

dvent (from the Latin *ad venio* which means that which comes before), the season of anticipation and preparation, calls each of us to quiet reflection. There is no better way to master the pre-Christmas, commercial madness than a good season of Advent...a time of quiet reflection on the Incarnation of the Son of God for us. Advent is a heart thing. Each of us prepares a place in our heart by examining the contents, discarding the dross, and making sure that Jesus has the only place of honor. Join me in fully exercising this anticipatory season! This Advent's mid-week services will be Holden Evening Prayer, a most contemplative order of worship. Now that the turkey has been served in every conceivable way, let's prepare for the coming of Jesus!

t. Paul states in the 13th Chapter of his letter to the Church in Corinth that in the present age we see through a glass darkly. We might say that as we look at our life it's almost as though we are looking into one of those carnival midway mirrors...it is pretty distorted. In light of our own myopic self perception, the wonder of the Incarnation of the Son of God among and for us increases. We seldom see beyond ourselves and yet into this self-centered world Jesus is born, taking on our flesh and our lot. We stand in awe and amazement that the Son of God would empty himself in order to connect to his creatures in a way God had not done before. Of course we celebrate such a Gift at the Nativity of our Lord, at Christmas. We celebrate the Christ Mass! It would be this Jesus, who matured into a messianic proclaimer of the Kingdom of God and how it worked, who would walk straight to the cross for each of us, declaring that this is what Son of God looks like. "Come, follow me!"

ur Advent / Christmas schedule:

December 2	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Worship
December 6	3:30 p.m.	Children's Christmas Program
December 9	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Worship
December 13	8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.	A Service of Lessons and Carols
December 16	6:30 p.m.	Christmas Potluck / Worship
December 24	5:30 p.m.	Family Worship Service
	7:30 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.	Candlelight ChristMass
December 25	10:30 a.m.	ChristMass Day Worship

ust a note on more mundane matters. A few Sundays ago we read of the widow who gave it all in her Temple offering. With her example as a backdrop, we too should examine our willingness to give all or at the least a proportion of God's blessings to us. During this coming season of giving, recommit you and your family to joyful tithing of dollars, of time, of your creaturely giftedness to the work of the Kingdom of God among us and beyond us. We only return what of Lord has first given to us!

"Traditions" of Christmas continue to be challenged in our society: "Merry Christmas" vs. "Happy Holidays," the silly Starbucks red cup controversy, public displays of Christian symbols of the season, or the removal of them, and others. The pushback, or the perceived pushback against our Faith by our culture can be disheartening. But should we expect our culture to be the proclaimer of the Christ? And even if our culture did so, I would expect Christ to be proclaimed truthfully and Biblically. You want to find Christ during Christmas? Find Him where He has promised to be: in Word and Sacrament. The Church — the Body of Christ — is to proclaim Christ and celebrate the Christ-mass. Don't expect our culture to do it for you. You. . .go be who you are as a disciple of Jesus in what you say and what you do — acts of mercy, acts of love, acts of service, words of encouragement, speaking the Gospel to those who need to hear it. Be the face of Christ within your God-given vocations from within our culture.

NERF WARS — Junior and Senior High — Sunday, January 3rd beginning at 6:00 p.m. Details will follow via email and on the bulletin board. Friends are absolutely welcome. Save the date and prepare to do battle!

Notes From Pastor Jon

During the month of December, Hope usually has a higher number of visitors — in worship, at special events, etc. If you encounter someone on our campus that you don't know, introduce yourself. Welcome them to Hope. A good icebreaker might be "So how long have you been attending Hope?" That's a safe question. If you end up talking to a member of Hope you don't know, they can respond accordingly and not feel offended. If you end up talking to a visitor, they have the opportunity to say, "Oh, I'm just a visitor" or "This is my first time here." Either way, a face-to-face conversation is started. You can continue the conversation by asking them, "Do you have any questions?' "Do you need help finding anything?" You can also invite them to Coffee Hour. Go with them. Continue the conversation and introduce them to more people. You have just made a very important step: you have started a relationship with someone who has come to hear about Jesus. You have become the face of Hope Lutheran Church for that individual. This Advent Season, take the time to get to know someone else at Hope, before the service in the Narthex, around a cup of coffee in the Great Room, after worship in the Sanctuary. You can make a tremendous impact in the life of someone new to our community.

In closing, Sheri, the girls, and I wish you and your family a blessed Christmas as together we celebrate the birth of the Christ, the Son of God, who has come to share our flesh in order to demonstrate God's great love for us by dying and rising again to save us from ourselves — so that we might also die to our sinful ways and rise with Him to new life.

His Peace Be With You, *Pastor Jon*





Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near! Let every hill and valley, A level road appear! Then greet the King of glory, Foretold in sacred story: Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God's Word!

Advent is here! It is time to prepare for our Savior's birthday. We have many worship services and events to help everyone celebrate Advent and Christmas. We hope that you will join us in celebrating in word and song as we tell the story of Jesus, born as a baby in Bethlehem.

Wednesday, December 2nd — Advent Services #1 — 7:00 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer

Sunday, December 6th — *The First Leon* Musical — 3:30 p.m.

Come and join the Sunday School children as they tell the Christmas story in word and song.

Wednesday, December 9th — Advent Service #2 -- 7:00 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer

Sunday, December 13th — Service of Lessons and Carols — 8:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Hope's annual celebration of scripture and carols led by the Sanctuary Choir, Celebration and Jubilate Bells, and Festival Orchestra

Wednesday, December 16th — Advent Service #3 / Christmas Potluck — 6:30 p.m.

Come join us as we enjoy dinner, fellowship, preaching and the singing of Christmas carols led by the Hope Brass.

Thursday, December 24th — Christmas Eve

Family Christmas Eve Service — 5:30 p.m.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service — 7:30 p.m.

Special music by: Sanctuary Choir, Jubilate Bells, and Festival Orchestra

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service — 11:00 p.m.

Special music by: Instrumental and Vocal Soloists

Friday, December 25th — Christmas Day

ChristMass Service — 10:30 a.m.

May God Bless Your Advent Preparations! Stephanie Poyner, Director of Music

Children's Music Ministry

December is very busy for us! Please remember the following dates:

Sunday, December 6th — 11:00 a.m.
Children's Choirs and Bell/Chime
Choirs Ring and Sing

Sunday, December 6th — 3:30 p.m.

The First Leon, Sunday School
Christmas Musical

Wednesday, December 9th — 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Children's Choir, Chimes and Bells Christmas Party. Join us in the Great Room for pizza and Christmas carols!

Children's Choir, Bells, and Chimes will resume January 13, 2016!

Merry Christmas! Ms. Penny & Ms. Stephanie

Friendswood Library Christmas Concert Friday, December 4, 2015 7:00 p.m.

Please join Hope's Bell Quartet and Instrumental Soloists as we proclaim the Savior's birth.

Youth Ministry

Lean on Me...

We are knee deep in rearing four young adults at our house — we've traded early morning feedings for late night watches, waiting for the sound of keys in the door — safe at home again. . . breathe. I love my kids — they are awesome, funny, smart, respectful, inquisitive and well on their way to being productive citizens in the world. They can also drive me right up to the brink of insanity, honk the horn, do a Chinese fire drill and turn around to smile at me with complete cluelessness as to why I might be stressed. The truth is, I get through this parenting thing, the good and the rough, with a whole lot of God and some really awesome peer groups. Those who have traveled this road before are priceless but it's the ones that are knee deep in it with me that remind me I'm drowning in the shallow water and all I have to do is put my feet down and stand up. From commiserating over 504's to comparing curfews and consequences, deciding how short the skirt should be and which gamer battles to fight — my peers have so often helped me navigate this course. In a conversation with Therese Huning recently, she shared that the Sunday Morning Bible study is having such great discussions, "I wish there were more parents there, more people in on the conversation." It struck me, how important those conversations are — I've never stepped out of that Bible study group not feeling lifted up as a parent. It may be that you are in deeper water, maybe you're being tumbled down the stream or maybe you're just ankle deep right now and enjoying the calm. Wherever you are as a parent, I encourage

Youth attending National Youth Gathering, don't forget to sign up for Upward Concessions



On the calendar:

Sunday, December 6

Senior High Christmas Party, Secret Santa, games and food — come join the fun! 5:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 12

Hope's outreach at Santa in the Park. Stop by the booth and hand out postcards and bubbles and smiles. 3:00 p.m. — 8:00 p.m.

Friday, December 18

Junior High Christmas Party, bring a silly or sweet gift (under \$10) and play! 6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 3 NERF WARS!!! Candy canes are everywhere this time of year. You see them as ornaments, yard décor, wall hangings, and of course, on the Christmas candy aisle. There is even a poem that relates how a candy cane can remind us of Jesus.

What if we use a candy cane to remind us why we need Jesus? Spend some family time and try the experiment below. As you're watching how the experiment turns out, talk with your children about how the liquids represent the people, TV shows, music, and activities in their life. The things you are in contact with have an impact; some right away, some more slowly. Is this impact positive or negative?

Candy Can Experiment:

(adapted from http://www.coffeecupsandcrayons.com/dissolving-candy-canescience experiment)

- * 3 Jars or glasses
- * Water, milk, juice or other liquids
- * Small Candy Canes

Fill each jar with the same amount of water, milk, or juice and put in an unwrapped candy cane. Make a prediction about what might happen to the candy cane in each liquid. Will they all dissolve? Which liquid might dissolve the candy cane more quickly? After the candy canes completely dissolve, sample what the liquids taste like.

During Advent, we prepare for Jesus' coming. His birth represents the biggest positive impact we can ever experience. What a precious gift we were given so many years ago on that first Christmas. How can your family continue to surround itself with the positive impact of Christ's birth? How can you be a positive impact to others and shine your light each day?

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." *Isaiah 9:6*

Wishing you a joyful Christmas Krista Beken Director of Children's Ministries

During the month of December, our Cross Training classes will learn more about Jesus' birth through their study of the books of Luke and Matthew.

Each family will also receive an Advent calendar to take home. Use this calendar to help your children learn even more about Christmas and the wonderful gift God gave us.



<u>Upcoming Children's Events:</u>

- "The First Leon" Christmas Program ~ Sunday, December 6, 3:30 p.m. Join us in the Family Life Center for our musical presentation. A cookie reception will follow.
- Family Christmas Eve Service
 Thursday, December 24th,
 5:30 p.m.



Ladies Guild

On December 8th there will be presents for Secret Pals and presents for friends as the Ladies Guild celebrates its annual Christmas Party to which all of Hope's women are invited to join in the gathering. We rejoice at the birth of the Babe in the manger, Jesus Christ.

When the rattling chains of Christmas Past frightened old Scrooge in Charles Dickins' "A Christmas Carol," his old fears, old angers and old griefs envelope him and rendered him incapable of finding the "true meaning of Christmas," much less joy, peace or goodwill to men. He gave no thought to God's gift to the world of Jesus, our Savior.

Just as Scrooge, we too may have a Christmas Past. . .memories of Christmases, holidays or unhappiness. Often these dampen joy and make holidays and life difficult.

When Scrooge was shown the spirit of Christmas Present and its possibilities, he was relieved and delighted to realize that there was still time, time to put aside the past by chancing the present.

There is a Christmas Present for you! If you are willing to reach out for it, if you believe God's promise of a Savior, then there is a Christmas Present for you. It is Christmas Now, yes, right now. It is not ones remembered or ones hoped for, but this very Season. This is not a present as in a gift from family, relatives or friends, it is a present from God.

Reach out to open this Gift. . .don't wait to first grow spiritually for that would be giving away time used to read, study, and experience joy and peace while faith grows. Using this Christmas to begin the sewing of seeds of the Gospel and love which will yield a harvest of awareness of God's design for our life and a genuine caring for others.

Join our fellowship at 6:30 p.m. on the 8th as we bring our potluck dishes, gifts and share in the singing, praising and joy of this Christmas.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Christmas Potluck / Advent Worship

Mark your December calendar for our Annual Christmas Potluck / Advent Worship for Wednesday, December 16th at 6:30 p.m. in the Great Room. We would love to have you join us for food, fellowship, worship and music. We ask that you bring either a favorite main dish, side, or dessert (more than one dish if you are inspired).

We will need volunteers for set-up and clean-up. If you would like to help, there will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex starting November 29th or you can contact Rita Henderson at 281-482-7943 or rhenderson@hope-lutheran.org.

Looking forward to seeing you there as we celebrate and prepare for the coming of the Christ Child!



Raising Girls

Men's Ministry will begin a study of the book "The New Eve" by Robert Lewis in January 2016. With God's help we seek to develop a more focused and deliberate Christian game plan to help rear our girls, and to demonstrate to them how very important they are to us. We ask that men with daughters or with any responsibility in the upbringing of a girl to prayerfully consider joining us.

We will meet on the church campus the third Sunday of each month. Class will begin immediately following 2nd services (12:30'ish) and end at 2:30 p.m. Lunch, books and t-shirts are being provided, so an RSVP is important. This does not replace the Men's class during Sunday School hour.

If you have any questions, or would like to RSVP for January 17, 2016, please contact Owen Jones at 281-507-0079 or owenjoneslaw@yahoo.com.

Once Upon a Time, in Bethlehem...

Stephen Ministers are blessed to join once again with Hope to celebrate the birthday of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We know little of Jesus' early life, but we are very familiar with His later years and last days. We know and believe His promises to be with us, to guide us, to care for us when burdened and troubled, and to offer salvation and life everlasting. We walk in faith and by grace we are saved.

Remembering His promise to be with us in those time when we are burdened. He has provided Stephen Ministry at Hope to do just that in His name. We are here to serve.

Your Stephen Ministers wish you a most blessed and peaceful Christmas and days to follow. If we can be of service to you, please speak with Pastor Jon and he will see that you are given a personal Stephen Minister.

Merry Christ from all of us: Pastor Jon Petering, Michele Albrecht, Kathy Bors-Koefoed, Leroy Hall, Julanne Lott, Sandy McHone, James Prince, Margie Riley, James Schleider, Jinx Schkade, Mary Ann Waldon and Lorna Zeitler.

"for unto you is born this day, a Savior. . ."



POINSETTIAS

The Altar Guild will be decorating our Chancel and Nave for Christmas with beautiful Poinsettia, decoratively wrapped, at a cost of \$7.00/each. Flower envelopes are available for your use in the Sunday Bulletin concluding on December 6th (firm). A donor list will be published in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day bulletin.

All flowers may be picked up after the 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service or the Christmas Day service.

Please contact Miria Castille at 281-996-1084 for questions or further details.

Holiday Worship Schedule

December 6 3:30 p.m.

Children's Christmas Program

December 13 8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

A Service of Lessons and Carols

December 16 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Potluck /

Worship

December 24



Hopefest



ITEM REQUESTED	REQUESTED BY	APPROVED AMT.
2016 Graduation quilts (\$68 / each) this year—12 seniors Hold for future use (2017: 22 seniors)	Pam Bubendorf	\$400.00 \$600.00
Materials & labor for development of new Lenten set	Altar Guild / Miria Castille	\$1,500.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	Pastor Ralph	\$3,500.00
Women's Retreat Committee	Lynn Hobratschk	\$1,000.00
Handbell Refurbishment	Stephanie Poyner	\$3,000.00
Missionary Support Initiative—support local LINC congregation	Pastor Jon	\$1,000.00
VBS—2016 supplies / scholarships / t-shirts	Krista Beken	\$500.00
Mercy Tree—place for homeless & hungry in Clear Lake area	Margie Riley	\$500.00
2016 National LCMS Youth Gathering—32 teens + 6 adults	Robin Groeper	\$3,500.00
HURT—help CCISD families with children "at Risk" as needed	Krista Beken	\$750.00
LCMS Pastor Askins—Missionary to Asia	Jinx Schkade	\$500.00
Camp Hope — provides interim housing for our Wounded Warriors	Jerry, Joyce & Jordan Pfleeger	\$1,000.00
Center for Pregnancy	Margie Riley	\$250.00
Lighthouse Cooking Team	BBQ Cooking Committee	\$1,000.00
Raising a Modern Day Christian Knight	Krista Beken	\$600.00
TOTAL FUNDING APPROVED		\$19,600.00
Each Charity receives \$2,600.00 from Hopefest + Thrivent supporting funds (\$800) = \$3,400 each Friendswood Nutrition / Meals on Wheels; Christus, Our Daily Bread; Bay Area Alliance for Youth & Families, Christian Helping Hands; Galveston Urban Ministries (GUM)		\$13,000.00
GRAND TOTAL DISPURSEMENT		\$32,600.00

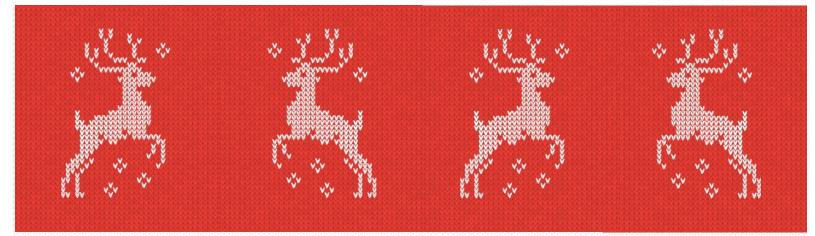
	ANNUAL PLAN	Y-T-D PLAN	Y-T-D ACTUAL	% OF PLAN
Operating Receipts	\$1,089,012.00	\$593,589.71	\$502,848.55	84.71%
Early Childhood Tithe	\$45,000.00	\$24,375.00	\$24,375.00	100.00%
Total Receipts	\$1,134,012.00	\$617,964.71	\$527,223.55	85.32%
Outreach	\$74,405.00	\$43,754.50	\$25,095.78	57.36%
Education	\$9,250.00	\$5,361.51	\$3,291.08	61.38%
Children	\$2,350.00	\$302.96	\$208.41	68.79%
Youth	\$15,200.00	\$5,495.75	\$2664.71	48.49%
Music	\$5,500.00	\$2,995.00	\$1954.17	65.25%
Assimilation	\$2,600.00	\$140.84	\$51.32	36.44%
Misc. Ministries	\$11,600.00	\$7,963.04	\$4,088.38	51.34%
Personnel	\$633,157.00	\$385,552.87	\$375,478.65	97.39%
Finance	\$101,950.00	\$54,646.62	\$31,700.62	58.01%
Facilities	\$225,750.00	\$131,284.66	\$96,590.96	73.57%
Office & Worship	\$42,750.00	\$20,929.05	\$18,246.87	87.18%
Omnibus	\$9,500.00	\$4,558.30	\$2,339.52	51.32%
Total Expenditures	\$1,134,012.00	\$662,985.10	\$561,710.47	84.72%
Income Less Expenses		(\$45,020.39)	(\$34,486.92)	

Debt: \$1,396,808.69

Financial News



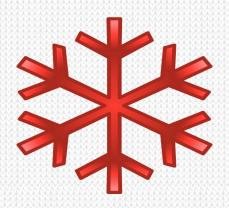
Fiscal Year (04/01/15 - 03/31/16)
As of October 2015



Irvin Burtzlaff	12/1	Gregory Adams	12/17
Norma Irving	12/1	Lynne Behrend	12/17
Mary Ann Waldon	12/1	Eileen Kneisler	12/17
Jennifer Frank	12/2	Kaitlyn Koch	12/17
Pat Hall	12/2	Henry Riley	12/18
Daniel Brown	12/3	Michael Van Chau	12/18
Jason Henry	12/3	Darryl Scheer	12/19
Josie Jones	12/3	Jessica Wilson	12/19
Wyatt Jones	12/3	Karen Kerch	12/20
Amy MacRill	12/4	Jacob Reyes	12/20
Alayna Pirker	12/4	Mary Jane Riddle	12/20
Ellen Kuehnle	12/5	Holly Yarborough	12/20
Andrea Gisch	12/7	Troy Froboese	12/21
Philip Johnson	12/7	Kathryn Davis	12/22
Christien Lake	12/7	Scott Fournier	12/23
Corrine Schleider	12/7	Noelle Johnson	12/23
JoAn Warren	12/7	Justin Paulder	12/23
Jaya George	12/8	Carolyn Benson	12/24
Vicki Glebe	12/8	Andrew Wiley	12/24
Tyler King	12/8	Tiffany Henry	12/26
David Krause	12/8	Justin Dorrell	12/27
Harry Reichart	12/8	Steve Hartzell	12/27
Kaitlyn Gahring	12/9	Kelly Adams	12/28
Jan Green	12/10	Penny Thomas	12/28
Kevin Rhodes	12/10	Timothy Watlington	12/28
Sandra Thiem	12/11	Carol MacRill	12/29
Chancellor Beken	12/13	Brynn Horak	12/30
Donna Braswell	12/13	Tonia Perry	12/30
Jennifer Harpole	12/13	Tamera Ross	12/30
Jacqueline Brooks	12/14	Blake Hasty	12/31
Stephanie Reyes	12/14	Matthew Haverty	12/31
David Kaderka	12/15	James Klein	12/31
Karen Newhoff	12/16	Joyce Schrader	12/31

William & Heather Taylor 12/4 Chad & Alexandra Lake 12/11 Dennis & April Darling 12/16 Eric & Joy Korth 12/17 Larry & Nancy Stiles 12/19 John & Val Williams 12/20 David & Norma Kaderka 12/28 Niels & Charlotte Aalund 12/29 Robert & Aileen Anderson 12/31

Birthdays and



This Month at Hope

FRICAY SATURDAY	Small Group (Petersen) 6:30 PM Children's Program Rehearsal 10:00 AM	Lessons & Cards Tree Goes Up	12/19/2015 Small Group (Peteren) 6:30 PM 12/19/2015	12/26/2015 Christ Mass Service 10:30 AM 12/26/2015	December 2015
THARSDAY	9 000 AM 9 9 00 AM 6 00 PM 7 00 PM 7 00 PM	Study Series 12/10/2015 12/2016 12/2016 12/2016 13/201	Nousieter Deadline Shub Series Shub Sundi Orong (Hinga) Shub Il Orong (Hinga) Shub Il Orong (Hinga) Shub Il Orong (Hinga) Shub Il Orong (Women's) Shub Il Orong (Women's)	Wd 06:11 Wd 06:22 Wd 06:59	Unward Basisteid 600 PM Small Group (Women's) 7.00 PM
WEDNESDAY	9 930 AM 1000 AM 500 PM 600 PM 700 PM 730 PM 730 PM	9-30 AM 6-00 PM 7-00 PM 7-00 PM 7-30 PM	restant MDO mail Group (Briefsan) deent Worship / Petluck 620 PM deent Worship / Petluck 750 PM anctuary Ghour 750 PM Meals on Wheels	100 PM	BASIC TOO PM
THESDRY	Preschool / MDO 930 AM Hope Woodwinds 600 PM Upward Baskerball 600 PM Jubilate Bruss 800 PM	A 128/2015 Preschool / AMO Hope Whoodwrinds Floyer Brazes Too PM Theye Brazes Ladies Guild Too PM Jubilate Bells Stoo PM	Preschool / MDO	Christmas Rehearsal 6:00 PM Upward Basketball 6:00 PM	Upward Enslethall 600 PM
MONDAY	***	127/2015 127/2015	Polytham Polython Polytham Polytham	Staff Meeting Small Group (I Upward Baske Small Group (I	SOO AM Office Closed Control of Contro
SUNDAY	***	g	12/13/2015 10/	12.00.2015 Study nn nl Sunday School Obrintanity stry dy Group tool onl it issue scussion Group tudy Group	



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH 1804 S. Friendswood Dr. P.O. Box 1076 Friendswood, TX 77549

Return Services Requested



Anchor Chain

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Ralph W. Hobratschk, Senior Pastor

Jonathan E. Petering, Associate Pastor