2026



Hope Scope

Pastor's Pen

"Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God . . . So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future - all belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God."
~ 1 Corinthians 3:18-19, 21-23 *(NRSV)*

You may have been aware of a recent election in our country! It turned out really badly—in the opinion of some. It turned out really well—in the opinion of others. As Americans, we know that elections matter. They have consequences. And so it is good that so many people care so deeply about their politics. We should care deeply, but as Christians, we have to know that elections are not the most important thing.

The Apostle Paul was involved in a sort of politics himself. After he had been preaching and sometimes establishing churches in various places, other leaders would come along and—at least at times—contradict what Paul had been teaching. Some would say "I am a Pauline Christian" or "I am a Christian of Apollos." It was like they already had denominations!

But Paul was careful to tell them not to put their faith in people—in earthly leaders. Our faith and our hope belong in only one place and that is in Jesus Christ, our Lord. The psalmist (Ps. 146) says: "Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish."

When they are at their best, our political leaders can be a help to us. But that is all. They will not save us. They can't. Only God, working through all of us, can do that.

One thing I have really come to appreciate about Hope Presbyterian Church is that—while I am pretty sure there are conservatives and liberals here, and everything in between—unlike what we see in so many other places, we are all able to live and work together, and to pray and sing together, and to learn of God's hopes for us all, together. That is a gift and a blessing!

~ Blessings,
Brian Jones

Coffee Servers:

December 6th:
Sandy & Jeff Wersal
Brooke & Jesse Appleby

December 13th:
Alisa & Duane Taatjes family

December 20th:
Allie & Joe Johnson family

December 27th:
Tim & Sue Block
Connie Swanson

Deacons of the Month:

Jason Windingstad &
Don Heath

Office Hours:

Monday thru Friday
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday Schedule:

9:15 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship
10:00 a.m. Worship
(Also on Facebook & the radio at 96.9 fm)
No Bible Study for the month of December

Television Schedule:

Channel 18 or 181

Sundays:	2:15 p.m.
Tuesdays:	11:30 a.m.
	3:00 p.m.
Thursdays:	8:00 a.m.
	5:00 p.m.

Session Highlights

submitted by Nancy Birkeland



At its meeting on November 23rd, the Session approved the following:

- Request be Alcoholics Anonymous to use the Fellowship Hall, kitchen, and Jack Anderson Fireside Room all day and evening of Saturday, December 12, 2026 for its Christmas party
- Baptism of Jonathan William Martin, son of Emily & Dillon Martin on a date to be determined in December
- Recommendation for the congregation to approve the pastor's compensation package for 2027
- Treasurer Kristene King having a CPA review the new bookkeeping procedures
- Personnel Committee seeking a new co-head counter to replace Brenda Bratberg
- Placing an ad in the *Lakes Area Review* for the Christmas Eve service
- Holding a special congregational meeting on Sunday, December 13th following worship
- Slate of candidates to serve 2027-2029

Communion servers for Sunday, November 29th:
Alisa Taatjes, Kathy Terpstra, Larry Bratsch, Deb Ficek, and Jerry Bents

October's Financial Report

submitted by Kristene King

	Month of Oct 2026	Year to Date Monthly Avg.	Year to Date Oct 2026	Prior Year to Date Oct 2025
Operating Support Received	$ 16,871.66	$ 20,923.80	$ 209,237.95	$ 213,087.14
Operating Activity	$ 24,427.57	$ 23,491.16	$ 234,911.64	$ 229,644.92
Operating Variance	($ 7,555.91)		($ 25,673.69)	($ 16,557.78)

Support Needed to Meet the Mission Plan	$ 27,674.40
Per Capita Commitment for 2026	$ 7,144.00
Per Capita Support Received Through 10/31/2026	$ 3,397.00

Per capita for 2027 will be $48.00 per active member.

Christian Education Youth & Families

submitted by Tyann Jones

"But the angel said to them, do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the city of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

~ Luke 2: 10-12

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On November 14th, several of us from Hope Presbyterian attended a David Crowder Christian concert in Alexandria, MN. It was fantastic!! Thanks, Matt Haglund, for organizing the adventure!



Sarah Sampson, Brooke Appleby, Tyann and Pastor Brian Jones, Matt Haglund, Shayla Sampson, Savannah Appleby, Anakin Haglund, George Appleby

On November 22nd, the youth made Christmas ornaments to hang on the tree in the Fellowship Hall. Some ornaments were also given to the Deacons to put in their Christmas gift baskets.









Time to take your Christmas pictures!!
The Photo Wall is all set up. SMILE! 😊



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So much work goes on behind the scenes. Thank you! Thank you!





Christmas is All About the Gifts



The Christmas Program is Sunday, December 6th at 10:00

Join us as we tell the story of a little girl named Hope who discovers that Christmas is all about the gifts. And….the Gift goes on….

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Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Sock Ministry for our CARE Pantry families.

Lots of warm toes this Christmas!!



FRIDGE BRIDGE

You can put this reminder sheet on your fridge!

Sunday, November 29	**Rehearsal** after church for the Christmas Program. Lunch will be served for participants and families.
Wednesday, December 2	Family meal at 5:30 Worship service at 6:00 **Program rehearsal for ALL** 6:20
Sunday, December 6	**Christmas program** at 10:00
Wednesday, December 9	Family meal at 5:30 Worship at 6:00 Classes as usual at 6:20
Sunday, December 13	Advent Fun Hour 3:00-4:00
Wednesday, December 16	Family meal at 5:30 Worship at 6:00 Classes as usual at 6:20
Thursday, December 24	Christmas Eve Service at 5:00
Friday, December 25	Merry Christmas!
Wednesday, December 30	No meal, worship, or classes
Wednesday, January 6	Family meal at 5:30 Worship at 6:00 Classes as usual 6:20



Thanksgiving Challenge Update

submitted by Jerry Bents



We did it! As of Sunday, November 22nd, we have collected $11,100.00 to help with the financial deficit. Thank you so much for your generosity and willingness to give. Without our faithful members, we wouldn't have been able to achieve this match. And a HUGE THANK YOU to the anonymous donor for the match! Please continue to give, as we aren't at the end of the year quite yet. Thank you again from the Finance Committee!

Thank Yous



Thank you to everyone who sent cards and visited me during my recent stay at Bethesda Therapy Suites. It was appreciated. I enjoy visitors, and you are always welcome.

~ Ruth Birkeland

CARE Pantry Product Challenge

December's CARE Pantry Challenge product is… Toilet Paper!



Please place your donations in the CARE Pantry box by the mailboxes.
Thank you for your continued support of the CARE Pantry's mission!

Announcements

Brian & Tyann's Christmas Open House

You are invited to an open house at Pastor Brian & Tyann's house (306 Miller Street – Spicer) on Sunday, December 6th from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. There will be food and drink and conversation, and who knows what else?!?!? Come early and stay late, or just drop by – whatever works for you!

Advent Fun Hour

Join in on the fun on Sunday, December 13th from 3:00 – 4:00 pm. We will have 20 minutes of games, 20 minutes of singing, and end with 20 minutes of eating! Come for the fun, and don't forget to bring your favorite appetizer or snack to share with the group!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Everyone is welcome to join us for our Christmas Eve candlelight service at 5:00 pm on Christmas Eve (December 24th). Come and celebrate Jesus' birth. If you can't be with us in person, you can also catch it live on Facebook at www.facebook.com/hopechurchspicer.

Head-Offering Counters Needed

We are looking for 1 or 2 people who would be interested in volunteering their time to be a head-offering counter 1 to 2 Sundays a month counting the offering after church with one of our Elders. If you are interested, please talk to Larry Bratsch.

Prayer Requests

Members with Health Issues: Robert Pinske, Daryl & Kathy Taatjes

Family and Friends with Health Issues: Amanda (Kathryn Frazee's granddaughter), David (Myron Ficek's brother)

Grieving: Family of Roger Steele, Family of Ray (friend of Brian & Tyann's), Family of Julia Iverson (retired NLS art teacher), Family of Patricia Strong (friend of Jo Holm), Family of Doris Nygaard (friend of Jo Holm), Family of Norma Jean Harlow (friend of Jo Holm), Family of Lonnie (Jerry Harder's brother), Family of Brittany Gehrke

Sept/Oct 2026 Impact Report

WE OFFICIALLY RETURNED TO THE NEW BUILDING ON OCTOBER 13!

COME JOIN US FOR NIGHT OF GRATITUDE ON NOVEMBER 5 FROM 4:30-7:30 PM AT THE LITTLE THEATER IN NEW LONDON. LIVE MUSIC, FOOD, & DRINKS AVAILABLE

THE COMMON GROUND GARDENS FALL FUNDRAISER WAS A BIG SUCCESS! THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CAME OUT AND SUPPORTED OUR ORGANIZATION! WE RAISED AROUND $2,500 THAT WILL BE PUT TOWARD OUR OUTREACH PROGRAMS. WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR EVERY DONOR, VOLUNTEER, AND MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY FOR THE CONTINUOUS SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION!

CHRISTMAS JOY REGISTRATION WILL BEGIN THE FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER! PLEASE REACH OUT TO DIRECTOR@YOUARETHELINK.ORG IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A CHILD IN OUR PROGRAM! IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO A MONETARY DONATION, YOU CAN DO CASH OR CHECK & DROP IT OFF AT OUR OFFICE OR MAIL IT. PLEASE PUT A NOTE THAT IT IS FOR CHRISTMAS JOY. OUR MAILING ADDRESS IS:

PO BOX 823,
NEW LONDON, MN 56273

THANKSGIVING BASKET SIGNUPS ARE COMPLETE. WE HAVE 75 BASKETS THAT WILL BE DELIVERED THIS YEAR. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE, PLEASE REACH OUT TO OUR OFFICE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

COMMUNITY REVIVAL IS STILL ACCEPTING DONATIONS DURING NORMAL STORE HOURS! PLEASE CALL IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT DONATION ITEMS.
THRIFT STORE NUMBER: 320-347-1047

OUTREACH/OFFICE PHONE NUMBERS:
320-354-5555
320-354-5465

YOUR IMPACT

310 & 296
families served in the Food Pantry

22,845 & 22,951
pounds of food distributed

142
students currently enrolled from the NL-S Schools to receive food for the weekend.

446 & 502
hours donated by generous community members to keep The Link's programs running smoothly

71 & 36
families provided with household needs, including:
clothing, dishes, furniture

14 & 7
provided with financial support to families facing hardships. This support includes, but is not limited to: medical bills, prescription costs, utility bills, rent/mortgage payments and other basic needs.

Tuesday's Table Schedule:
1st Tuesday: Our Lady of the Lakes
2nd Tuesday: Evangelical Covenant
3rd Tuesday: Faith Lutheran
4th Tuesday: Peace Lutheran
5th Tuesday: Crossroads Community

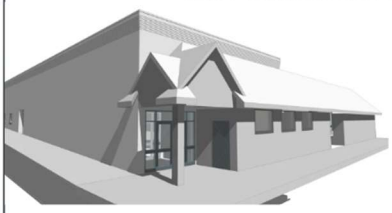
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!!!
YOU are The Link!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Gently used clothing (any size)
- Household essentials (dishes, sheets, small furniture items, etc.
- Unexpired food donations
- Monetary donations to The Link's general fund
- Monetary donations or sponsorship of a child in the Christmas Joy program
- Pray for The Link & your community
- Invite The Link's staff to attend a business or church meeting, book club or any group event to help spread awareness of The Link's programs

BE A PART OF THE LINK'S LEGACY!

The Link *Renewed*



Thank you to everyone who helped support our capital campaign for the New London building renovations! We are so excited to be in our new space!

DONOR WALL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE!

December 2026 – Birthday Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUEDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
				Eli Twernbold Liz Windingstad		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Bob Ehrlich Zach Fischer		Bob Sampson	Sherry Bratsch	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
			Brian Jones	Conny Williamson	Carol Burns	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Nic Barney	Jason Bents Bill Schurman			Happy Birthday Jesus!	
27	28	29	30	31		
		Greg Swenson	Kelli Haglund Ann Roguske	Jennie Bents Lauren Bratberg		

December 2026 – Hope's Events Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUEDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
		11am-2pm CARE Pantry distribution 12:00 pm CARE Pantry lunch 6:00 pm Tuesday's Table - Our Lady of the Lakes 6:30 pm Presbytery mtg - via Zoom	5:30 pm Meal 6:00 pm Worship 6:20 pm Christmas Program Practice 7:15 pm Choir practice			7:00 pm AA
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:15 am Fellowship 10:00 am Christmas Program 3:00 - 5:00 pm Open House at Pastor Brian & Tyann's house	10:00 am Coffee & Conversation	6:00 pm Tuesday's Table - NL Cov. No CEYF meeting	5:30 pm Meal 6:00 pm Worship 6:20 pm WOW 6:30 pm TAG 7:15 pm Choir practice			AA Christmas Party (all day)
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:15 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Special Congregational meeting 11:15 am Belize meeting 3:00 pm Advent Fun Hour	10:00 am Coffee & Conversation 5:45 pm Deacons 6:30 pm Property mtg.	11am-2pm CARE Pantry distribution 12:00 pm CARE Pantry lunch 6:00 pm Tuesday's Table - Faith Luth.	5:30 pm Meal 6:00 pm Worship 6:20 pm WOW 6:30 pm TAG 7:15 pm Choir practice			7:00 pm AA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9:15 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship	8:30 am Staff mtg. 10:00 am Coffee & Conversation 6:30 pm Session	6:00 pm Tuesday's Table - Peace Luth.	6:15 pm Choir practice No CE Classes - Christmas Break Hope Scope deadline	5:00 pm Christmas Eve service w/ communion	Office Closed Merry Christmas! Church in use all day for Jones family Christmas party	7:00 pm AA
27	28	29	30	31		
9:15 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship	10:00 am Coffee & Conversation	6:00 pm Tuesday's Table - ????	No CE Classes or Choir - Christmas Break			