Pastor’s Page

The word “hope” has been haunting me recently. Words do that sometimes when we pay attention to them. The word hope popped up in the funeral liturgy, which we used way too many times in the month of November. Hope lies behind the Advent season—a savior comes, eventually, a savior comes. Hope is behind the scurry and fury of Commercial Christmas—I hope I get…

Rather than the rock of faith, hope leads us into ambiguity. Imbedded in the concept of hope is that maybe it will and maybe it won’t: Maybe it will snow tomorrow, maybe the Packers will win again, maybe the Lord will return in glory and splendor for all to see. If we hold such hopes, then we must also entertain the possibility that it might not snow tomorrow, the Packers might not win again this season (especially with a secondary that couldn’t stop the Gibraltar football team if they had to), maybe Christ won’t return any time soon to clean up all of our messes and rectify all of our wrongs and save us from ourselves.

But this is the season to be hopeful.

At our writing group’s November meeting, we were led with the prompt, “Hope is a thing with/that…” We found a picture is some of books that reminded us of something that hope is or does. I offer my reflection that day. The picture I found in a children’s book was that of a crescent moon…

A waning crescent moon promises—I’ll be back.
A parent cuddles his young one before a business trip—I’ll be back.
A tearful child saying goodbye to friends—I’ll be back.
The last oak leaves clinging to oak branches—I’ll be back.

Perhaps, not today. Perhaps, not even tomorrow, but hope is the promise of return, to NOT abandon, to NOT orphan.

A waning crescent moon promises, I’ll be back and like the postal carriers of old, neither rain, nor sleet, nor dark of night will keep her from her appointed rounds.

Hope is a thing with perspective—our waning crescent moon—sorrow-filled and lonely—is someone else’s waxing crescent moon—joy-filled and brilliant. The promise of a new moon—which really isn’t new—is the promise of hope unseen—present, real, tangible—yet unrecognizable, camouflaged and hidden.

Hope is a waning crescent moon setting on the horizon, quietly sailing to gentler seas. I’ll be back, she says…I’ll be back. And like boomerangs, departing adults and wandering saviors, she comes back. She always does.

Hope lies at the very heart of Christmas. It represents the promise that things will not always be as they are. We might believe that we get to dictate the terms of how this will come to be, but—gratefully—we don’t. We simply get to receive it, to hold on to it—and if it isn’t under the Christmas tree—know that it will come, one day, eventually, a Savior comes.

In Faith. In Love. In Hope.

Pastor Kerry
December Servants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lectors</th>
<th>Ushers</th>
<th>Fellowship Hosts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>Dave Schrader</td>
<td>Surbaughs</td>
<td>Krapfs &amp; Darlene H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 11</td>
<td>JoAnne Morris</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Thorpes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 18</td>
<td>One of the Krausses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Everyone bring a plate of cookies!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elder of the Month

Trudy Fandrei
920-854-7581
trudyrranch@gmail.com

Fill in the blanks!

Contact Ardis Fletcher if you would like to read Scripture during worship.
Contact Pete Budic if you would like to usher.
Contact Karen Krauss if you’d like to host Fellowship this month.

Birthdays

12/08 Tracey Fitzgerald
12/12 Karena Malmgren
12/13 Greg Sunstrom
12/19 Olivia Olson
12/28 Abbigael Sitte
12/29 Mike Jacobson

Anniversaries

12/03 Gary & Beverly Schulze
12/04 Mike & Sharon Jacobson
12/29 Gene & Laurie Anderson

Thoughts are with you

We want to thank all of you for your cards and tributes to Glenn and Mitch. Most of all, thank you for your prayers for strength that only God can give. With love, the Glenn and Mitch Olson families

Those ill or recovering: Anita Beckstrom, Bernice Sunstrom, Sten Kordon, Laurie Anderson, Rita Melvin, Larry Peterson, Lucas Spence, Kenon Bunda, Anita Anderson, Rick Gename, Nancy Hughes, Kaye Knutson, Janet Schuster

Senior living & nursing care centers: Anita Beckstrom, Elaine Kalms, Marjorie Nichols, Lois Rice, Bernice Sunstrom

Serving in the military: Bryan Duff, Brian Flood, Patrick Flood, Austin Lent, David Mann, Todd Pichette, Jimmy Wiltse
On November 20, we held our annual Church Council. Ordinary business was conducted, such as receiving organizational reports and approving the budget for 2017. Other, less-than-ordinary, business was also conducted.

The proposal to experiment with a Unified Board was discussed and ultimately approved by Church Council. The proposal joins together the Board of Elders and Trustees for a two-year trial. There will be ample opportunity for feedback and progress reports.

Corresponding with the experiment, the following were elected at Church Council to sit on the Unified Board: Pat Beckstrom, Trudy Fandrei, Sharon Jacobson, JoAnne Morris, Anne Porter, Kathy Ray, Bill Surbaugh and Kathy Wagner. The existing Joint Board shares an optimism about the results of this experiment. We also share a desire to learn from the experience. This may be a better way to lead and organize this congregation. It may be the exact opposite.

We ask for your prayers as we go about the business of re-imagining the organization and structure of our congregation. We also ask for your patience. We don’t expect trouble in transitioning from one model to another, but this is, after all, an experiment.

**Finances – Narrative Report**

To date, all local bills and salaries have been paid. Our payments to the Northern Province for our Common Ministries and Pastor’s Health and Pension command our attention—and ought to for the rest of the year.

Early in 2016, the Provincial Controller’s office offered our congregation an opportunity to earn forgiveness (not theologically correct) for what we continued to owe to the Common Ministries Fund. For each year we pay in full, the Province will forgive 20% of what we owed previously. Pat Beckstrom has been able to make consistent regular payments for all of these categories. Our budget for 2017 shows the 20% reduction in this area.

Celebrate, church! We will make 12 payments in 12 months for the first time in a number of years. We would like to thank those who give financially regularly and faithfully. We would like to thank those who have pledged toward our finances for 2017. We would like to thank those who take advantage of the automatic withdrawal option. We also need to thank Pat Beckstrom for tending to this vital aspect of our faith and witness.

**Chimney Report**

On November 22, the scaffolding went up around the chimney at the parsonage. During the summer, we had discovered that the chimney, inside and out, was in need of serious repair. A gas fireplace will be installed after the masonry is completed.

The Trustees and the Memorial Committee have allotted much of the undesignated monies in the Memorial Fund for the project. We anticipate the whole project will cost approximately $10,000.

If you would like to contribute to the work, you may make contributions directly to the Building Fund. If you would like to replenish the Memorial Fund, you can make donations in memory of Glenn Olson, Dick Kostka, or Mitch Olson—or anyone else you care to remember.

—Pastor Kerry

**CANDLE SHORTAGE!**

Our supply of candles with the light sensor is just about depleted. If anyone has extras at home or sees them in the store, please bring them! (Battery-operated ones are available but more expensive to use.) Thank you!
Christmas in the Country, sponsored by Women’s Fellowship, is Saturday, December 10, from 10 am to 2 pm. There will be local vendors’ arts & crafts, a huge bake sale (please contribute your favorite holiday sweets!), handmade rag rugs, and a homemade chicken soup lunch. A perfect time to buy Christmas gifts! Take a couple of posters from Fellowship Hall to distribute around Northern Door, and sign up if you’re able to help during the event.

Your Write

The next meeting of Your Write is Monday, December 12, at 1 pm in The Oasis/Fellowship Hall. The group is ecumenical, encompassing all forms of writing. Inspiration this month comes from Jim Wallis, Editor in Chief of Sojourners magazine, and dovetails nicely into Pastor Kerry’s message: “Hope is believing in spite of the evidence, then watching the evidence change.” Some prompts for your own writing: “While I wait…” and “Who would’ve thought I’d find hope there…?” Come enjoy the fellowship and motivation!

Women’s Bible Study

The Women’s Bible Study is back to meeting on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am. The study book is bestseller Accidental Saints – Finding God in All the Wrong People by Nadia Bolz-Weber. The book answers the question, “What if that person you’ve been trying to avoid is your best shot at grace today?” Intrigued? Join the study!

Kudos

Thank you to all who served and supported this year’s community lunch ministry. What a joy to see all the smiling faces and hear the continuing chatter. Attendees from last November through this November totaled 600+ souls fed with a meal, a hug, and laughter. Thanks to all the ladies who participated for the October Women’s Service to make our 120th anniversary a special celebration. To all those who helped with the three memorial services by baking cakes, working in the kitchen, and cleaning up—so many of you offered your help without even being asked, and the families really appreciated everything you did. Cheryl Surbaugh’s Advent quilt is displayed in the sanctuary. It was used for the cover for our Advent booklet, and it will continue to celebrate the history of the church. All the table decorations have been lovely and add to our time of fellowship.

Collectibles on Display

To all collectors! You’re invited to show your favorite collectibles in Fellowship Hall from Sunday, January 29, through Sunday, February 5. With the Community Lunch on Wednesday, February 1, this gives folks an opportunity to see the eclectic tastes of our congregation on wonderful display. Please write a brief paragraph about why you collect this particular item. If possible, bring your own table for your display. For more information, contact Cheryl Lubahn (920-854-0007).
**Women’s Fellowship Update**

The following people will continue to serve for 2017:

**Officers**
- President: Kathy Ray
- Vice President and Treasurer: Sheila Petroni
- Secretary: Dawn Emery-Janzen

**Standing Committees**
- Faith development Jan Schrader
- Funeral lunches: Jan thru March – June Olson, April thru June – Trudy Fandrei, Debbie Mann, July thru September – Kathy Ray, October thru December – Sue Sunstrom
- Mission Outreach: Jan Schrader
- Christmas gifts: Lucille Kostka, Betty Holland
- Scand birthday party: Trudy Fandrei
- Nominating Committee: To be announced
- Table decorations: Nov–May: Jennie Stultz, Jan Schrader, June–Oct: Beth Ferris
- Cards for birthdays or get well: Diane Thorpe
- Kitchen coordinator: Sheila Petroni
- Hospitality: Sheila Petroni, Karen Knudson
- Rug making: Lucille Kostka, Kathy Ray
- Scholarship: Britt Maltby, Dawn Emery-Janzen, Kathy Wagner
- Group study leader: Appointed at each meeting for the next meeting
- Fellowship hour coordinator: Tracey Fitzgerald or as posted in the kitchen; monthly coordinators are listed

If you’re unable to serve, talk to Kathy Ray or Sheila Petroni. The next official meeting will be in May 2017 to plan the Cherry Festival.

---

**Unity Prayer Day**

December 26th is SBMC’s day to pray for many needs, here and around the world. Add your name for half-hour of prayer (Fellowship Hall); there are many topics from which to choose this year.

---

**Tea Time**

The ladies’ 2017 Tea has been set for Wednesday, May 10, at SBMC, from 1–3 pm. This tea is a concerted effort of SBMC, Wickman House, and Linden Gallery. It will be an “Asian Tea with a Blending of Tastes and Traditions.” As plans finalize, SBMC member assistance will be coordinated. For any further questions, contact Cheryl Lubahn at (920) 854-0007.

---

Remembrance letters from current and previous members and pastors—written for our 120th anniversary—are still available. If you would like a copy, please call the church office or leave Kathy Kirkland a note.
Upcoming Church Events

★ Women’s Circle
Women’s Circle will not meet in December.

★ Women’s Bible Study
The current study is *Accidental Saints – Finding God in All the Wrong People* by Nadia Bolz-Weber. The group meets Tuesdays at 9:30 am.

★ Mission Committee
The Mission Committee is planning the details for the January mission trip to Ahuas Medical Clinic in rural Honduras. Keep the mission team and Rick Nelson in your prayers!

★ Sunday School
Sunday school continues to meet on Sunday mornings at 9 am, except for Christmas Day! There will be a Youth Rehearsal on Sunday the 18th at 9 am.

★ Choir & Bell Rehearsals
Choir rehearsals every Wednesdays (1 pm) and Sundays (9 am) except the 18th and 25th. Rehearsals to be announced for the Joint Choir (during Scand’s worship service) on the 18th. Bells rehearse every Tuesday at 7 pm except the 27th.

★ Men’s Breakfast & Bible Study
Meetings on Thursdays at 8 am in Fellowship Hall for a continental breakfast and Bible study.

★ Elders & Trustees
Elders meet on Monday, December 12, at 9 am. Trustees meet at 9:15 am on Thursday, December 15.

Community Events

**Christmas in the Village** throughout Ephraim is Saturday, December 3. Hotels & shops will have treats! Ephraim Moravian’s **ADVENTure** is from 11 am–2 pm with Sweets for the Holidays Bake Sale, Granny’s Christmas Attic with old-fashioned Christmas decorations, candle-wrapping, wreath-making, and displays of Moravian traditions.

**Peninsula School of Art** will be hosting a **Bowl-Making Day** on Family Art Day, Saturday, December 17 from 9 am to noon. RSVP directly to the Peninsula School of Art, 920-868-3455.

**Birch Creek**
**Music of the Season**
Saturday, December 3 – Juniper Hall – 7 pm
Cost: $29 (just $20 for SBMC members!) Birch Creek’s Symphony Brass & Percussion invite you to a holiday concert in the intimate setting of Juniper Hall. Birch Creek welcomes the Moravian Church Handbell Choir for the festivities. For tickets, call 920-868-3763.

**Before the Flood**
Stella Maris’ Care of Our Common Home Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship are holding a **special viewing of the acclaimed documentary, Before the Flood**, from Martin Scorsese, Leonardo DiCaprio and National Geographic: Wednesday, December 7, 7 pm at the UU, 10341 Hwy 42, Ephraim. Free! In collaboration with The Climate Change Coalition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11 am-2 pm Christmas in the Village Ephraim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm Birch Creek Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 am Sunday School</td>
<td>9 am Choir</td>
<td>9:30 am Women's Bible Study</td>
<td>Noon: Free Community Lunch</td>
<td>8 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>1 pm setup for tomorrow’s event</td>
<td>10 am-2 pm CHRISTMAS IN THE COUNTRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 am Worship</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm Bells</td>
<td>1 pm Choir After-School Group</td>
<td>7 pm Before the Flood screening at UU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 am Sunday School</td>
<td>9 am Choir</td>
<td>9:30 am Women's Bible Study</td>
<td>1 pm Choir After-School Group</td>
<td>8 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>8 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>9 to Noon Peninsula Art School Soup Bowl-Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 am Worship</td>
<td>1 pm Your Write</td>
<td>7 pm Bells</td>
<td>9:15 am Trustees</td>
<td>9:15 am Trustees</td>
<td>10 am joint Choir at Scand Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 am Youth Rehearsal</td>
<td>9 am Sunday School</td>
<td>9 am Elders</td>
<td>Winter Begins Noon: Open Door Lunch/Ephraim</td>
<td>8 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>8 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>Christmas Eve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO Choir</td>
<td>10 am Worship</td>
<td>9:30 am Women’s Bible Study</td>
<td>1 pm Choir After-School Group</td>
<td>1 pm Choir</td>
<td>7 pm Service</td>
<td>7 pm Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 pm Joint Choir at Scand Service</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm Bells</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>Unity Prayer Day</td>
<td>9:30 am Women’s Bible Study</td>
<td>1 pm Choir</td>
<td>8 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve</td>
<td>Happy New Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO Sunday School or Choir Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 pm Loaves &amp; Fishes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 am Service</td>
<td></td>
<td>NO Bells</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth Sunday School (Oct - May) 9 am  
Sunday Worship Service 10 am  
Women's Study, Monday 3:30 pm  
Men's Study, Thurs. 8 am  
Pastor Kerry's office hours: Monday through Wednesday 9 am–Noon,  
always available for a time to meet  
Cell 920-854-0015  
Parsonage 854-4559  
Church Office 854-4080  
Secretary Kathy Kirkland: Thurs/Fri 8:30 am–2:30 pm  
e-mail: kkrauss@dcwis.com  
Secretary: sbmoffice@dcwis.com  
Website: www.sisterbaymoravianchurch.org