



PASTOR'S PARAGRAPHS

A day in mid-February can be one of those treacherous times for the young, romantic male...Valentine's Day! Flowers and candy? A nice card that doesn't say too much? A more expensive gift? Ramifications of any of these decisions? No wonder it is called the cruelest month. I rejoice that those choices are not so fretful for me these days...I have my Valentine! God gifts us with a faithful, loving spouse. We can take advantage of this coming occasion to share our love and admiration of one who has promised to walk beside us through all sorts of situations. I rejoice in the gift of a wonderful bride!

The people of God have always lived counter-culturally. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and the Prophets all did so. There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ stood against the status quo in his day, thank God! Jesus mirrored the grace of his Father and condemned those who would justify themselves. Martin Luther stood firm on the Word of God that declares justification by faith alone in face of the abuses of the Roman Catholic church of his day. His efforts changed the face of Europe and of the Church. Some 500 years later we each stand within this stream of counter-cultural living and proclamation. Each of those mentioned above faced the attack of many who endorsed and promoted the status quo, who were unwilling to listen or change, who espoused their wishes above all else. Your vocation and mine as a follower of Jesus Christ is to live in this eddy of being different than that which surrounds us. For example, we with priority gather regularly on Sunday morning to encounter our God in worship, we tithe our income to further God's Kingdom and mission, we attempt to live out our vocation in the market place each day, or we stand against injustice where we experience it, no matter the societal norm. Guess what? What we experienced as a nation in the revolution of the '60s was nothing new. The Church has lived that way from the beginning and continues today.

Odd years being back a special event for members of Hope...our biennial women's retreat. I rejoice that some 80 +/- women will converge on Camp Allen (a really fine facility) for 48 hours of spiritual revival, personal growth, mutual support and the simple refreshment of time away in a relaxing atmosphere. My thanks and kudos to the committee that has worked so diligently and for so long to make this every two year event memorable. And my thanks to the husbands/fathers who step up to mind hearth and home and offspring for the weekend. May of God use this event to empower our women to serve and lead, witness and rejoice.

For the voting membership of the congregation, here's a heads-up of the coming Voters' Assembly on 19 March between worship services in the Great Room. We will be presenting a slate of candidates for directors and treasurer for election, the annual spending plan for approval and other matters for acceptance. You are surely encouraged to attend and express your wishes with your vote.

NOTES FROM PASTOR JON

I have noticed a trend over the last few years — and you may have as well: fewer people in worship on Sunday morning. It hasn't been a dramatic change; just a slow decrease each year. And we are not alone. Most other congregations — both LCMS and of other denominations — are seeing this same trend. So why is it happening? That's the million-dollar question. Some possibilities are:

1. "Regular" worship attendance is being re-defined. Attending once every couple of weeks or once a month is now considered "regular."
2. Sunday morning is no longer sacred. Sports, community events, shopping all are happening on Sunday morning.
3. Time. People run themselves ragged and are over-booked Monday thru Saturday.

Sunday is their only "down-time" or "family-time."

4. Technology. I don't have to physically attend worship. I can listen to a sermon online or watch a church service on TV.
5. Worship is boring. I can be "entertained" in so many other ways.

What do you think?

So what is the solution? That also is a million-dollar question. But I think so often we forget what happens in worship. In the Divine Service, the Almighty God comes to us. He is actually present with us. Jesus is with us. He comes to us through the Word read and proclaimed. He comes to us through the Sacraments — baptism and the Lord's Prayer. He is present wherever two or three are gathered in His name. And Jesus is present among us in the love we share for one another — the prayer

we offer for one another, the encouragement and support we give to one another. Just our physical presence and fellowship together is God working among us. This is all incredible, mind-blowing stuff!

But none of that happens for you unless YOU, yes YOU are physically present in the gathered Body of Christ on the Lord's Day — Sunday. It may not look like it or seem like it, but your brothers and sisters in Christ need you. Because that's how the Body of Christ works. When you are not here with your brothers and sisters, our gathering is less than what it should be. The pattern of Sunday Morning worship is an easy habit to drop. And once dropped, can be difficult to regain. I get that. So I urge you, consider your time and how you make use of it. Consider your priorities. Consider what is most important in your life — and your eternal life. And come join us. We will be happy to see you!



Confirmation

Retreat is out there on the horizon, but approaching fast. Retreat will take place March 31st — April 2nd. Registration materials will be mailed by the end of the month. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. Stay tuned for further details as they become available.

Stephen Ministry

The new class of candidates has already begun training and will continue into June. 50 hours of training and many more of study is what it takes to form a Stephen Minister. May our Lord grant them wisdom, knowledge, endurance, and enthusiasm for the task ahead. Continue to pray for them as they seek to serve.

His Peace be With You,

Pastor Jon



MUSIC MINISTRY

I WANT TO WALK AS A CHILD OF THE LIGHT.
I WANT TO FOLLOW JESUS.
GOD SET THE STARS TO GIVE LIGHT TO THE WORLD.
THE STAR OF MY LIFE IS JESUS.
IN HIM THERE IS NO DARNNESS AT ALL.
THE NIGHT AND THE DAY ARE BOTH ALIKE.
THE LAMBE IS THE LIGHT OF THE CITY OF GOD.
SHINE IN MY HEART, LORD JESUS.

February 5th
Sanctuary Choir,
Orchestra & Celebration
Bells

February 12th
Children's Choir and
Bells (11:00 only)

February 19th
Soloist

February 26th
Festival of the
Transfiguration — Adult
Choir, Orchestra, Jubilate
Bells

The hymn text *I Want to Walk as A Child of the Light* and its tune, HOUSTON, were written by Kathleen Thomerson. Ms. Thomerson was born in Jackson, Tennessee in 1934. She studied organ performance at the University of Texas, obtaining both a bachelors and master degree. Since 1999, she has served as the Director of Music at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Austin, Texas. Ms. Thomerson composed this hymn as she was traveling to Houston, thus giving the tune the name HOUSTON. This hymn is a great example of Jesus as the Light of the World and our lives — a theme we celebrate during the time of Epiphany.

With Easter being late this year, we have delayed our Easter preparation until the beginning of March. Beginning on March 8th, we would like to invite all students in grades 6-12 to come and sing in the choir for March and April. We will be participating in the Houston Choir Festival this year on April 30th. A special 6-12 Youth Choir will be featured at this event, so we will spend our March and April rehearsals learning the music for Easter and the Festival. Rehearsals will be on Wednesdays from 7:45—8:45 p.m. Please come and join us for this special event.

Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord!

Stephanie Poyner
Director of Music



YOUTH MINISTRY

Trivia
Night

Saturday

February
11th

You've never been to Trivia Night??

No big deal, you're only missing the most fun night of the year!! Trivia Night brings together friends and strangers in teams of ten for a friendly competition of what you know, what you don't, what you didn't know you knew and what you really don't care about knowing. Even if trivia "isn't your thing," you'll find plenty of laughs and great conversation at this favorite faith family event raising funds for the annual youth summer trip. \$10 per person gets you in the game, prize drawing tickets, bake sale and goodies are available for a little extra (or win tickets each round you table takes the top score!).

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., game begins at 7:00 p.m. and typically lasts until 9:30 p.m. Babysitting is on us, just sign them up so we can staff properly. Tickets go on sale January 29th, bring a team or join one when you get there.

Just come play!

Get in the game!!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

A Valentine Countdown

We are through the Christmas season and have finished our Advent studies and countdowns. Lent will begin in March, and the countdown to Easter will begin as well. Why not add another countdown to the mix.

Countdowns can be a great visual reminder for children, and a Valentine countdown can be a fun opportunity to remind your children of God's great love for each of us.

Write Bible verses on construction paper hearts. Display the hearts where you family will see them, and choose one verse each day to look up and discuss. Or, hide one heart in your home each day and let the children go on a hunt to find the heart. Once found, look up the verse, read, and discuss.

Ten references and explanations are listed below. Can you find 4 more together to create the 14 day countdown from February 1st—14th?

1. Romans 8:39—Absolutely nothing will ever be able to separate us from God's love.
2. John 3:16—God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for us. That is a huge sacrifice to make.
3. 1 John 3:1—Our God is an almighty God who is in complete control of the world. Not only does He love us but he wants to lavish His love on us and He wants to make us His children.
4. 1 John 3:16—He loves us so much that He was willing to give up His life for us even though He was completely sinless.
5. Romans 4:8—He loved us so much that He died for us before we were even His children. He loved us before we were His children as much as He does now.
6. Ephesians 5:1-2—Jesus loved us and we are to try to be like Him in the way we love others.
7. Jeremiah 31:3—God loves us with an everlasting love.
8. Psalm 36:5—God's love is very big. There is nowhere in the world that it does not reach.
9. Psalm 89:2—God's love will stand firm forever and He will never ever let us down.
10. Romans 8:28—God will take care of those who love Him and everything will work out for the good of His purpose.

This idea is adapted from several websites including Ministry to Children, myjoyfilledlife.com, and meaningfulmama.com.

INTERNET CONNECT:

Have a little family fun this Valentine's Day. "This game show will help everyone in your family learn what brings each other joy."

Valentine Family Game Show:

<http://www.imom.com/printable/valentine-family-game-show/>

#WHZ6y1MrKUK

Mark your Calendar SWAT Dates up to our Lenten Break

Third—Fifth Graders are invited to come enjoy some faith and fellowship. Bring a friend and share the fun! We'll meet from 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m. in the Great Room on the following Wednesday nights: January 25th, February 1st, February 8th and February 15th.

Watch the bulletin, Facebook and your email for details.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Maker Fun Factory. . .Created by God; Built for a Purpose
June 19-23, 2017
9:00 a.m. — Noon

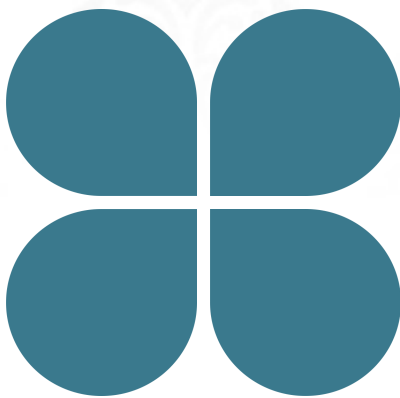
"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

Help Wanted

HELP WANTED ads are most familiar. It means there is a need for a particular event, service, job, and on and on.

Stephen Ministry is please that openings have been filled for men and women to train to become Stephen Ministers. This commitment exemplifies the willingness of those who will serve our Lord in ways in which He has called, equipped and gifted them.

HELP WANTED: Stephen Ministers are asking for help from you. Trained Stephen Ministers are ready, willing and able to serve immediately upon request. It cannot be done without your asking. We ask your help in Prayer and Participation. Both are needed. Your prayer for the Ministry — or for a Stephen Minister — is a blessing to all.



Mailboxes

Mailboxes have been cleaned out and re-alphabetized. If you hadn't picked up your 2017 offering envelopes, you can now find them in your mailbox.

Questions?? Let me know. *Debbie Hasty*

Tiny Treasures PreSchool / MDO

Can you believe that it is time to think about a new school year? Our Mother's Day Out / PreSchool program will begin priority registration (for students already enrolled in our program) for the 2017-2018 school year on Tuesday, February 7th. We will then open registration to the congregation on Sunday, February 12th.

If you are interested in registering your child in our program, please do so as soon on Sunday, February 12th. Please contact Junelle Petersen if you would like a registration form in advance. This will save you a great deal of time on Sunday. For your convenience, we will have a table set up in the Grand Hallway to accept registration forms and answer any questions. We will open our registration to the public on Monday, February 13th.

Questions?? Call Junelle Petersen at 281-482-4654.

Men's Ministry

Men's Ministry will begin a study of "52 Things Wives Need From Their husbands" on March 12, 2017. We will meet in the Great Room after the 11:00 a.m. service and lunch will be provided. All the men of Hope are invited to be a part of this study. Everyone is welcome to bring a friends as well. Men that would like to attend should RSVP to Scott Butler by phone 281-381-3188 or email at sbutler99@outlook.com.

Flippin' Pages

Putting up a new calendar was easy, and even turning one of the pages already. With January already gone and February appearing, do we wonder what is ahead for us in the coming months? Unexpected opportunities, disappointments or trials of faith, and, if so, most welcome times of Joy and Peace, Trust and Assurance. In faith, we leave the unfolding days in God's hands.

During this month, Ladies Guild plans to do many things.

In February. . .

- We will attend church and Bible class,
- We will print Braille the 6th (day) and 20th (evening)
- Some will ring bells, some sing in choir, come teach Sunday School,
- Some will serve as Stephen Ministers,
- Some will deliver Meals on Wheels,
- Some will work as volunteers at the Then & Now Resale Shop,
- And all plant to attend our February 14th Guild meeting for an evening sharing love for each other and our Lord and Savior

Our prayers for our Secret Pal, Prayer Sister, Lutheran Bible Translators whom we financially support monthly, and Mite Box Grant Recipients continue, trust on God's promises to hear and help.

Ladies Guild is open for every woman of Hope and all are encouraged to come and attend a gather, meet us in person, see what services are available for each gifted believer.

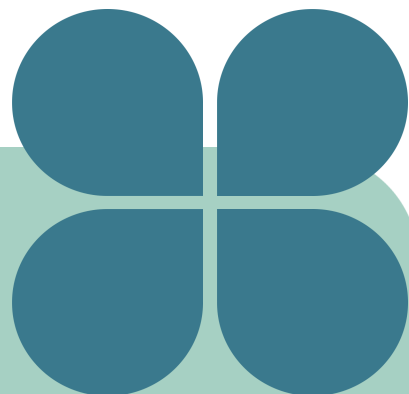
Once again, the next meeting will be February 14th, 7:00 p.m. You are invited.

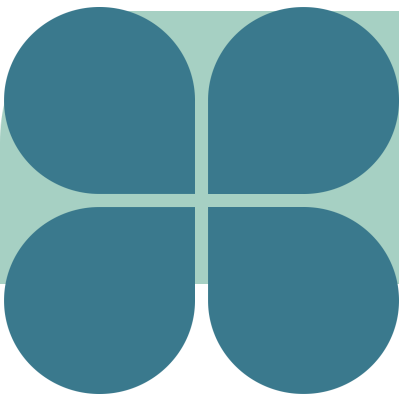
The Simply Giving Program

Enjoy the convenience of electronic giving. Hope offers electronic giving, which allows you to make donations on a scheduled, automatic basis. If you are writing checks and preparing envelopes every week, you will especially appreciate electronic giving. It is convenient for you and provides much-needed donation consistency for our congregation. New participants and changes for existing participants are made in the church office so there is no delay to start, stop or change amounts.

The Simply Giving Program is endorsed by Thrivent Federal Credit Union. To get started, you can find the authorization forms on the Welcome Center.

If you have any questions, please contact Katherine Kohn at 281-482-7943 or kkohn@hope-lutheran.org.





Columbarium Committee

Background

The 1960 census of Friendswood stated that there were 960 people. Today, there are 40,000 people and Friendswood has become “HOME” to a large contingency of people. There are limited places available for a final resting place for those who may desire to remain in this area in perpetuity.

The Friends Church Cemetery is restricted to members of the faith or to people who lived in Friendswood prior to 1960. In 2015 the Episcopal Church installed a Columbarium (a place to permanently store cremated remains) on their property for their members.

The traditional church cemetery had, for centuries, served as the ideal place of burial for its congregational members. Members were born in the church and spent their lives involved in the church community. After death, members remained a part of that community by interment (ground burial).

The 20th century trend has been to choose a secular cemetery and this trend has caused a lack of church cemeteries. Additional reasons for the lack of church cemeteries on church properties has been lack of space, being land locked and large cost for additional property for a cemetery.

The LCMS has no official position on cremation. Cremation is increasing in favor, in part because of space limitations in some cemeteries, and because of health considerations. The primary reason for the increase in cremations is economic, however, since it avoids such costs as purchase of coffins and cemetery plots and substantially lowers the expense of a funeral.

In their textbook Pastoral Theology (used at our Synod’s seminaries), LCMS Pastor Norert H. Mueller and George Kraus offer this perspective: *“Not too long ago, the church viewed cremation negatively. Because the general public associated the practice with heathen religions and/or an attempt to disprove the possibility of the resurrection, Christians were reluctant to consider it. In itself, the practice has no theological significance and may be used in good conscience.”* Synod’s Lutheran Service Book Agenda, approved by the LCMS in convention, includes instruction (rubric) for the committal of a person’s ashes, encouraging burial or interment and discouraging the scattering of the ashes. (1)

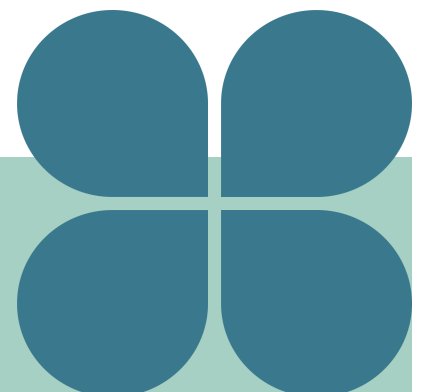
Committee

A Columbarium Committee has been formed to investigate the feasibility of providing a Columbarium at Hope Lutheran Church. Committee members include Harold Benson, Margie Riley, Katherine Kohn and Bruce Hunter. The committee is considering a number of items associated with installation of a Columbarium including:

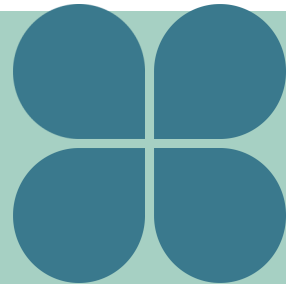
- Legal/regulatory requirements
- Columbarium manufacturers and design options
- Potential locations
- Construction/maintenance cost
- Policies and procedures
- Other church installations

Currently the Committee is planning to present information and recommendations to the Board of Directors in February and to the congregation at the annual Voters’ Assembly on March 19, 2017.

(1) LCMS information is an extract from LCMS Frequently Asked Questions page 4 Cremation.



FINANCIAL NEWS



Financial Data
Fiscal Year (04/01/16 - 03/31/17)
As of December 31, 2016

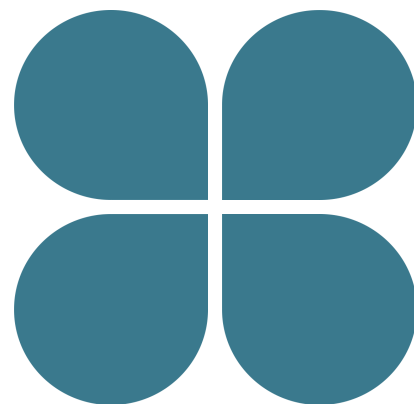
	ANNUAL PLAN	Y-T-D PLAN	Y-T-D ACTUAL	% OF PLAN
Operating Receipts	\$1,025,075.00	\$788,549.87	\$676,676.79	85.81%
Early Childhood Tithe	\$36,000.00	\$32,625.00	\$3,2625.00	100.00%
Total Receipts	\$1,061,075.00	\$821,174.87	\$709,301.79	86.38%
Outreach	\$73,600.00	\$56,143.01	\$54,847.95	97.69%
Education	\$9,250.00	\$5,579.01	\$3,739.78	67.03%
Children	\$4,450.00	\$1,117.60	\$664.07	59.42%
Youth	\$11,520.00	\$6,949.68	\$3,170.08	45.61%
Music	\$5,500.00	\$4,735.91	\$2,574.02	54.35%
Assimilation	\$2,600.00	\$615.16	\$74.93	12.18%
Misc. Ministries	\$9,000.00	\$7,758.64	\$4,061.73	52.35%
Personnel	\$592,515.00	\$474,914.67	\$460,833.82	97.04%
Finance	\$107,500.00	\$41,666.22	\$36,426.04	87.42%
Facilities	\$194,150.00	\$164,827.37	\$120,653.92	73.20%
Office & Worship	\$44,540.00	\$28,726.90	\$24,446.51	85.10%
Omnibus	\$6,450.00	\$5,830.97	\$1,249.06	21.42%
Total Expenditures	\$1,061.075.00	\$798,865.30	\$712,741.91	89.22%
Income Less Expenses		\$22,309.57	(\$3,440.12)	

Debt: \$1,236,406.66

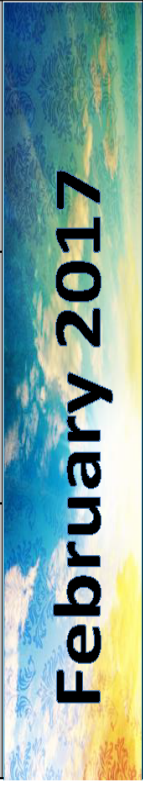






BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Debbie Schkade	2/1	Alexandra Hall	2/16	Dave & Chyrl Durling	2/4
Lisa Swanson	2/1	Reagan Breaux	2/17	David & Laura Krause	2/5
Richard Petersen	2/2	Rachael Mittendorf	2/17	Greg & Kelly Adams	2/11
Boyd White II	2/2	Jill Monk	2/17	Gerrit & Beverly Kroesen	2/14
Eric Braswell	2/4	Kevin Utsey	2/17	Bruce & Dena Brown	2/19
Gerald Butler Sr.	2/4	Mary Beth Davis	2/18	Roger & LilaJan Hibbs	2/21
Wendy Hunter	2/4	Keith Monk	2/18	Jason & Tiffany Henry	2/25
Jonathan Tubbs	2/4	Dylan Lake	2/19		
Vicki Breaux	2/5	Calder Gibson III	2/21		
EmmaLynne Fontenot	2/5	John Gruener	2/21		
Carson Leimer	2/5	Raymond Beken	2/22		
Lois Keller	2/7	Ephraim Centeno	2/22		
Katie Kueck	2/7	Ashleigh Grape	2/22		
Elizabeth Rhame	2/7	Parker Westover	2/22		
Tyler Adams	2/9	Gerrit Kroesen	2/23		
Eugene Walleck	2/9	Melissa Hinga	2/24		
Karen Klein	2/11	Macey Braswell	2/25		
Dale Kohn	2/11	Joshua Gruener	2/25		
Elizabeth Ricaldi	2/11	Josiah Norris	2/25		
Luke Stapleton	2/11	Gary Berg	2/26		
Elizabeth Hawkins	2/12	Dave Durling	2/26		
Alpha Siems	2/12	John Plumpton	2/27		
Stacie Utsey	2/12	Kyle Bargas	2/28		
Dan Carlson	2/13	Rene Gebhardt	2/28		
Chad Lake	2/14	Thomas Hamre	2/28		
Mack Freestone	2/16	Rich Wenzel	2/28		



THIS MONTH AT HOPE

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
 <h2>February 2017</h2>						
2/5/2017 Eucharist BUILT Adult Bible Study Confirmation High School Small Groups History of Christianity Men's Ministry Parent Bible Study Sunday School Together with Jesus Video Discussion Group Women's Study Group Eucharist Small Group (Butler)	2/6/2017 Braille Preschool / MDO Staff Meeting Small Group (Henderson) Girl Scouts Upward Basketball Stephen Ministry Training Small Group (Huning)	2/7/2017 <i>77 Priority Registration</i> Preschool / MDO Hope Woodwinds Upward Basketball Hope Brass Jubilate Bells	2/8/2017 <i>CSM Training</i> Preschool / MDO Children's Choirs Celebration Bells SWAT BASIC Sanctuary Choir Small Group (Hinge) Sanctuary Choir	2/9/2017 Preschool / MDO Adult Study Series Upward Basketball Small Group (Hinge) Small Group (Women's) AA Meeting BASIC Small Group (Hinge) Sanctuary Choir	2/10/2017 Upward Basketball Small Group (Peterson)	2/11/2017 Upward Basketball Trivia Night
2/12/2017 <i>77 Congregational Registration</i> Eucharist BUILT Adult Bible Study Confirmation High School Small Groups History of Christianity Men's Ministry Parent Bible Study Sunday School Together with Jesus Video Discussion Group Women's Study Group Eucharist	2/13/2017 <i>77 Open Registration</i> Preschool / MDO Quilting Staff Meeting Upward Basketball Stephen Ministry Stephen Ministry Training	2/14/2017 Preschool / MDO Hope Woodwinds Upward Basketball Hope Brass Ladies Guild Jubilate Bells	2/15/2017 Preschool / MDO Small Group (Erickson) Children's Choirs Celebration Bells SWAT BASIC Sanctuary Choir	2/16/2017 Preschool / MDO Adult Study Series Upward Basketball Small Group (Hinge) Small Group (Women's)	2/17/2017 <i>News Letter Deadline</i> Upward Basketball Small Group (Peterson)	2/18/2017 <i>Women's Retreat</i> Upward Basketball
2/19/2017 <i>Women's Retreat</i> Eucharist BUILT Adult Bible Study Confirmation High School Small Groups History of Christianity Men's Ministry Parent Bible Study Sunday School Together with Jesus Video Discussion Group Women's Study Group Eucharist	2/20/2017 President's Day Staff Meeting Small Group (Henderson) Girl Scouts Upward Basketball Stephen Ministry Training Small Group (Huning)	2/21/2017 Preschool / MDO Hope Woodwinds Upward Basketball Hope Brass Jubilate Bells	2/22/2017 Preschool / MDO Children's Choirs Celebration Bells Sanctuary Choir	2/23/2017 Preschool / MDO Adult Study Series Upward Basketball Board of Directors' Meeting Small Group (Women's)	2/24/2017 Upward Basketball	2/25/2017 Upward Basketball
2/26/2017 Worship BUILT Adult Bible Study Confirmation High School Small Groups History of Christianity Men's Ministry Parent Bible Study Sunday School Together with Jesus Video Discussion Group Women's Study Group	2/27/2017 Preschool / MDO Quilting Staff Meeting Volleyball Stephen Ministry Stephen Ministry Training	2/28/2017 Preschool / MDO Hope Woodwinds Hope Brass Jubilate Bells				



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

Return Services Requested

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Anchor Chain

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Ralph W. Hobratschk, Senior Pastor

Jonathan E. Petering, Associate Pastor