



Hope Scope

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. - 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 (NRSV)

These words from the Apostle Paul make it seem like he is humbling himself. And in a way, that is what is going on. I will tell you that as a preacher, I have often taken encouragement from this passage. Most Sunday mornings I don't feel like I have a tremendous supply of lofty words or wisdom for you. And yet, I feel like I can continue in this ministry, because I know about Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

The season of Lent is upon us, and Lent is a time for really working hard to tell the truth, about ourselves, about the world, and about our God. Sometimes that can be hard.

One of the hardest things to reconcile between the Gospel and American culture is the idea that is prevalent in our country, that winning is the thing. That what we are supposed to do is win. We are supposed to make others act the way we want them to. Success is all about appearing to be powerful and articulate and rich. It has to do with getting our own way.

And that whole notion is contrary to the Gospel. It is hard for us to see death on a cross as power. It is hard for us to understand that ultimate power in the universe has to do with ultimate love. Sometimes we see things like love, service, sympathy, and empathy as weakness. Jesus says otherwise. The Gospel says otherwise.

I think our misunderstanding of this situation is one factor in the way we have so much trouble getting along with each other anymore. I mean if we are supposed to defeat everybody we disagree with - if we are supposed to show how strong and articulate we are - it is always going to be a challenge for us to love our neighbors.

I am hoping that maybe this year we can find the truth about the power in discipleship. I am hoping that in this season of Lent, everyone will take a lesson.

~ Blessings, *Brian Jones*

At its February 23rd meeting, the Session:

- Watched a video of Clearwater Forest Camp's capital campaign, Fan the F.L.A.M.E!, to build a new building. Rev. Scott Thompson of Willmar will be making a presentation to Hope Church about the church making a contribution to this building campaign.
- Amended the 2026 budget to correct line 217 SECA from \$5,956 to \$6,142.26
- Approved the 2025 Church Statistical Report filed with the General Assembly
- Approved a total of 11 TAG youth and adult chaperones attending the Sidewalk Prophets concert in Clara City on Wednesday, March 11th, and to pay \$15 per entrance ticket out of the Gulbranson Youth Legacy fund for a total amount of \$165.
- Kathy Terpstra volunteered to be Hope's commissioner to the March 7th Presbytery meeting in Amboy.
- Assigned the following Elders to serve on the church's committees:
 - CEYF - Brooke Appleby, Deb Ficek and Alisa Taatjes
 - Finance - Jerry Bents and Howard Jones
 - Mission Engagement - Deb Ficek, Alisa Taatjes and Kathy Terpstra
 - Personnel - Larry Bratsch and Kelli Haglund
 - Property - Howard Jones and Jody Leason
 - Technology - Brooke Appleby and Alisa Taatjes
- The following volunteered to serve communion on Sunday, March 1st during the 10:00 a.m. worship service: Jerry Bents, Kelli Haglund, Howard Jones, Alisa Taatjes, and Kathy Terpstra.



FINANCE REPORT

| | Month of Jan 2026 | Year to Date Monthly Avg. | Year to Date Jan 2026 | Prior Year to Date Jan 2025 |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Income | \$ 20,367.45 | \$ 20,367.45 | \$ 20,367.45 | \$ 27,520.36 |
| Expenses | \$ 21,673.20 | \$ 21,673.20 | \$ 21,673.20 | \$ 28,600.76 |
| Net Profit (Loss) | (\$ 1,305.75) | | (\$ 1,305.75) | (\$ 1,080.40) |
| Income Needed to Cover Monthly Budgeted Expenses | | | | \$ 27,674.40 |
| Per Capita Assessment for 2025 | | | | \$ 7,144.00 |
| Per Capita Paid by Members Through 011/30/2025 | | | | \$ 1,146.00 |

Report prepared by Kristene King, Treasurer

In 2026, Per Capita has increased to \$47.00 per active member.

March's CARE Pantry Challenge

March is MN Food Share month, so we are gathering food and monetary donations for the Link.

Please place your food donations on the table in front of the mailboxes or in the CARE Pantry box by the mailboxes. Monetary donations can be put in the offering plate or given to Steph in the office. Thank you!



**COLLECTING
FOOD & FUNDS
THROUGH THE
END OF MARCH**

CARE Pantry update

The CARE Pantry has been chosen as the recipient of the month at Bargains & Blessings. Please be sure to shop and donate items! We get a percentage of all purchases made in the month of March.

Soup 'n' Bread Suppers

Soup 'n' Bread supper at 5:30 pm
Lenten Services to follow at 6:15 pm



Sign-up in the Fellowship Hall
with what you would like to bring

March 4th - Work Group 2
in the kitchen

March 11th - Work Group 3
in the kitchen

March 18th - Work Group 4
in the kitchen

March 25th - Kids and
families in the kitchen

Christian Education Youth & Families

Respectfully submitted by Tyann Jones

“Create in me a clean heart, oh God; and renew a right spirit within me.”

Psalm 51:10

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The TAG (Teens and God) group purchased and packaged items for our church's on-going CARE Pantry mission on February 10th. Thank you to Karen Bents, CARE Pantry coordinator, for organizing the lists and jobs for the volunteers. It was a really fun time!



Youth workers: Zach Fischer, Grace Gau, Madelyn and Evelyn Titus, Savannah Appleby, Isaac Taatjes

Adults workers: Karen Bents, Liz Windingstad, Jill Gau, Tyann Jones, Melissa Mangen



Pastor Brian held a class on Communion for parents who were interested in finding out more about how Presbyterians understand the sacrament of Communion for their children. The discussions included ideas about how to talk with our children about what this sacrament means.



We had a youth Fun Day on February 22nd. The WOW kids went to the YMCA and the TAG kids went to WIG (Willmar Indoor Golf).



Not pictured: Sue Schiro, Pastor Brian Jones



Not pictured: Wally Titus, Eli Carlson, Pastor Brian Jones



Christian Education Youth and Families Committee has been at it again!!

Costume Closet: Thank you to Jonelle Foreman, Tyann Jones, and Pam Sigafoos for organizing all the costume tubs in the supply room. Material and costumes were culled, cleaned, and repaired. Many thanks to Jonelle for sewing, washing, and delivering miscellaneous costumes and material.

Painting: Our **3 education rooms** and **the bell choir room** all received a beautiful facelift. The rooms are bright and cheery thanks to the painting crew: Harold and Jonelle Foreman, Tyann Jones, and Joni Lamphere. Very special thanks to Harold and Jonelle for ALL the leg work getting the paint and all the supplies as well as emptying the rooms prior to painting and then putting everything back afterwards.



Busy Bags: Many thanks to Melissa Mangen who went through our Children's Church Busy Bags. She cleaned out used or broken items and refilled the bags with new resources.



One Great Hour of Sharing Fish Banks will be distributed to our students.
They **should be brought** back to church on
Palm Sunday which is March 29th.

The money is collected globally and used for 3 Presbyterian Projects:

1. **S**elf-Development of People
2. Presbyterian **H**unger Fund
3. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (**E**mergencies)

Remember the word, "**SHE**"

Fridge Bridge

- March 1 Handbells rehearsal at 8:50am
- March 4 Soup and bread meal, Lenten worship at 6:15pm,
classes as usual
- March 8 **Handbells will play during church**
- March 10 CEYF committee meeting at 6:30
- March 11 Soup and bread meal, Lenten worship, classes as usual
- March 18 Spring break at NLS so no Wednesday night classes
Soup and bread meal, Lenten Service at 6:15pm
- March 25 **All youth HOST** soup and bread meal
Lenten Service at 6:15pm
Classes as usual
- March 29 **Palm Sunday**
Kids sing in church
Fish Banks due
March into service with palm branches

Looking ahead:

- April 5 Easter
- April 26 We will honor our high school graduates and Christian Education
Leaders during church
Kids will sing in church



DINNER THEATER
HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MARCH 29, 2026

THE COMMITTEE STRIKES AGAIN



A comedic look at a well-meaning church committee attempting to create a dinner theater using Bible stories, only to find themselves stuck remembering all the previous skits that went hilariously, wrong.

FREE WILL OFFERING
FUNDRAISER FOR THE 2027 BELIZE MISSION TRIP

TWO TIMES AVAILABLE: 4:00PM • 6:00PM



Dear Friends in Christ,

I am deeply grateful to the Hope Presbyterian Women for inviting me to share about The Compassionate Way. It is a true joy to speak about a ministry that is so close to my heart. Each day, I am humbled and inspired as I witness God's transforming love at work in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you to everyone who has offered financial support. Your generosity makes it possible for me to serve individuals who are often overlooked or forgotten - including women in addiction treatment facilities, senior adults in assisted and independent living communities, men and women experiencing homelessness, dependent adults, children living in mobile home parks, and many others. Through your partnership, compassion becomes tangible, and hope is extended in meaningful ways.

May God continue to bless each of you as you share Christ's compassion in Spicer, New London, and beyond. I am truly grateful for your partnership in this ministry.

God's Blessings,
~ Candace Adams

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Compassionate Way has recently been informed that the bank will NO longer accept checks addressed to The Compassionate Way. Instead, checks must now be made out to Lakes Area Presbyterian Church, which currently acts as our fiscal sponsor. When sending a check, please indicate "For The Compassionate Way" on the memo line. We regret any confusion or inconvenience this change may cause.

Thank you once again to the congregations that have generously supported our ministry efforts. Checks can still be mailed to:

The Compassionate Way
7761 Excelsior Road
Baxter, MN 56425

If you have any questions, please contact me at 320-905-5453.

God's Blessings,
~ Candace Adams



Linking People.
Building Community.

2026

Impact
Report

“Creating a community where neighbors share the love of God through service to each other.”

The Food Pantry



212

households served

13,349

pounds distributed

324 adults

179 children

75 seniors

Household Exchange



63

families provided with household needs including, but not limited to:
clothing
dishes
furniture

Client Services & Outreach



13

households

provided with financial support to families facing hardships, such as: job loss, chronic illness, homelessness & increased cost of living. This support includes, but is not limited to: medical bills, prescription costs, utility bills, rent/mortgage payments and other basic needs.

18 referrals given

10 families provided with budgeting support

5

families provided with advocacy support

8

families provided with networking support

Wildcat Backpacks



159

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

440 CHILDREN & 68 ADULTS
RECEIVED CHRISTMAS GIFTS

with Christmas Joy

Foster Stitches

3

children in foster care provided with clothing

Tuesday's Table

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

Volunteer Hours

353

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

Current Needs

- Household essentials (i.e. dishes, towels, sheets, small furniture items, etc.;
- Household goods and clothing donations for the Thrift Store
- Gently used clothing of any size;
- Unexpired food for The Food Pantry
- Monetary donations to a program of your choice OR to The Link's general fund.
- Donations to The Link's capital campaign for building renovations

For more information on The Link's programs OR to make a monetary donation, please scan the QR code or visit www.youarethelink.org



How can you help?

- Donate unexpired food items to The Food Pantry OR organize a food drive;
- Help us spread awareness about The Link's by talking to your friends and family and sharing on social media;
- Volunteer at The thrift store or in the food pantry;
- Invite The Link's staff to attend a business or church meeting, book club or any other group events to help spread awareness of The Link's programs;
- Pray for The Link & your community
- Ask us about the building remodel campaign

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

director@youarethelink.org

320-354-5465

www.youarethelink.org

55+ Driver Discount Class

Monday, March 9th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm OR

Monday, March 23rd from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

At the Atwater Community Center (107 2nd St. N - Atwater)

This is a 4 hour in-person class about driver safety. It is good for 3 years, and you can save 10% off your car insurance. To register, please call 320-308-1400 or 888-234-1294, or register online at www.DriverDiscountProgram.com

JOIN US FOR AN

EASTER EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH 9AM-11AM

Peace Lutheran Church
100 4th Ave. SW, New London, MN
Hosted by NLS Ambassadors

Freewill Donation \$5/child suggested

**Great Prizes,
Decorate a Cookie,
and Get Info on being a Candidate
with the NLS Ambassador Program**



Questions? Please contact Becky Arvila @ 320-905-3337,
Lori Pederson @ 320-905-2514, or Stephanie Bents @ 320-220-1504

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

There are three special offerings of the Presbyterian Church: One Great Hour of Sharing taken Palm Sunday; World Communion Offering taken the first week in October; and Christmas Joy Offering. Each have special purposes.

At the end of Lent, we will be taking the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering.

“Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

If you believe Jesus’ words from Matthew 25, then One Great Hour of Sharing is a way for all of us together to help others when they are most vulnerable.

Some of the ways that the funds collected are used:

* Disaster Assistance – Volunteers are sent to places after natural (or unnatural) disasters to work with local churches to assess and assist with their immediate and long-term needs.

* Hunger Relief – This program works to alleviate hunger and eliminate its root causes, working through relationships and partnerships in the US and around the world.

* Poverty - Works to identify and change systems and forces that push people into poverty and keep them there.

* Immigration/Migration/Refugees – Advocate for compassionate and just immigration laws and policies

* Climate Change – Promotes education on sustainable living and earth care concerns.

If you would like to learn more about any of these programs you can find the info at: <https://pcusa.org/special-offerings/one-great-hour-sharing>

Giving envelopes are available on the table in the Narthex for you to give towards the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. This offering will be taken through Easter.

Office Hours

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

Sunday Schedule

9:15 A.M. Fellowship Hour
10:00 A.M. Worship in Sanctuary
Also on Facebook Live &
on Radio 96.9 FM

TV - Channel 18 or Channel 181 - Sundays 2:15 pm, Tuesdays 11:30 am &
3:00 pm, or Thursdays 8:00 am & 5:00 pm

Members with Health Issues:

Darlene Thompson, Greg Swenson, Gaylord
Lind, Conny & John Williamson, Arlos Jones

*Prayer
Requests*



Family and Friends with Health Issues:

Randy Dahlberg (Lisa Thorson's cousin's friend)

Grieving:

Family of Paul (Joni's daughter's father-in-law), Family of Kim (Joni's sister),
Family of Todd Harder (Betty Harder's son)

****Please Note** If you have a prayer request, please fill out a prayer request
card found on the table by the mailboxes in the Fellowship Hall and return it to
an usher or Pastor Brian.

March Deacons of the Month: Jeff Wersal & Greg Swenson

March Coffee Servers

March 1st: Jerry & Sue Schiro

March 8th: Clara O'Connor, Joyce Schroeder

March 15th: Melissa & Lyle Mangen

March 22nd: Jackie Wahl & Gaylord Lind

March 29th: Jerry, Karen, & Stephanie Bents

