

Hope United Methodist Church
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Hope United Methodist Church NEWSLETTER



MARCH 2026

Dear Hope Family,

Called to Be Faithful Witnesses

Another month is here with us, and what excites me is the Christian calendar, in which the month of March going all the way to early April falls in both Lent and Easter. In my first appointment in 2015, while serving as a pastor in Kenya, I was appointed to oversee four churches. Then I had three other local churches, one in bigger town with an attendance of about 15-20 people and one of them in another smaller town had a few members who had begun meeting in a nearby elementary school and had an evangelist who was specifically pastoring that church. This first mission experience of my ministry as a full-time pastor taught me the real meaning of mission. I had just come from the university, or rather seminary, and therefore had vigor and was enthusiastic in my calling, especially in mission.

One important reality about Kenya is the existence of many tribes. There are actually 44 or more distinct ethnic groups, each with their own language and culture. These differences include food, languages, social norms, traditions, and ways of life. Fortunately, I had already learned about contextualization, and I knew that my mission would be successful only if I practiced amalgamation. Amalgamation refers to the blending of cultures, rather than one group eliminating another (acculturation) or one group losing itself within another (assimilation).

Jesus Christ calls us to recognize and accept the reality that we sometimes live too far from what it truly means to be Christian. Yet, in that recognition, we are invited to embrace God's call to believe more deeply and to become not just witnesses, but true witnesses of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. When we do so, we become carriers of Christ's testimony and of the power revealed not only through His perseverance in suffering and death, but also through the victory of the resurrection.

Today, I find myself here in Blue Earth, eleven years after my first ministry appointment in Kenya. My journey itself is evidence of how God's grace works—indeed, it is amazing. From where we are, God calls us to be witnesses to the whole world. This calling is what we often refer to as the Great Commission. Before Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He promised His disciples: *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"* (Acts 1:8). This is the power I pray for over all of us during this Lenten season—the power that enables us to pray, to love one another, to forgive one another, and to reflect deeply on Christ's love for us. I began to experience this power not only when I was commissioned by the church for my first appointment, but from the very moment I received Jesus as my personal Savior. This power is real, and we encounter it in prayer. Lent is a season of prayer. During this Lenten journey, may we open our hearts to the Holy Spirit so that we may receive the power to live as faithful witnesses—praying, loving, forgiving, and walking daily in the hope of the resurrection. Amen.

**Blessings to you,
Rev. Godfrey Gakuru**

Hope UMC, a faith community growing in Christian love, through discipleship, the inclusion of all, and fellowship.



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

SUNDAY SERVICES: 10:00AM WORSHIP

A pre-recorded message airs at 9:30am on
KBEW 1560 AM. Visit behopeumc.com to stay updated
with current events, bulletins & newsletters.

Staff:

Pastor Godfrey Gakuru (740) 803-6762 E-mail: hopepastor@bevcomm.net

Carolyn Kaiser, Administrative Assistant (763) 567-9004 cell E-mail: hopeumc@bevcomm.net

Megan Goshorn, Kids Coordinator (253) 592-5219 cell E-mail: kidscoordinatorhope@gmail.com

Office: (507) 526-2144 hopeumc@bevcomm.net

Office hours are Mondays 8:15am-12:15pm and Wednesdays 8:15am-4:15pm.

Newsletter items are due by the 17th of the month.

Please send announcements for the bulletin and the newsletter to the above email address or call the church office. Also, please notify the church office of any changes in names, addresses, incorrect birthdays or anniversaries, or if you'd like to receive this newsletter via email.

Mission Committee

Starting on Ash Wednesday, our Mission Focus will be BUCC-y Bags with our Lenten Offering! We'll be filling "Lenten Jars" with coins collected for that right up to Easter Sunday on April 5. Please see the Lenten Coin Calendars on the bulletin boards by the restrooms. A cart will be available in the Narthex on both Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday to collect your coin-filled containers.



Again, this Lenten Season, Hope is helping to support **BUCC-Y BAGS**. Our own Brenda Millmann with the Blue Earth Area Schools serves K – 5th grade students with weekend food insecurity. Each BUCC-y Bag is packed with soup, easy mac, pudding cup, applesauce, fruit juice, fruit snacks, beef jerkey, cereal, oatmeal, crackers and peanut butter. The goal of weekend food bags is to help reduce hunger over the weekends so students return to class less hungry and ready to learn. Food insecurity affects many of our families right here. This year, Brenda prepares BUCC-y Bags for 116 students. She raises funds from donations, does the shopping, packing and distribution each Friday after school with limited help. Each bag costs about \$4.

This is a great way for us to share our abundance, and it is right here for the children of our community. We have two ways to support this at Hope. You can just write "BUCC-y Bags" on the memo line of your check and place in the offering plate or donate online and put BUCC-y Bags in the Comments/Notes section. It is both a fun and thankful way to help kids in our own community.

Baby Hugs: Delivered the first 24 Baby Hugs to UHD beginning of February.



The **LORD'S ACRE** group will be meeting March 15 after the worship service. There's still time to be part of this group, just sign up! This past year, the group prioritized about \$5,000 between Camp Scholarships for Hope kids, among other outreaches not covered by other sources or in our conference apportionments. A new 2026 sign-up poster will be coming later this month.

Please get Lord's Acre payments in to the church office ASAP. Thank you!!

Everyone loves a Potluck! March 29 is a **FIFTH SUNDAY**, so save that date. A free-will offering usually supports a mission or two. Watch the weekly bulletins for updates.

Lastly, the **WELCOME counter** in the Narthex is where you can bring in donations for Bundle Up, Emma Norton in St Paul, our local food shelf and shopping bags for our Mat Weavers. Baskets are labeled and we welcome your donated items **all year long!**

Thank you!!

Seeds of Hope Garden

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 2nd 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!

Would you like an electric copy by email to send back? Please contact the church office.



March Birthdays

- 1- Bobby Russell
- 3- Bill Thompson
- 5- Adam Steinke
- 6- Ty Peterson
Brandon Spencer
- 7- Nicole Meyers
- 10- Mackenzie Abel
Jonathan Hinton
Korissa Libra
- 11- Logan Stelter
Blair Lunz
- 12- Teresa Erichsrud
Crystal Uecker
- 14- Jody Johnson
- 15- Judy Hamson
Teresa Johnson
- 17- Debbie Murphy
- 18- Leah Becker
Tim Dann
- 19- Todd Olson
Nicole Hasbargen
Kayla Lawrence
- 20- Sandy Kitts
- 21- Jan Oberg
Jazmyn Lunz
- 22- Colleen Gore
Nathan Scheid
- 23- Nathon Steele
- 24- Gertrude Paschke
Mollie Olson
- 26- Milton Steele
Terry Johnson
Janet Maloney

March Anniversaries

- 28- Alan Huff
Nancy Huff
- 29- Gail Keck
Gage Guth
- 10- Karen & Gerald Cyphers
- 15- Daryl & Judy Murray
- 28- Taylor & Brenda Millmann



Music Notes



Hope Choir has resumed regular Sunday morning rehearsals. Come join us at 9:00AM on Sunday mornings to have some fun while preparing anthems to sing for worship. All are welcome.

~Pat Richards

YOUTH EVENTS

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.



We do need adult chaperones on this trip. If we do not have volunteers to chaperone, the trip will not be able to happen... Lodging is \$10 per person per night 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.

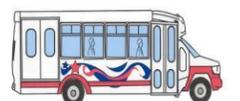


UPCOMING Youth Bowling Event:

Blue Earth Area Churches are planning a Bowling Event for our youth (Grades 6-12) on **Sunday, March 22**, in Fairmont at **Bowlmor Lanes**. Watch the Sunday bulletins for more details to come!

Please contact the church and leave a message if you know someone who needs a ride to church or call Al Roesler at 507-525-0630.

Let's fill the bus!





KIDS KORNER

Join us for a joyful Easter morning filled with food, fun, and creativity!

Families are invited to enjoy a brunch while kids decorate and color Easter eggs together. This fun, come-and-go style event is for all ages as we celebrate the joy and hope of Easter.

All supplies provided. Just bring your family and come ready to celebrate!

PARENTS: Palm Sunday, March 29th—Children will be singing during worship. As there is a Potluck Dinner right after worship, there will be NO Sunday School that day.

~Megan Goshorn, Kids Coordinator

Minnesota Walk to Emmaus

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

The Minnesota Walk to Emmaus-Men’s Walk #135 is coming up soon!

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/>



“Happy” Hour is returning!

Thursdays at 5:00 pm

****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.

Please lift up in prayer....



• Members and Friends in Health Care Centers and those at their homes including:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Mae Hove | Mike Rubatt | Terry Hassing |
| Jean Nelson | Mary Ochs | Muriel Hanna |
| Cindy Steinke | Scott Steinke | Lillian Kohlmeyer |
| Fran Fenske | Todd Olson | Damian Prescher |
| Layne McCleary | Mary Toland | Joe Ferraro |

• Armed Services personnel and their families including: Eric Becker, Hunter Spencer & Cole Steinke.

• All those that have a lost a loved one recently.

Please help us update this list if you have names to be added or omitted.

Need Prayer?

We have created a form on our website so that you can submit your prayer requests. You can choose to be anonymous or not, and you can even choose how your prayer is shared. Whether you want just

Pastor Godfrey to know or the entire church is up to you! So go to our website: behopeumc.com and click at the top on the tab that says "prayer request."



United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith (UWF)

Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 2pm

Circle Meetings:

Joy Circle: Thursday, March 12 at 2pm

Faith Circle: NO March Meeting

“Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Father is a merciful God, who always gives us comfort. He comforts us when we are in trouble, so that we can share this same comfort with others in trouble.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 CEV

In the scripture quoted above we are directed to praise God, the source of all comfort. We are to pass on the comfort God has given us to those who are troubled themselves.

We are not meant to be comforted and then just enjoy that sense of comfort alone, but spread that comfort to others around us that need it. To tell them they are seen and heard and loved, that they are not alone in their distress, anxiety or whatever trouble they are facing.

What a blessing to be able to give comfort, whether we are delivering meals-on-wheels, donating to a rescue fund for those who have lost everything in a fire, or sending words of care and love in a card or letter to someone who is lonely and feeling cut off from human contact. That isn’t asking too much of us. Reach out to someone today!

Prayer: Dear Lord, help us to notice when someone needs a human connection and be willing to reach out and offer your comfort to them. Amen.

Don’t forget our next UWFaith meeting on **Tuesday, March 3rd at 2:00pm!** All are welcome!

Be Blessed!

Your sister in Christ, Nancy



HOPE UMC ~ MARCH 2026

"New month, new goals, new mindset, new focus, new intentions, new results."



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:00AM: Choir Practice 9:15AM: Fellowship 10AM: Worship & Communion Service 11AM: Sunday School Bible Study	2 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Meals on Wheels</div>	3 2PM: St. Luke's Communion 2PM: UWF Meeting	4 7-7:30AM: Youth Bible Study 2:30-4:15PM: Early Release 7-8PM: Confirmation	5 10AM: Sermon Scriptures Bible Study 1-3PM: Mat Weaving 5PM: Happy Hour w/Jesus**	6	7
8 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:00AM: Choir Practice 9:15AM: Fellowship 10AM: Worship Service 11AM: Sunday School Bible Study	9	10 2PM: Membership/History Mtg 6:30-8PM: SPRC Training Mtg	11 7-7:30AM: Youth Bible Study 2:30-4:15PM: Early Release 7-8PM: Confirmation	12 10AM: NO BIBLE STUDY 2PM: Joy Circle 5PM: NO HAPPY HOUR	13	14 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #FFD700; color: black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Walk to Emmaus: Pastor Godfrey</div>
15 4th Sunday in Lent 9:00AM: Choir Practice 9:15AM: Fellowship 10AM: Worship Service (led by Worship Committee) 11AM: Sunday School Bible Study / Lord's Acre Mtg UMCOR SUNDAY	16 1-3 PM: Interfaith Caregivers BINGO	17 <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	18 7-7:30AM: Youth Bible Study 2PM: St. Luke's BINGO 2:30-4:15PM: Early Release 7-8PM: Confirmation	19 10AM: Sermon Scriptures Bible Study 1-3PM: Mat Weaving 5PM: Happy Hour w/Jesus**	20 <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	21 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Youth Mission Trip: Midwest Mission</div> Area Youth Bowling Event (Grades 6-12 with more details to come) RESERVED: ALL DAY—Private Event
22 5th Sunday in Lent 9:00AM: Choir Practice 9:15AM: Fellowship 10AM: Worship Service 11AM: Sunday School Bible Study RESERVED: 12-8PM—Private Event	23 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED	24 NO SCHOOL (preK-5th Grade only!) OFFICE CLOSED	25 2:30-4:15PM: Early Release 7-8PM: Confirmation	26 RESERVED: 12-6pm Private Event INTERFAITH CAREGIVER'S 30th Anniversary Open House 5PM: Happy Hour w/Jesus**	27	28 9:30-11AM: Color Me Easter Brunch
29 Palm Sunday 9:00AM: Choir Practice 9:15AM: Fellowship 10AM: Worship Service with Kids Singing 11AM: Bible Study 11:15AM: Potluck after worship Baptism of Lakeland Huber	30	31	Season of Lent: Wednesday, February 18 to Sunday, April 5—shaded in purple! Maundy Thursday Worship Service 4/2/26 at 5:30pm Good Friday Worship Service 4/3/26 at 5:30pm Easter Sunday Worship Service 4/5/26 at 10:00am			

Prayer of the month: *Father, thank you for carrying us through life's winter seasons and for bringing us into new springtime seasons of hope. Thank you for the lessons you teach us in winter seasons: lessons like endurance, rest, perseverance, and trust. Thank you for the blessings you have prepared for the season ahead. Most of all, thank you that your character and love never change. Amen.*