

Pastor's Paragraphs



July 4th, a national day of the celebration of individual freedom and the celebration of the birth of a nation committed to that premise, leads us to justifiable national and individual pride. God has looked with favor on our land, especially as we look at the history of the world. We are blessed with a freedom that is the envy of the civilized and uncivilized nations of the world, e.g. freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, plus other Bill of Rights freedoms. I suspect that is the reason we have an ongoing immigration flood...people yearn for freedom and know that it is here! Unfortunately, we who are citizens of this great nation so often take our freedoms for granted.

Freedom is not free. It entails a lot of individual responsibility, diligence and work. That work begins in community, community as small as the family, extending to town and State, nation and world. Understanding individual freedom necessitates the vigilance of individual responsibility. That sounds a lot like the responsibility we share as the members of the Kingdom of God. It is our vocation to proclaim the freedom of the individual from sin, death and the sway of the devil. We are not just free from, but free to... We are free citizens and also are all those who declare Jesus as Lord. Maybe we have more than one reason to celebrate freedom on the 4th of July!

Later on this month I will be attending the synodical (read: national) convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as first Vice President of the Texas District, though sadly with no voice or vote. I have been asked by our District President to help keep an ear on the tenor of the assembly and will gladly do so. There will be some contentious issues facing the delegation this triennium. Pastor Dan Schepmann of Gloria Dei and Larry Wooflin of Epiphany, Pearland will represent our Circuit. Please remember these men and the convention in your prayers. May our decisions be God-pleasing and beneficial for the work of the Kingdom among us and to the world.

Lynn Ann and I will be vacationing in the great Northwest the middle of the month. We look forward to a week away to refresh us for the weeks to come!

In April of 2017 we will embark on a 10 day tour of the Holy Land. I'll be leading a group from Hope and maybe other congregations in the area. You are indeed invited to join. The experience is nothing less than life-changing. You will never read the Scripture the same because you will have been there! If you want more information, there are brochures in the office that will detail the itinerary, cost and requirements. Please feel free to ask me your questions or seek out those who are on the tour three years ago. We are closing in on the deadlines for reservations.

Notes from Pastor Jon

Website

Did you know that our website is also available in “mobile-friendly” format? Just search “Hope-Lutheran Friendswood” on your phone’s browser and we should come up. First thing you will find is helpful information for visitors. Then you will see a place to listen to a sermon, followed by a link to a user-friendly calendar of all Hope events. The page finishes with announcements, and a map to our location. There’s also a search bar to search any keyword on our entire website. What a great, easy tool for your personal use and to show your friends! Give it a try!

Stephen Ministry

Summer is often a time to relax, go on vacation, or catch up on your reading as you stay indoors to escape the heat. But just because it’s summer doesn’t mean that crises can’t happen, heartache goes away, or unresolved issues in your life unwind themselves. Stephen Ministers are available to you to walk beside you, listen to you, pray with you, and keep your confidences. Contact me, or talk to another Stephen Minister for more information.

Small Groups

Are you interested in great fellowship with a group of friends? Are you interested in digging into God’s Word and serving others? Join a Small Group! Check out the list on the volunteer opportunities page found at the Welcome Center, or go to Hope’s website (hope-lutheran.org/ministries/small-groups) for more information, or give me a call or email. Have you been a member in a group, enjoyed it, and desire the opportunity to start a new small group? Contact me and we’ll talk about it.

Outreach

It’s not a secret that citizens of Friendswood take advantage of our campus every time the 4th of July rolls around. Why? Because we are so close to Centennial Park — making our parking lots an excellent place to watch fireworks! The people will already be here, so how can we serve them while they are here? The staff has come up with a simple and easy plan to make that happen this year: “Parking and Popcorn.” We will utilize our awesome popcorn machine to give these folks something to munch on while watching the show! It’s that simple. It’s a simple way for us to be hospitable to our neighbors and a chance to engage in conversation. We will also be giving our neighbors the opportunity to offer prayer requests. And here’s a radical idea: we might even just pray with them right there on the spot!

If you want to help out, let us know. And even if you just plan on being on campus for the fireworks, wear your “got hope?” t-shirt. Let’s take this opportunity to show Friendswood some love!

On a personal note — July 2nd will be the 10th anniversary of my ordination into the Office of Holy Ministry and installation as Hope’s Associate Pastor. It has been a privilege, an honor, and a blessing to serve our Lord and you in this place among such great people and in such a great community. God bless you all.

His Peace Be With You,

Pastor Jon

Christ be my Leader by night as by day;
Safe through the darkness, for He is the way.

Gladly I follow, my future His care,
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.

Christ be my Teacher, in age as in youth,
Drifting or doubting, for He is the truth.
Grant me to trust Him; though shifting as sand,
Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.

Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;
Death cannot hold me, for He is the life.
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain
Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign!

Summer Music Camp

begins July 11th at 9:00 a.m.

Please watch your email boxes for a reminder.

Auditions for 2nd-5th graders for speaking parts in the musical will be Thursday, July 7th at 6:00 p.m.

Everyone is invited to the BIG performance of our camp musical Here for the Gold on Thursday, July 14th at 6:30 p.m. in the Family Life Center. See you there!

The Music Ministry will be coming back to life in August. Please watch for details in the bulletin, over email, and in next month's newsletter.

Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord!

Stephanie Poyner
Director of Music

Music Ministry

youth ministry



Our family dog, Maggie, loves car rides. Somehow she just knows the difference between me getting the keys to leave on an errand or head to work versus getting the keys for a Maggie ride and she can barely contain herself. Nose to the gate, she bolts as soon as the door slides open and claims her seat waiting for the windows to go down. She's not a head out the window kind of passenger, but her olfactory senses are on overdrive and she seems to gulp down everything we pass. Her long legs can make turns and stops a balancing challenge and she is best when she sits but she's so excited that sitting is almost impossible. So I drive like I'm the bakery guy delivering a wedding cake, and I've learned if I simply rest my hand on her when a turn is coming she weathers the course better. That's all it takes, I don't have to hold her or brace her — I just lightly rest my hand on her and she knows something is coming, be ready. You can feel her calm. It always makes me think of those times when I feel like life is swallowing me up and there is this gentle whisper, a presence, God's hand lightly resting on my heart reminding it to beat, reminding me to breathe. So incredible the power of the Master when we have that relationship of trust. . .

July is all about the National LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans! We will be heading east on Saturday, July 16 with thirty youth and six adults for an adventure that will include great speakers, music, challenges, Bible studies, late nights and beignets! Please hold our group in prayer. . .

- For safety in our travels and our experience
- For hearts open to whatever God may have in store
- For eyes to see the community we are in and how we can share His Light
- For attitudes towards trying new things
- For friendships we didn't expect
- For seeds to be planted, for growth to happen in God's time.

Youth need service hours? Still plenty of opportunities through the summer to stock up on those hours!! Pop some popcorn, sort garage sale donations, help with the garage sale and some random youth room improvement projects. Contact Robin to sign up to serve!!

A thousand thanks to our 2016 VBS volunteers for making it a cool, fun adventure! Hope members, community volunteers, and over 150 children learned about following Jesus, the Light of the World.

At least 100 volunteers prepared for and witnessed to the children in stations like Sing & Play Rock, Deep Bible Quests, Spelunker Sports and Games, Cavern Café Snacks, KidVid Cinema, Imagination Station Crafts, and Cave Quest Closing. We even had some of our youngest members joining the fun in Tad's Preschool Pool! Together we experienced "God Sightings" ~ seeing God at work in our everyday lives, and review important Bible truths from stories throughout the Bible.

Through our mission project, we supported Sole Hope and their efforts in to provide closed toe shoes to children in Africa to help prevent many of the issues that come from sand fleas in some areas. They also "hold medical clinics, provide education, and provide education, and provide jobs for and with the beautiful souls in Uganda." You can read more about their program at: <http://www.solehope.org/>.

Our Family Night Ice Cream Social was a great success thanks to the ice cream sodas donated and served by Hope's Ladies Guild. A special thank you to all the ladies who donated supplies for the ice cream sodas, and to those who scooped up and served all that ice cream!

We count on every single one of our volunteers, no matter how small a part you think you had. The VBS staff this year has been a wonderfully amazing group! THANK YOU!

"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done."
Genesis 2:2

As you spend time with family and friends this summer, look around and see what you can notice that God has created ~ a sunset, a thunderstorm, a tasty snack, a bumblebee on a flower, a kind work, a child's laugh.

I wish you abundant God Sightings this summer. They always make me smile when I slow down to notice.

Krista Beken
Director of Children's Ministries

Children's



Ministries

Small Group

Eastsiders Small Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in members' homes in the East League City / South Shore area. In July we will be starting a new study series "Unstoppable Gospel" and invite anyone interested in fellowship, Bible study and caring for others to join with us. All ages are welcome.

If you have questions or want to know more about the many Small Group Ministry opportunities at Hope, check out the church website under Ministries. Eastsiders Small Group is led by Melissa Hinga — mhinga@ricetec.com or 832-654-8675.

Attention all Women!

Don't miss your chance to get away for a weekend and be treated to delicious meals, a beautiful outdoor retreat center, Bible study, quiet time, connections with women of faith, and "Joy for the Journey" speaker Tammy Whitehurst who will leave us laughing, crying, and giving praise to our Heavenly Father. We only have 80 spaces left for this retreat weekend of February 17-19, 2017.

We will have a Registration window open from August 22nd — November 10th, so, take a look at your calendar, invite a friend, commit to blocking out some time and come find our registration table. The all-inclusive cost for the weekend is \$215, with scholarships available.

Please make this appointment for yourself and be prepared to find your Joy!!

Ready to get Fit??

Want to start on the road to getting healthy and fit? There is an interest at Hope in getting a group together for running / jogging. It would not matter what level you are. Beginner or advance; all levels would be welcome.

Interested?? Please contact Cynthia Tauss at 915-373-9650.

Parking & Popcorn

Come join us 4th of July for popcorn & fireworks. Hope Lutheran Church will provide the parking & popcorn. The City of Friendswood will provide the fireworks.

Fireworks start at around 9:00'ish, so stop by the back sidewalk area for popcorn before the show begins.

Pop by. . .we'd love to have you!!
Bring your neighbors and friends!!



Concert

The Houston Lutheran Choral presents its annual 4th of July concert entitled “*An All-American Salute to the 4th*” sharing music by American composers. There will be rousing songs, love songs, and sacred songs. Festivities begin at 6:00 p.m. with the concert followed by hot dogs, Frito pies and desserts in the gym. There is no cost but a free will offering basket will be available.

Date & Time: July 4th at 6:00 p.m.

Place: Trinity Lutheran—Downtown; 800 Houston Ave.

Tickets: NOT required

You are encouraged to bring your lawn chairs to sit outside in the parking lot after the meal to enjoy the fireworks offered by the City of Houston. A great view and lots of fun.

As always, HLC enjoys singing for you and hope you celebrate our country's freedom with them on this special occasion.



Stephen Ministry vs. Stormy Weather

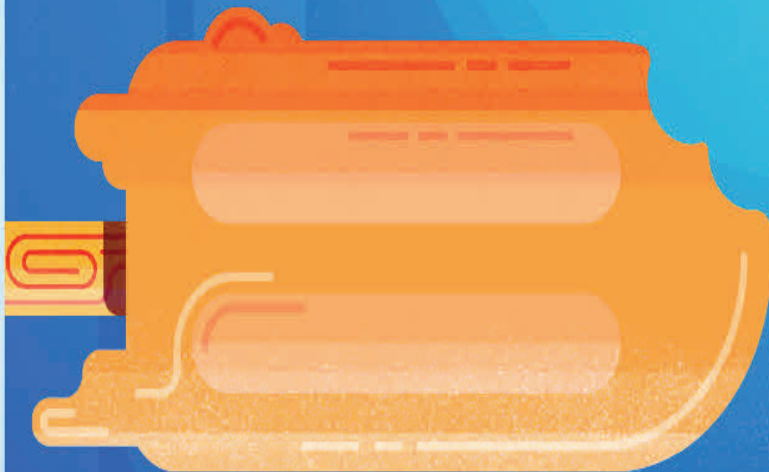
Once again we are aware of the hurricane season. As much as we can, minor and major preparations are being made to prevent as little damage as possible.

There are many storms in our lives and the lives of others. Many such experiences — such as divorce, death, terminal illness, hospitalization — are at the eye of these storms. Some storms bring much destruction, and people need help in repairing damage.

How many people do you know, in your home, or congregation, at work, or in the neighborhood, who are experiencing a storm, past or current. Perhaps it is you, yourself.

Consider the calming touch of Jesus offered with quiet sharing with a man or woman of faith, a Stephen Minister. Trained to listen, and offering to share in private, confidential and non-judgmental conversation, this is Hope's offer to our congregation.

Just as weather reports keep us alerted to conditions, so focusing on God's love and promise alerts us means to weather life's storms. Yours upon request.



Ladies Guild = Free, to Serve. . .

With the heart of a servant and eyes on Christ, we are free—a kind of freedom that our national citizenship cannot provide. We are indeed blessed to live in this country because here we are free to speak and live our faith. And in this faith we are able to serve Him openly, gladly and daily. God bless America.

Convention news will be on the agenda on July 12, our next meeting date. We'll be hearing about the newly chosen Mission Grants for the coming biennium. Our Mite Box contributions fund these — the Word being sent not only in our country but into foreign fields as well. This is, and always has been, the Mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League. May God grant it ever be so.

Our ladies have been thinking, planning and working on insuring all women of Hope that they are invited and wanted to be a part of our Guild. There are so many opportunities and avenues of service as well as spiritual nourishment and fellowship. Encourage, invite and welcome those who sit in your pew, are in your small group, sing in choir, etc. etc.

Did we mention fellowship, and fun? Well, as an example, our July meeting will be "Christmas in July." Yes, the time when we bring (or exchange) a fun (or serious) Christmas gift — bring one, get one — and enjoy the fun.

Hostesses scheduled are Gail Akins and Sallie Rouse. Till then, remember Secret Pals, Prayer Sisters and yourselves.

Happy Birthday, America.



How to Avoid Taxes on IRA Withdrawals

You won't owe income tax on your required minimum distributions if you donate them to Hope Lutheran Church.

Retirees typically need to pay income tax on withdrawals from traditional retirement accounts. And once you turn age 70 1/2, annual IRA withdrawals become required. There's a stiff 50% tax penalty if you miss a distribution. However, if you are in the fortunate position of not needing your IRA distributions to pay for living expenses, you can avoid income tax on the withdrawal if you donate it to charity.

Retirees age 70 1/2 or older who directly transfer their IRA withdrawals of up to \$100,000 to a qualified charity will not owe income tax on the distribution. A charitable distribution from your IRA can be used to satisfy your minimum distribution requirement.

A nontaxable charitable distribution must be made directly from the trustee of the IRA to a charitable organization. If you withdraw the money yourself and then donate it to charity you will need to pay income tax on the distribution. Contributions from workplace retirement accounts including 401(k)s and 403(b)s are not eligible for this tax break, but you could roll the money over to an IRA and then make a contribution directly to a charity. You must also be at least age 70 1/2 at the time the distribution is made. You cannot additionally claim a charitable contribution tax deduction on a charitable distribution from your IRA but you have avoided paying income tax on the minimum distribution.

	ANNUAL PLAN	Y-T-D PLAN	Y-T-D ACTUAL	% OF PLAN
Operating Receipts	\$1,040,751.00	\$162,897.27	\$139,160.20	85.43%
Early Childhood Tithe	\$45,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	100.00%
Total Receipts	\$1,085,751.00	\$168,897.27	\$145,160.20	85.95%
Outreach	\$74,318.00	\$12,158.34	\$12,038.00	99.01%
Education	\$8,850.00	\$725.00	\$21.10	2.91%
Children	\$2,300.00	\$299.61	\$164.35	54.85%
Youth	\$13,200.00	\$2091.91	\$1195.45	57.15%
Music	\$6,000.00	\$397.24	\$366.15	92.17%
Assimilation	\$800.00	\$100.00	\$52.45	52.45%
Misc. Ministries	\$10,100.00	\$650.00	\$500.00	76.92%
Personnel	\$637,528.00	\$118,324.46	\$115,856.80	97.91%
Finance	\$55,555.00	\$9,259.16	\$243.35	2.63%
Facilities	\$227,400.00	\$37,158.34	\$24,270.10	65.32%
Office & Worship	\$40,700.00	\$5,951.36	\$5,223.81	87.77%
Omnibus	\$9,000.00	\$1,516.69	\$404.00	26.64%
Total Expenditures	\$1,085,751.00	\$188,632.14	\$160,335.56	85.00%
Income Less Expenses		(\$19,734.87)	(\$15,175.36)	

Debt: \$1,310,080.51

**Fiscal Year (04/01/16 - 03/31/17)
As of May 2016**

*Financial
News*



Birthdays and Anniversaries



Ellis, Jeff	7/1	Frank, Ian	7/17	Larry & Linda Davis	7/6
Adams, Marjorie	7/2	Melcher, Harvey	7/17	Sven & Kathy Bors-Koefoed	7/8
Dietrich, Alice	7/2	Pirker, Rozanne	7/17	Sanjay & Rexanne Singh	7/8
Bretting, Milton	7/3	Rebstock, Emma	7/17	Matthew & Jennifer Tieman	7/10
Pfleeger, Jordan	7/3	Anderson, Robert	7/18	Ron & Carolyn Ricaldi	7/11
Sikes, Joan	7/3	Blankenship, Shelby	7/18	Jim & Dina Connor	7/14
Berg, Annette	7/4	Hembd, Judy	7/18	Mathews & Brett George	7/16
Frank, Andrea	7/4	Schkade, Mike	7/18	Gerald & Saleena Butler Sr.	7/26
Blankenship IV, Joe	7/5	Moller, Carolyn	7/20	Jonathan & Sheri Petering	7/27
Tieman, Miranda	7/6	Weiland, Joyce	7/20	Slater & Carol Sauer	7/27
Eaves, Wyatt	7/7	Williams, Jarret	7/20	Adam & Star Weiss	7/29
Fox, Sadie	7/7	Illerich, Daniel	7/21		
Dodd, Alice	7/8	Mertens, Sarah	7/21		
Petersen, Judith	7/8	Pedersen, Makenna	7/21		
Westover, Shayne	7/8	Weiss, Star	7/21		
Groeper, Alexander	7/9	Yarborough, Karen	7/21		
Cox, Carrie	7/10	Plumpton, Emily	7/22		
Hever, Mason	7/10	Gilbert, Hannah	7/25		
Norris, Caitlyn	7/10	Lemire, Fred	7/25		
Steakley, Shawn	7/11	Riley, Matt	7/25		
Gonzales, Chris	7/12	Whitman, Joshua	7/25		
Hackerott, Edith	7/12	Akins, Gail	7/26		
Hever, Stephen	7/12	Connor, Jim	7/26		
Aalund, Lauren	7/13	Hamre, Debbie	7/26		
Fennell, Frank	7/13	Knighton Sr., Marvin	7/26		
Lestishen, Jenae	7/15	Chew, Carol	7/28		
Orsak, Brooke	7/15	Blaylock, John	7/29		
Chew, Jim	7/16	Burtzlaff, Janet	7/29		
Tiracchia, Ronald	7/16	Gonzales, Mark	7/29		
Watlington, Amanda	7/16	Butler, Gerald	7/30		
		Zimmer, Lana	7/31		





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VOL 33 | JULY 2016 | ISSUE 7

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Ralph W. Hobratschk, Senior Pastor
Jonathan E. Petering, Associate Pastor

