in this journey in whatever way it fits your life in your congregation. Watch the weekly sermon. Gather a small group. Reflect together as a church.

Lean into the resources that have been prepared for you.

Most of all, come with openness, trusting that the same Christ who asked that question beside the pool is still asking it today. Do you want to be made well? Christ is offering healing grace. May this be a holy Lent for you. A holy season, a season in which, by the grace of Christ, we are all being made well. Amen.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED...

- **Communion will be served at Parker Oaks / Heartland Living every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at 10am.**

### 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/>



### UPCOMING Youth Mission Event:

Hope UMC is planning a mission trip for **all youth (Grades 6-12)** to volunteer and learn all about the **Midwest Mission Center** in Jefferson, Iowa, for the weekend of **March 20-**



**22.** It may not encompass all of those days but would take place during that timeframe. This is a great opportunity for our youth to learn about one of our recipients of the mission work Hope UMC helps.

#### **MORE DETAILS TO COME (itinerary/exact times/dates)!**

We have one adult chaperone along with Pastor Godfrey and 3 youth signed up for this trip so far. Lodging is \$10 per person and will be covered by Hope's General Mission fund. If your child would like to register for this trip or you would like to volunteer as chaperone, please reach out to Pastor Godfrey. We need to know rough numbers of participants as soon as possible as we need to make sure there are enough adult chaperones for the trip.



**Seeds of Hope Garden Surveys** went out with the February 2026 newsletters. If you haven't completed it yet, please do so and bring in the Seeds of Hope questionnaire - place in the box on the welcome counter in the Narthex. There are also blank copies available, if you can't find yours. This will be our 2<sup>nd</sup> year producing & distributing fresh garden produce, and your input is greatly appreciated! Surveys are needed by mid-March so we can start planning this year's garden. Feel free to use the back side for additional comments you might want to share! If you would like an electric copy by email to return to us, please contact the church office.