



FEBRUARY 2025



THE HOPE CHURCH BEACON

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment.
Care for the poor.
Forgive often.
Reject Racism.
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthly and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity.
Love God.
Enjoy this life.

HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

35127 GARFIELD ROAD, CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MI, 48035

CHURCH OFFICE: (586) 296-8760

EMAIL: HOPEUCC4@GMAIL.COM

WEBSITE: HOPEUCCMI.COM

FACEBOOK PUBLIC PAGE: @HOPEUCCMACOMB

YOUTUBE: HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST - CLINTON TOWNSHIP



WORDS OF HOPE



The month of February begins with a Groundhog Day ceremony held at Punxsutawney in western Pennsylvania, is based on a semi-mythical groundhog named Punxsutawney Phil. This event centers on the Pennsylvania Dutch superstition that if a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day and sees its shadow, it will retreat to its den and winter will go on for six more weeks; if it does not see its shadow, spring will arrive early.

As the cold of February settles deep in our bones and the lack of sunlight triggers the winter blues we are tempted to withdraw into our homes like the famous rodent. We are living in a time when the country is divided, and we all wait to see the impact of a new administration. Our hopes for a Lion's Super Bowl victory were defeated. Valentine's Day brings happiness for some and disappointment for others. So, it can feel tempting to retreat into our own emotional den.

Therapy 101 tells us our feelings are not good or bad, they are just feelings. Where we do have control is in choosing our response to those feelings. We remember that happiness is a temporary state typically based on current events. We would have experienced happiness if we had won the Super Bowl!

Joy is a state of the heart, a gift from God. Joy is knowing that no matter the circumstances we are not alone, and that God is working in our lives. So as people of faith we are called to seek joy! Sometimes it is a deliberate choice, and it takes practice. Our faith encourages us to be proactive. Plan an enjoyable activity, get up on Sunday and come to church. Reach out to someone who you think could use some encouragement. Read this Beacon and find a way to connect at church.

The scripture reminds us, "A joyful heart helps healing, but a broken spirit dries up the bones." Proverbs 17:22 Even when we feel discouraged God calls us to seek joy! So during this month let us come together and embrace our joy!

Blessings,
Pastor Meg

CHURCH NEWS

Hearing Assistance is Offered at Hope UCC

Can't quite hear Pastor Meg's sermon?
Think the choir just doesn't sing loud enough?

We can help!

We can accommodate you with our assistive listening system! We have installed a complex system that can transmit directly to your hearing aids through your own smartphone or with a special receiver we can lend you. We also have earphones for those without hearing aids.

Make sure you can hear God's wonderful good news!

Attention Hope Church:

In the event that you encounter an individual seeking assistance, we kindly request that they are directed to contact Pastor Meg or reach out to the church office during regular business hours.

At Hope, we provide a range of support services for those requiring assistance. Our primary objective is to cultivate an environment where everyone feels safe, secure, valued, and embraced. This objective is best achieved through the coordinated allocation of resources. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Thank you.

Congregational Meeting

February 23rd immediately following worship. This meeting will be in-person only. The purpose will be to have elections for the Board of Trustees. All members are encouraged to attend. Copies of the reports and agenda will be available as soon as possible.

CHURCH NEWS



New Member Class

Do you know what this comma means? Are you interested in finding out? Have you been attending for a while, and you would like to know more about what it means to be a member? Would you like to become more involved, but you don't know where to begin? Do you have questions about what the UCC is all about?

Come and join in the conversation with Pastor Meg and then decide if it feels like a good fit and a good time for you to become a member.

Join in the conversation on Sunday February 9th. We will meet in the parlor following worship. Grab some refreshments and come join us. Please call the church office or let Pastor Meg know if you can attend. If that date does not work for you and you are interested please talk to Pastor Meg about meeting individually. Wherever you are on your life journey you are welcome here!

We are the Church!

We need teens or adults to serve as liturgists by reading the scripture each week. If you would be willing to serve in this capacity, please reach out to Pastor Meg and sign up at the Welcome Table.

Pastor Meg is inviting children and teens to read the Call to Worship. If you have a young person in your family who would like to participate in worship, please contact the church office. Pastor Meg will write the material at your child's reading level.

The children do not need to be church members.

WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Chili Cook Off - Feb 16th

Congregational Meeting - following worship - Feb 23rd

Ash Wednesday - March 5th

Daylight Savings Time - Spring Forward - March 9th

Confirmation Sunday - March 23rd

Palm Sunday Worship & Egg-stravaganza! - April 13th

Maundy-Thursday with Soup Supper - April 17th

Good Friday Worship at noon - April 18th

Easter Sunday - April 20th

hope

CHURCH NEWS



Introducing the Newest Members of Hope United Church of Christ

Please join us in welcoming the new members of Hope UCC! We are thrilled to have them join us and appreciate the effort they have put into sharing a bit about themselves. Each person enriches our fellowship and helps us build deeper connections within our church. We believe that every individual brings unique gifts and experiences that can enhance our ministry and missions. We look forward to getting to know you and growing together in our faith.

Cynthia



A Detroit native with Ohio roots, where her family's playful Wolverine-Buckeye rivalry runs deep. An accomplished artist, she's created vibrant abstract murals in Pontiac, and is a retired flight attendant with American Airlines. Cynthia now thrives as a real estate agent at Keller Williams. A passionate short story writer, she's met several celebrities, including her favorite, Tim McGraw. Hiking the trails of Alaska remains on her bucket list, adding to her love for adventure. What attracted her to Hope Church? Her sister Linda brought her here, Pastor Meg is the one who keeps her here :)

CHURCH NEWS

Robin



I have a wide variety of interests that include reading nonfiction, yoga, weight lifting, and learning about various religions and philosophies. My family loves to travel; as a result, we've been to about 15 states, 1 territory, and 2 other countries. It's our goal to visit every state and continent in the next 5 years. My wife is in the Army so we're open to living almost anywhere.

I was a counselor at a detention center for adolescent females for about 12 years. I was a registered massage therapist for about 5 years during which time I specialized in hospice work. I also have worked as a nursing assistant both in a nursing home and private duty. Currently, I am a stay-at-home parent, homeschooling my 10-year-old and 8-year-old children.

I am particularly attracted to Hope UCC due to its open acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals. I was also interested because of the active Sunday School. After attending the church I find the members' warmth and friendliness are the real pull of the church.

I'm AJ and my Fiancée is Blake Harvey. Together we share two children Breah who is 6 and Chris who is 10. We both currently work for a nonprofit organization that assists individuals with mental health and addiction. Our hobbies (when we have a free moment) include taking our children to all their various clubs and activities, spending time with family, trying new restaurants, and serving our community through different outreach programs.

AJ & Blake



While we live a very busy and fulfilling life we both felt something was missing and that missing piece was a church we could call home. I initially found Hope UCC through internet research. I was hopeful about the inclusivity displayed on the website. Through many discussions Blake and I decided to give it a chance and I'm so glad we did. In such a very short time our family has been welcomed with open arms and love. We are excited for the future of this church and hope to continue growing within Hope UCC.

CHURCH NEWS

Ken

Ken is a dedicated individual who has retired from his diverse career as a professional driver, skillfully navigating the roads in greyhounds, limousines, and shuttle buses. His journey is enriched by his service in both the Air Force and the Army National Guard, showcasing his commitment to duty and community. Beyond his professional life, Ken is an avid cross-stitcher, finding joy and creativity in every stitch. He dreams of visiting Alaska, where he hopes to experience the breathtaking wonder of whale watching. A former member of Trinity Church, Ken is eager to reconnect with the congregation after relocating back to the area near Hope UCC.

Valencia

Meet Valencia, a creative spirit with a passion for thrifting, crafting, and sewing; and attending plays and concerts. She studied theatre at Wayne State University. Valencia works as a licensed Realtor.

Outside of work, Valencia is always smiling and brings a playful sense of humor to everything she does. Whether she's cuddling with her two dogs, Pinto and Preston, reading design magazines, redecorating her home, or indulging in her love for sour candies, she's constantly bringing joy to those around her. One day she would like to go snorkeling. Visiting Valencia, Spain is another item she would love to check off her bucket list.

Valencia was drawn to Hope Church because of its kind and welcoming energy. Valencia is a warm spirited, friendly creative who is always smiling and has a playful sense of humor. Though she's slow to call people her friends, once you're in her circle, you're there for life.



Latoya



LaToya is a United Church of Christ member in discernment. She has served in ministry for over 25 years. She earned a master's degree in social work from Wayne State University in 2015 and a master's degree in seminary from Luther Seminary in Saint Paul Minnesota in 2022. LaToya enjoys playing basketball, listening to music, and attending sports events, plays, and concerts. One fun fact about LaToya is that she took acting classes at Wayne State University. She is employed with the State of Michigan as an Assistant Payment Worker. Attending the Super Bowl is one item she would love to check off her bucket list.

Pastor Meg's kindness, gentleness, and support attracted LaToya and Valencia to Hope Church.

CHURCH NEWS

HOPE ANNUAL Chili Cook-Off!!

**February 16th following worship.
Bring your famous chili in a
crockpot. (no soups) Bring your
tastebuds and join the fun!
We need at least 10 chilis to taste.
We will be awarding prizes for the
top winners.**

ASH WEDNESDAY



Ash Wednesday will be on March 5th.
We will host an Ash Wednesday Service and
Continental Breakfast at 10am.

Walk in prayer and Ashes
from 4:30- 6:30 that evening.

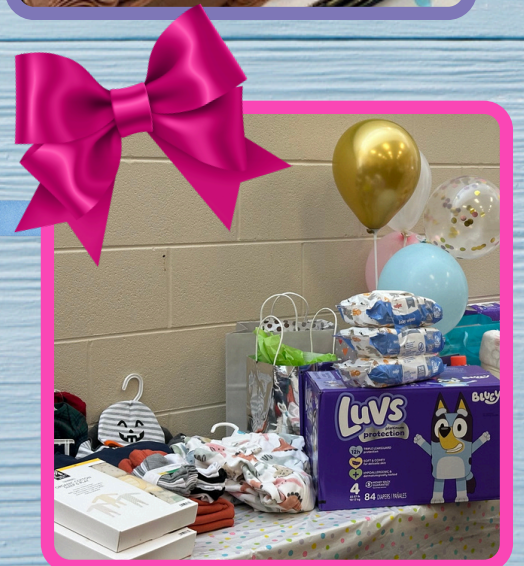
CHURCH NEWS

Thank you!
For the Generous Donations!



Baby Shower for Jesus

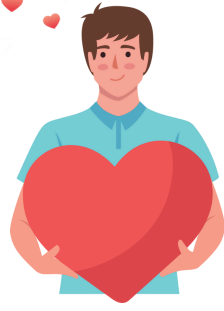
January 12th 2025



CHURCH NEWS



AMBASSADOR FOR HOPE: JOB DESCRIPTION



The purpose of this designated role is to have at least two people each week to serve as friendly greeters. We want to make sure that visitors and our members feel welcome at Hope. We would try to have 8 people serving in this official capacity. Ambassadors would sign up for a week each month but also be available as needed.

Weekly responsibility:

- *Be at church by 9:45.
- *Wear a nametag with yellow ambassador sticker
- *Watch for newcomers and introduce yourself. Answer questions and invite them to sit with you.
- *During worship scan the sanctuary looking for new faces.
- *During the blessing song walk out and stand near Pastor Meg.
- *Introduce yourself to new people.
- *Give them the current thanks for Poppin' bag.
- *Invite them to coffee hour and go with them if possible. Sit with them and find a table with other members you can introduce them to.
- *Offer a tour of the church building.
- *Make sure Pastor Meg is aware of their presence.
- *Offer them a visitor's clipboard to leave us their contact information.
- *If there are no visitors go into coffee hour and look for people seated by themselves invite them to join another table or sit with them.



CHURCH NEWS

Hope Website	YouTube	Instagram	Facebook
			
www.hopeuccmi.com	@hopeunitedchurchofchrist-c8235	@HopeUCCmi	@HopeUCCmacomb

Come and join us for Coffee Hour!



Whether you have a love for coffee, enjoy baking, or simply take pleasure in serving others, we would greatly appreciate your help.

We are looking for volunteers to help with organizing and cleaning up the coffee area, as well as providing refreshments for our weekly coffee hour fellowship.

If you're interested, please check the sign-up sheet in the narthex for more information and available time slots.

A special THANK YOU to everyone who helped in January with Coffee Hour!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER ALTAR FLOWERS FOR THAT SPECIAL DAY?

To sign up, please register on the bulletin board located in Fellowship Hall.

The cost is \$20 per arrangement.

Payments may be made either online or in person.



HOPE FOOD PANTRY



On January 11th, we held a drive-thru distribution day. We served 144 households, with 453 individuals. We distributed 11,466 lbs. of food, hygiene, and cleaning supplies. The success of this pantry distribution day was made possible thanks to the generous contributions from our donors, the hard work of our volunteers, and the dedication of your Christian Mission & Witness members.

We will welcome ANY donations for the Food pantry.

HOPE Food Pantry is open the 2nd Saturday of each month.

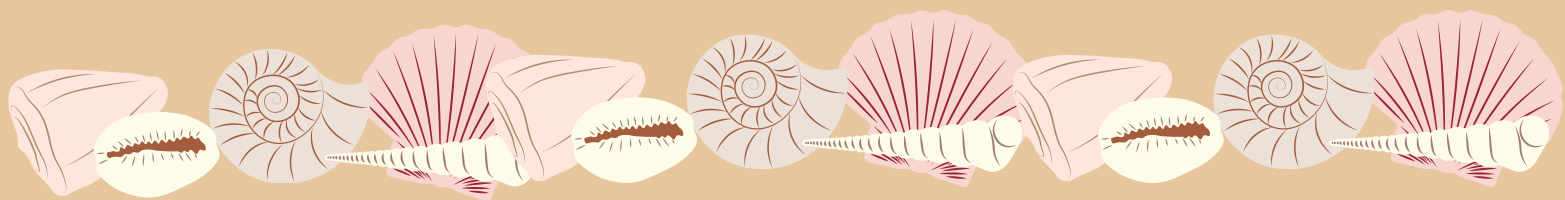
Our next drive-thru pantry distribution volunteer service day will be:

**Saturday, February 8th
from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Volunteer service hours are 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering it is helpful to sign up or contact a member of the Christian Mission and Witness Committee. There is also a sign up sheet posted on the table in the Narthex. We have packing and unloading parties all month long! Have your family or group staff an event!

Please join us in thanking all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication on this mission project!



Hope Food Pantry also distributes a Hygiene Kit every quarter. We are asking that donations for the hygiene kits focus on these 3 most requested items:

Toilet Paper / Laundry Detergent / Dish Soap

[please note that these should be single servings, individual size]

Thank you for always remembering the Hope Food Pantry!
Our continued success is because of you!

Radon in your home



January was National Radon Action Month. Learn more about this colorless and odorless radioactive gas.

Research shows that the air within homes and buildings can be more polluted than outdoor air. The average person spends approximately 90% of their time indoors. A potential indoor air pollutant of concern is radon.

What is radon?

Radon is a colorless and odorless radioactive gas. It is formed during the breakdown of uranium, which is found in nearly all soils and rocks. Radon ranks among the most serious environmental health problems facing our nation today.

How does radon get indoors?

High levels of radon in the soil are primarily responsible for indoor radon problems. Radon seeps into homes through gaps or cracks in the foundation floor or walls, sump pits, drains or other openings. Once confined in an enclosed space such as a home, it can accumulate to unhealthy levels.

What are the health risks?

The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates that residential radon exposure is responsible for 7,000 to 30,000 lung cancer deaths per year. The Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. If you smoke and your home has an elevated radon level, your risk of lung cancer is especially high.

How do you find out if radon is a problem in your home?

Data indicates that in Macomb County approximately 5 - 10% of the homes will have elevated radon levels. Since radon is odorless and invisible, the only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test for it. Free, easy-to-use radon test kits are available to Macomb County residents through the Macomb County Health Department. These easy-to-use kits allow you to check your home for radon. Test kits can be reserved by calling the Macomb County Health Department at 586-469-5236. After you have reserved your kit, it will be available for pickup at the Health Department's Central Health Center in Mount Clemens located at 43525 Elizabeth Road during normal business hours of 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

What can you do if your home has a radon problem?

A variety of methods are used to reduce radon levels in homes. The cost of making repairs depends on the design of your home and the extent of the radon problem. The average house costs about \$1,200 to fix, although repairs can range from about \$500 to \$2500. Contact the Macomb County Health Department to obtain a list of contractors that have completed federal and/or state radon remediation training programs.

Additional resources

- [Michigan Department of Environmental Great Lakes and Energy \(EGLE\)](https://www.michigan.gov/egle/about/organization/materials-management/indoor-radon)
<https://www.michigan.gov/egle/about/organization/materials-management/indoor-radon>
- [Environmental Protection Agency](https://www.epa.gov/radon) <https://www.epa.gov/radon>

Questions?


Call us at 586-469-5236, weekdays, 8:30am-5:00pm or email us environmental.health@macombgov.org.

CHRISTIAN MISSION & WITNESS

The CMWC is looking for people who might be interested in some pantry-related activities at times other than pantry day.

1. We need people to help pack boxes in-between pantry days. There is some lifting needed, 35lbs boxes. If you cannot lift, you could help fill boxes with dry goods which doesn't require lifting. The time commitment for this task would be 1 - 1.5 hours per packing party once a month.
2. We need folks to help us with bottle returns once a month on Monday mornings at 9:30 am. The time commitment for this task would be 1-1 1/2 hours. There is some lifting needed to take the bags of bottles out of the trailer, and put them in a shopping cart. Can't lift? No problem. Someone will help you. The \$\$ we receive from the returnables goes to support our food pantry.
3. We need some men/young adults to help unload food from a vehicle and bring it in to the church on the Friday before pantry and on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. The time commitment for this task varies depending upon traffic and waiting time at Gleaners or Macomb Food Bank.
4. The CMWC is also looking for people to join our committee. You know about our work with the pantry. We support other outreach projects as well. The time commitment for membership on the Committee is a 2-hour meeting once a month on the Tuesday before pantry. Additional time will be needed if you wish to participate in any of our outreach projects.

We hope that you will prayerfully consider helping out with one of these opportunities...helping those in need.



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!
Because of your generosity 835 items of socks, gloves, hats and scarves will be covering fingers, toes, heads and necks in the MCREST program this winter.
Again, THANK YOU!!

CHRISTIAN MISSION & WITNESS



HELP US RAISE SOME DOUGH! Mark your calendar for Friday, March 28, 4-8 PM, at Panera Bread Bakery & Cafe at 14121 Hall Rd., Shelby Twp. Bring a hard copy of the flyer below or a digital copy of the flyer to the restaurant on that day. Show the flyer to the team member taking your order, and HOPE Food Pantry will earn 25% of your net purchase. Online orders placed all day at our event cafe will count toward our total sales. Phone orders will also count between 4-8 PM. If you are ordering by phone or online, use this code (FUND4U) at panerabread.com, in the Panera app, or at the kiosk in-cafe. Hard copies of the flyer will be available at the church. You may also make copies in black and white to give to your friends, relatives, and neighbors. This is a "family event". So come and help us RAISE SOME DOUGH!



We're raising dough!

HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST - HOPE FOOD PANTRY

**March 28, 2025
4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
14121 Hall Road, Shelby Township, MI**

Use code FUND4U at panerabread.com, in the Panera App, or at the kiosk in-cafe.

Online orders placed all day at your event cafe will count toward your total sales.

25%

OF NET SALES
WILL BE
DONATED*

Bring this flyer or show a digital copy to your cashier when ordering at the cafe to ensure your organization gets a portion of the net sales.

Panera
FUNDRAISING

GROUPS AND MEETINGS

Hope Fun Bunch

January brought icy cold weather and snow that prevented us from meeting.

The Next Fun Bunch Gathering will be on February 17th.

Hope to see you there!

Tom R, President

Ida E, Vice President

Joe H, Secretary



HOPE SPARKLES EXERCISE CLASS

The last Date for Hope Sparkles Exercise Class was Wednesday January 29th, 2025. There will be no exercise class for the month of February, 2025. We will meet again on Monday, March 3, 2025 at 11:00 am.

See you on Monday March 3rd!

Linda H. and Marge L.



COMMUNITY



PFLAG-CT warmly invites the Hope UCC congregation to participate in our monthly support meeting. This gathering will take place on the last Tuesday of each month from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. We deeply appreciate Hope UCC's support of our chapter, as our mission focuses on supporting, educating, and advocating for the LGBTQ community. We welcome you to join us and learn more about our work.

To stay connected, please visit our website at PFLAGCT.org, complete the form, and mention Hope UCC. This will add you to our email list, ensuring you receive notifications about future meetings.

For any inquiries, feel free to reach out to me at yvonnetaad@wowway.com, and remember to mention Hope UCC.

Thank you once again for your support of our chapter. Stay safe and healthy, and may God bless you.

Yvonne Tadjewski, President, PFLAG-CT



REACH OUT IN FAITH



Thousands of older and disabled adults in our community struggle daily to get by. For these individuals a little extra help can make it possible for them to remain safe and independent in their own homes. The Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers program matches volunteers with frail, homebound and isolated neighbors who need assistance. If you have just a couple hours a month that you can give to someone in need, you can make a huge difference in the life of a struggling neighbor. You tell us what days, times and areas are convenient for you, and how you would like to serve. You can be matched with the same person for regular visits, or just be on a list for occasional rides and chores.

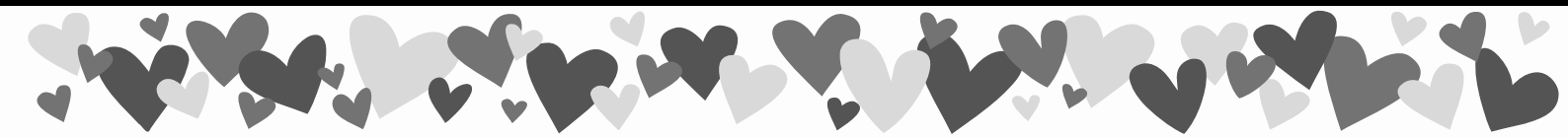
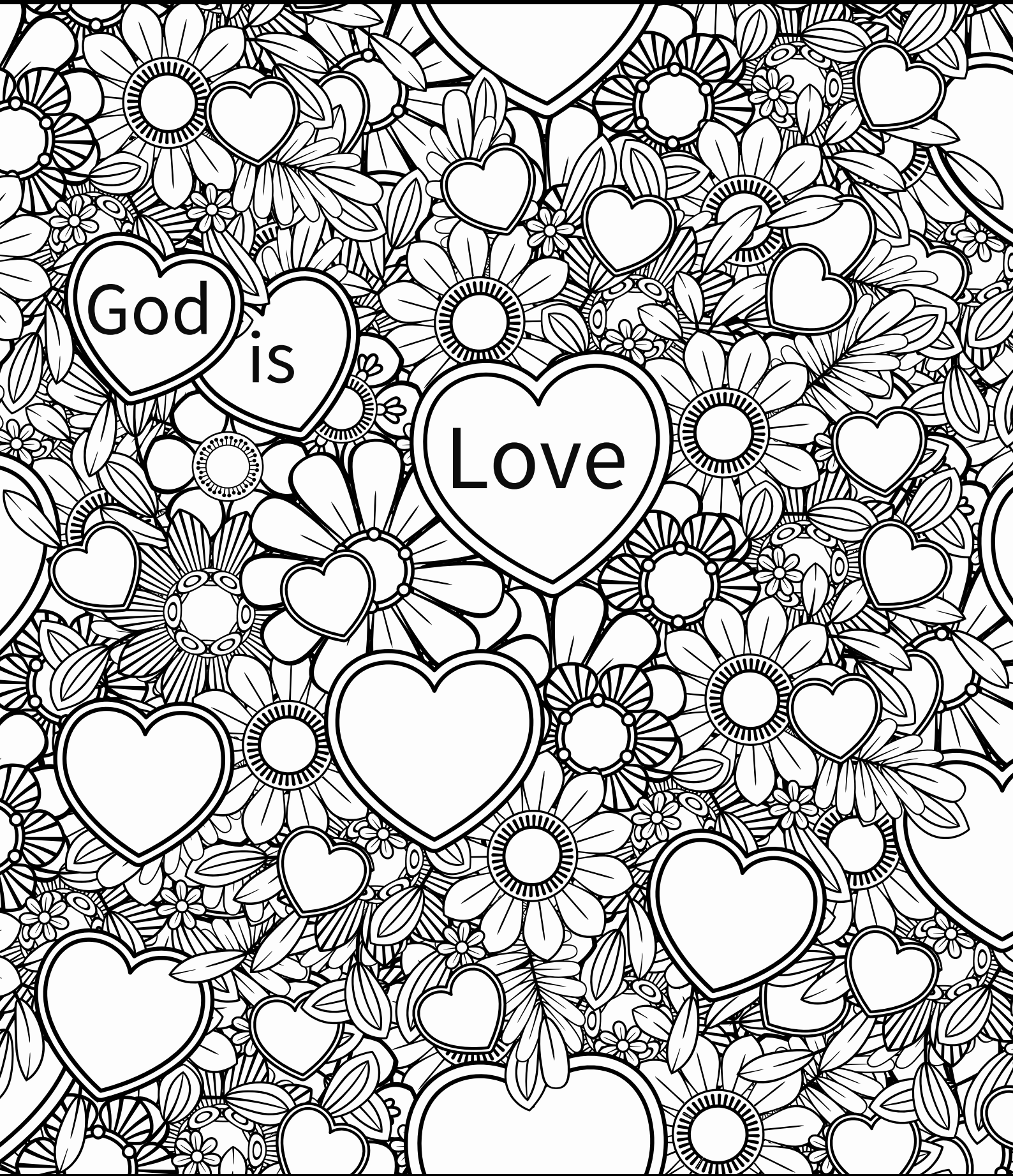
Volunteers are needed to help with:

- Transportation for medical appointments and essential errands;
- Simple chores, yard work and home repairs;
- Help with housekeeping and meal preparation;
- Friendly visits and supportive phone calls,
- Respite breaks for full-time family caregivers,
- And other support that can help a frail, older or disabled neighbor.

Call us at (586) 757-5551 for more info.

[Learn more about our work at www.ivcinfo.org.]

FAMILY PAGE



REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

HOPE CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Our congregation knows that prayer is our tool for connecting to God. Together, we pray in worship, and we pray at home.

You may contact the church office to remove or add a name.

We also have a prayer sculpture in the church lobby, and you are welcome to write a prayer request and hang it on the sculpture. When we lift our concerns in prayer, we will surely know the presence of the Lord.

Please remember those on our Prayer List ...

With a phone call, card, or note, and keep them in your Thoughts & Prayers.

Su and Family

Lori & Al

Jerry & Shannon

Nancy

Jean

Sue

Carol

Flaherty Family

John

Elaine

Baldwin Family

Harvey Family

We offer a special prayer for those who keep their concerns and needs to themselves, hoping that everyone finds the strength, courage, and patience to navigate their personal challenges.

HOPE GIVING

There are numerous ways to offer financial support to the church, and your donations play a crucial role in furthering the ministries of Hope Church.

***To give Online:** Visit the Hope UCC Website
WWW.HOPEUCCMI.COM

Select the "GIVE A GIFT" tab and then "GIVE A GIFT HERE"

***To give from your Cell Phone:** Text "HUCCF" to 45777

The site will respond with a link which you can use to route your donation to a specific fund. If you would like to donate to the "General Fund" you can simply text: "Gift Amount" followed by "HUCCF" to 45777.

[For instance, to give \$10 text "10 HUCCF" to 45777]

In both cases, you will be directed to our secure payment processing center where you will be able to easily walk through the steps to register and/or direct your donation.

(Hint - If using the text method, save this phone number in your "Contacts" list to make it easier to access.)

***To give In-Person:** We have a donation box in the sanctuary. You can mail your gift to the church office.

You can also drop it off from 9 a.m. -1:30 p.m. M - F

**Your Giving Statement will reflect the total donation.
Questions? Contact Lori**

***A big thank you from Lori for all the support after her surgery in January!**

It was greatly appreciated.

BOTS Meeting Minutes

Hope United Church of Christ Synopsis of Board Meeting January 21, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by President Steve Nielson. Pastor Meg led us in prayer.

Those in attendance: Pastor Meg, Steve Nielson, Nancy Burnham, Terri Hillman, Kirk Schoenherr, Linda Parsons, Linda Rehm and Nany Fay. Absent: Jerry Rogers and Lori Sarnowski. Guest: Barry Burnham at the time of the first item of New Business.

Congregational Comments – Steve – None

Additions to the Agenda – Steve – Delete from New Business – Super Bowl February 8th. Add to New Business – Barry Burnham to join our meeting and discuss Insurance Audit. Also add LaToya Young re a letter for file request – Pastor Meg.

Approval of Agenda – Motion to approve the agenda as amended with the one deletion and two additions was made by Nancy Burnham with a second by Linda Rehm. Motion carried.

President's Remarks – Steve – Welcome all back to the New Year. Hope you all enjoyed the holidays with family and friends. Received a thank you from Deborah for the gift card. All Committee reports are due January 26th and at the very latest by February 2nd for the Annual Report. Since the next meeting will be the last meeting with current Board, could it be at church on February 11th with a short meal at 6 pm and the meeting at 7 pm. No one objected.

Approval of the November Meeting Minutes – Motion was made by Nancy Burnham with a second by Kirk Schoenherr to approve the November meeting minutes. Motion Carried.

Treasurer's Reports for November and December 2024 – Motion was made by Linda Rehm with a second by Nancy Fay to approve the reports for both November and December. Motion Carried. Only the December 2024 report is shown below:

The following items summarize the financial results for the month of December:

Statement of Operations – Income (Page 3):

- Weekly Offerings for December 2024 were \$2,064 more than the amount budgeted but \$1,268 less than the amount received for December 2023. There were five December Sundays in both years. Year to date Weekly Offerings were \$4,067 less than the amount budgeted but \$401 (\$7 per week) more than the same period in 2023. We also received Special Offerings of \$1,715 for Christmas, \$105 for Energy, \$5 for Church Growth, \$135 for Our Church's Wider Mission, \$155 for One Great Hour of Sharing, \$555 for Neighbors in Need, and \$815 for the Christmas Fund (VOC) in December.
- The only Investment activity for the Operating Fund consisted of \$0.46 in interest to the Money Market Account.
- Year to date Operating Income, comprised of Weekly Offerings plus other Income accounts, is \$1,484 less than the amount budgeted but \$1,045 more than 2023.



BOTS Meeting Minutes

Statement of Operations – Expense (Pages 4-6):

- Total Operating Fund Expenses for December 2024 were \$26 more than the amount budgeted and \$2,082 more than the Expenses for December 2023. Year to date Expenses were \$7,869 less than budgeted with favorability primarily driven by the open Christian Education Director position and associated Christian Education costs, as well as lower heating cost. That favorability was partially offset by higher electricity and grounds upkeep costs, office supplies and administrative expenses, and cost associated with increased church life activities. Year to date 2024 Expenses were \$5,075 more than the same period of 2023 due, in large part, to a \$2,470 November charge for tree pruning.
- There was a gain (Income less Expense) of \$3,211 in December 2024 versus a gain of \$5,334 December 2023.

SYNOPSIS OF OPERATIONS:	<u>December</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Operating receipts	\$30,212	\$225,861
Operating expenses	<u>27,001</u>	<u>246,888</u>
Excess of receipts over expenses		
(Expenses over receipts)	<u>\$ 3,211</u>	<u>(\$ 21,027)</u>

Dedicated Accounts (Page 7):

- Dedicated Accounts had income of \$7,493 and expense of \$340 for the month, leaving a balance of \$102,235.

Building Fund (Page 9):

- Hope for the Future offerings received in December 2024 were \$1,540 (adjusted for the December reclassification of a June offering specifically allocated to parking lot repair) which was \$35 less than the amount budgeted and \$310 less than the amount received for December 2023. Year to date Hope for the Future offerings were \$3,544 more than the amount budgeted and \$2,599 more than the amount received in 2023. We have received Memorials of \$4,295 year to date. An additional invoice for \$300 for the parking lot repair was received and paid in December, bringing the total paid in 2024 to the repair to \$107,756.

Investments (Page 9):

- The securities account had a December loss of \$6,215 compared to a gain of \$10,916 for December 2023. Year to date 2024, the securities account had a gain of \$45,926 versus a gain of \$42,317 for the 2023.

<u>Synopsis of Cash Flow (Income less Expense)</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Budgeted Accounts (Operating plus Building excluding Investments)	\$ 4,936	(\$103,444)
Non-Budgeted Accounts (Dedicated Accounts)	<u>7,153</u>	<u>5,740</u>
Total Cash Flow	<u>\$ 12,089</u>	<u>(\$ 97,704)</u>

There was some discussion as to how to best present the report to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. Possibly have Terri make a short clip “The more you know” to be shown the couple weeks prior to the meeting so the Congregation could have a better understanding of the written report they will be given in the Annual Meeting booklet.

Unfinished Business

Painting Improvements
Civil Engineering



BOTS Meeting Minutes

New Business

Insurance Audit Update – Barry Burnham, Insurance Advisor: Barry Burnham joined our zoom meeting at this time. An audit was done for paid employees and outside vendors that work for the church. The Treasurer supplied the information which is highly confidential and the audit was sent in by the deadline. Every vendor must supply a copy of their Certificate of Liability Insurance that includes a box checked if they have Worker's Compensation Insurance and the amount. Two out of our twelve to fifteen vendors did not show they had Worker's Compensation on their Certificates of Liability Insurance. One of them has since supplied additional information to our insurance company. Since the insurance is based on the prior year, we will probably have to pay more for our insurance due to this one vendor not having Worker's Compensation Insurance in the prior year. We currently have a contract with this particular vendor thru the end of March 2025. We have had this particular vendor for the last three years and feel that our Insurance Company (Hartford Insurance) just decided to point out that he was without the required insurance due to all the recent claims that Insurance Companies are currently facing all over the country. We are very pleased with this vendor's work and would hate to lose this vendor.

After some discussion as to whether we should keep this vendor till the contract ends and if we are willing to pay more for services to help cover the cost of the vendor obtaining Worker's Compensation Insurance, it was decided that a motion be made to have Steve contact the vendor and discuss Worker's Compensation options by Nancy Burnham and supported by Kirk Schoenherr. Motion Carried. We will need to obtain a new vendor if this vendor will not obtain a Worker's Compensation Insurance Policy.

We thanked Barry for his time in presenting this audit report and he left the zoom meeting.

Nominating Committee Update – Nancy Burnham: The Committee consisted of Ida Eckert, Rick Cole and Nancy Burnham. They spoke with a lot of people and have five that are willing to run and we have five vacancies needing to be filled. The five nominees are Jim Wilson, Cynthia Greening, Carissa Spear, Brad Lusk and Rick Cole. At the Congregational Meeting, if there are no other candidates from the floor, we will proceed to elect these five nominees. We will have ballots ready if there are nominees from the floor.

Set Annual Meeting Date – Steve Nielson: Sunday, February 23, 2025 at 11:15 in person only in the Fellowship Hall. Would like to have child care available so all parents of young children could attend. Will ask the Confirmands to help out.

Audit Committee – Steve Nielson: Norm Nenninger, Bob DeGryse and Tom Reeser will be the Committee and they will be joined by Terri Hillman. A tentative date has been set for Friday, January 31, 2025 at 10 am at church.

Review Baby Shower for Jesus – Nancy Burnham and Terri Hillman: A great event with lots of people attending. Two children were baptized that Sunday so this could have contributed to the number of people attending. A wonderful luncheon of salads, sandwiches and cake was served. There was lots of generosity from Hope UCC. It was a heart warming experience delivery the gifts to Macomb Foster Closet. Thank you to all who worked on this event. Pastor Meg requested that Nancy Burnham and Terri Hillman make some notes so we could easily duplicate this great event at another time.

Review of Advent Season – Pastor Meg: Great concert by the Motor City Chorale. It was great having them at the very beginning of the Advent Season. We need to arrange to have them back in the spring and next advent season. We really need to have a designated team to organize the pageant and perhaps start planning it in the summer so there will be no need for a lot of rehearsals right at Christmas when everyone is so busy with other activities. The Board had some discussion of the various activities that took place during Advent. The Blue Christmas service was on-line only and had a better turnout than when we had it in-person. Pastor Meg suggested we explore other organizations or school connections as recipients of the toys. Terri Hillman suggested possibly contacting the Macomb Foster Closet. Pastor Meg also suggested we need more volunteers for special meals including a clean-up crew. She also suggested the possibility of hiring musicians for special services like Easter and Christmas Eve. Our choir and bells do a great job but some members are not always available particularly for the Christmas Eve service due to family commitments. Deborah could help us find paid musicians. Members of our Congregation would be given the opportunity to donate towards the cost.

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BOTS Meeting Minutes

Upcoming Lenten Season – Pastor Meg: Lent does not begin this year until March 5th (Ash Wednesday). It is much later this year. It was February 14th in 2024. The Board will have more discussion of Ash Wednesday and Holy Week at our next Board Meeting in February since there is still plenty of time.

Pastor Meg would like to have two studies for the Lenten Season. The first seminar will be for “Planning your own Memorial Service”. Each person would write their own plan for their memorial service and then keep a copy for their own records and have a copy on file at the church. Pastor Meg would also talk about planned giving during this seminar. The second study would be reading and reviewing the book “You Can’t Ask That!, 50 Taboo Questions about the Bible, Jesus, and Christianity”.

Confirmation of Tessa and Casey is being planned for March 23. On Palm Sunday we will have a petting zoo and either a breakfast or super coffee hour and a visit by the Easter Bunny. Traditional Holy Week will follow.

Update Church Rental – Pastor Meg: A few months ago we reached out to Matt Skubik to possibly help us find future renters. We will only be listing with him and we can say “no” to any renter for any reason. Pastor Meg will follow up with Matt.

LaToya – Pastor Meg: Recently she and her wife became members of Hope Church. LaToya is a member in discernment “someone who is seeking ordination in the UCC”. She was a member of a different UCC church and is now a member of Hope Church. She would like to have something in her file stating she is a current member of a UCC church. She will be preaching at Hope on February 2, 2025. Pastor Meg will be present on that Sunday. A motion was made to draft a letter for her to have in her file by Nancy Fay with a second by Nancy Burnham. Motion Carried.

Pastor’s Report – Pastor Meg:

Worship: We had 13 families participate in the pageant with a total of 22 youth. We had seven new members join on December 22nd.

Church Business: Gail worked her first Advent/Christmas season at Hope. She did an excellent job keeping track of all the necessary communication and worship service. We are preparing for the Annual Meeting and the Repots due to the UCC.

Spiritual Council: The group met in December to prepare for Advent and Christmas. We will meet next week. We will have another new member class on February 9th. We need to promote our Hope Ambassador opportunities.

Pastor Relations should meet in the spring.

Christian Education: I am still preparing lesson plans and gathering supplies. Jordan and Kristin are faithful teachers. My goal is to have the new Christian Education committee meet in February. Confirmation is scheduled for Tessa and Casey on March 23rd.

Community Outreach: Both AA and PFLAG sent us Christmas greetings. AA made an additional donation to the church for allowing them use the building on Thanksgiving Day.

Consent Agenda Items – Steve received only one report from the Property Committee for the month of December. Motion was made by Terri Hillman with a second by Nancy Burnham to accept this report as submitted. Motion carried.

These items are not for discussion. They are for review purposes only. Board will accept them as presented. If, however discussion is needed, a trustee can make a motion to remove them from the consent agenda for further discussion.

*MOTION TO ACCEPT CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

- COMMITTEE/COUNCIL REPORTS
- SPIRITUAL COUNCIL
- CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE
- CHRISTIAN MISSION AND WITNESS COMMITTEE
- TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
- STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
- INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
- PROPERTY COMMITTEE
- HR COMMITTEE
- PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
- MUSIC COMMITTEE






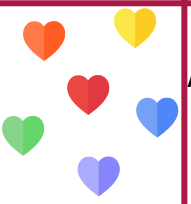




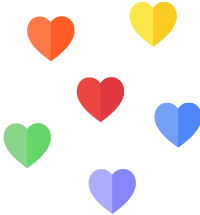
Adjournment: Motion by Kirk Schoenherr with a second by Nancy Burnham to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. Motion carried.

Meeting was closed with The Lord’s Prayer

PENDING BOT’S APPROVAL



FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 AA 7-8:30pm
2 Worship 10am Communion Sunday 	3	4 CMWC 12:30pm AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	5	6 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7:30-9pm	7	8 FOOD  PANTRY 10-12 AA 7-8:30pm
9 Worship 10am New Members Class	10	11 BOTS 7pm AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	12	13 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7:30-9pm	14	15 AA 7-8:30pm
16 Worship 10am Chili Cook Off 	17 Hope Fun Bunch 12pm	18 AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	19	20	21	22 AA 7-8:30pm
23 Worship 10am Congregational Meeting 	24	25 PFLAG 6-8pm AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	26	27	28	

THE LEADERSHIP OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Meg Wilson, Pastor & Editor / Gail Fellman, Publisher & Editor
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