



Doorway to Hope

The Newsletter of Hope Church, P.C.A.

Our Vision: Training People for L.I.F.E

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BECOMING A TREE TOGETHER

There is a famous image found in Psalm 1, at the beginning of the Bible's prayer manual. It is a tree thriving in the desert while everything else is consumed by the burning heat of the sun. Here is Psalm 1:3-4, *That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers. The wicked...are like chaff the wind blows away.* The prophet Jeremiah expands the description of this tree in chapter 17. *He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.*

Do these images describe you in the midst of trial and temptation? Are you a tree able to withstand anything this life may throw at you? Or do you feel more like chaff, blown in every direction, lost in the wind? We tend to think that those who are steadfast and immovable are rare, awe-inspiring, and worthy of imitation. Yet, for ourselves, when the heat of the sun bears down we don't feel like Psalm 1 trees. It is a nice ideal, but feels unachievable. Sound familiar? However, the Psalmist is not describing the spiritual elite. He's describing anyone who meditates on God's word. It's a metaphor for the Christian life. An immovable tree is simply a de-

scription of a disciple of Jesus Christ who is being forged in the heat of hardship.

How do Jesus' followers become tenacious trees that will not waste away even in a desert sun? Here is the description from Psalm 1:1, *Blessed is the one whose delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law they meditate day and night.* We become tenacious trees by delighting in, loving, enjoying God telling us what to do. What we ought to do and believe and how we should think and act has been written down for us in the Bible. This is in stark contrast to the world around us which believes "I can think things through for myself and come to my own conclusions about God, doctrine and morals." Which attitude describes you? The Psalmist and the rest of the Bible is adamant that

we only grow through eating God's Word.

The image in Psalm 1:2 is one of a lion gnawing on his dinner. To meditate on God's law is to chew on it like a lion salivating over his wildebeest steak. Lions, while devouring their kill growl, purr and take a primal



delight in what they are eating. Read the Bible like that. Savor and digest it, so that it becomes your strength. The Psalmist is telling us that what we spend all day thinking about will either cause our roots to go deep or to shrivel up. What we think about and meditate on will either slowly bring rejuvenation or leave us malnourished. This is Christian discipleship: Reading and praying the Bible so that we become

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tenacious trees.

At this point, I know that unless God helps me I am doomed to be chaff. We cannot become tenacious trees on our own. We need Jesus. He is the man who delighted in God's law, day and night. Jesus was immovable, steadfast, resolved to do God's will as written in the Bible, even if it meant going through hell itself. Listen to Jesus' own words, *The Son can do nothing by himself. I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgement is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will.* The God-man, Jesus, embodies Psalm 1. He says, "I can only do what God tells me to do." He is **the** tree.

There is more. Trees cannot survive without water. The prophet Ezekiel is shown a future where a river of life flows from God's presence in the temple. And on both sides of the river are trees whose leaves will not wither and always bear fruit (Ezek. 47:1-12). It is saying that if we have the water of God's presence, we will be a tenacious tree.

Put all of this together. Everyone who delights in God's law, day and night, will have God's presence and be able to stand firm no matter what life throws at us: tribulation, distress, anxiety, persecution, fam-

ine, danger or even sickness and death. The gospel shows us that Jesus, the tenacious tree, became chaff on the cross, bearing the full fiery heat of God's judgment that should have incinerated us. Jesus withered up and died, cut off from the water of God's presence for your sake. Why? To give us the life-giving water of God's presence with us no matter the circumstance, famine or flood. Now that the threat of judgment is taken away through faith in Jesus, we can joyfully go about meditating on God's Word. We meditate on God's law not to get God's presence but because we have it and want to drink deeply from it again.

We cannot become tenacious trees alone. We need the strengthening food of God's law, made digestible by grace. We need the water of God's presence. The final ingredient is the burning heat of our circumstances. Believe the gospel and you may find yourself standing taller and stronger than you realized. You'll be a Christian through faith alone in Christ alone. Hope Church is here to grow tenacious trees. Come learn God's word!



Pastor Nate



From Your Elders:

Back to school! The time when students both groan and look forward to another year spent together with friends learning has arrived. At Hope Church, that means there will be more opportunities to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18) through Sunday School, children's ministries, and even small groups (which you will hear more about in the next month).

The Session of Hope Church has been reading and discussing Harry Reeder's book, From Embers to a Flame: How God Can Revitalize Your Church for the last several months. Several things have come out of those talks. First, we want to emphasize and prioritize what the Bible does: proclamation of the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Peter tells us that these are things that angels obsessively look at. They can't get enough of God's kindness to us through faith in the Son, Jesus. Second, as Paul says in Titus 2:11-15, God's grace in the gospel teaches us how to live. Therefore, your elders want to be taught by the gospel and teach you how to live in relationship with God as your Father, Jesus as your Elder Brother, and the Holy Spirit as your Helper. Our job is to make disciples through words, modeling and action.

And third, we have all agreed that we have to confess our failure in taking the lead in discipleship and want to talk to you about it. **On Sunday, September 25th, after the service we are inviting you to stay for a fellowship meal after the service and a "family talk."** Hope Church is a family, so think of this informal congregational meeting as a family gathering intended to build lines of communication between your elders and the church. Please put this date on your calendar so we can talk about ministering together in Ballston Spa, New York.

Learn God's Word

Pray for His Glory

By: Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr.

Submitted by Jeff Butler

I once visited a home where the patriarch of a large family closed his blessing for the meal with “for your glory.” I kept my eyes closed, waiting for the usual “Amen” to follow, but it never came. A few seconds later, his son whispered to me, “That’s the way he always ends his prayers. We can eat now.”

It isn't difficult to understand why faithful followers of Christ often express a desire for God to be glorified when they pray. As the Westminster Shorter Catechism puts it, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.” Yet, as Psalm 115 illustrates, glorifying God is much more than simply closing our prayers with “for your glory.”

MOTIVATED BY OUR NEEDS

When we look at Psalm 115, we see that seeking God’s glory in prayer is not contrary to petitioning God for help or to seeking His blessings. We aren’t called to pretend that all is well when it’s not. In verse 2, we find that Israel was facing threats from other nations. But, in verses 12 and 13, the priests assured those who came to prayer that, “The Lord has remembered us; he will bless us...he will bless those who fear the Lord.” Like the rest of Scripture, these verses indicate that God welcomes us to cast our cares upon Him.

MOTIVATED BY HIS GLORY

At the same time, Psalm 115 reminds us that the highest motivation for petitioning God must always be a desire for His

glory. God’s honor must take priority over what we perceive as our own well-being—even when we are in life-or-death situations. Notice how this psalm begins: “Not to us, but to your name give glory” (v1). In effect, Israel prayed for God to help them for the sake of His honor, not theirs. They hoped He would rescue them from the nations, but only if it would bring Him glory.

When we’re in the throes of a crisis, it’s often hard to imagine how the difficulties we face may eventually yield praise and honor for God. Yet, if you’ve been a follower of Christ for very long, then time and again you’ve seen God take terrible trials and turn them into something good, not only for you, but also for his own glory. Sometimes things that benefit us at the moment also bring immediate honor to God, but there are other times when they do not. For this reason, when we face difficulties, our deepest motivation should not be for our lives to be easier, safer, more enjoyable, or more prosperous. Even if it means that we must endure unbearable pain, we are to desire something far more important than our own benefit—the honor and glory of God.

Praying for the glory of God is much more than merely saying, “For your glory.” It’s a matter of our deepest motivations. What do you want more than anything else? Is it your own glory or His?



New Sunday School Classes Start Soon!

It’s that time of year again! Hard on the heels of school’s beginning, Hope Church’s fall classes will start on September 18, from 9:00 to 9:50 a.m.

Our preschoolers will continue to meet with Pat VanVoorhis, whom our children already know and love. Kindergarten through grade two will be taught by Rae Whitehead. Jill Galarneau will continue to teach grades three and four. Pastor Nate and Elder Jeff Butler will be team-teaching a communicants’ class this fall! This is for our young folks who are interested in being more involved in the life of the church and in taking the Lord’s Supper, so will involve children from middle elementary grades through high school. Our adult Sunday School Class will feature the book, *Christianity Explored*.

We will continue to offer a children’s church program during the morning service, beginning after the offertory, which will be focusing on the Gospel Project For Kids. This will be for children ages 4 to 6.

We look forward to your participation in these programs! May we all “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” through them! (2 Peter 3:18)

Interact in Worship



Snapshot on Children's Ministry By Melanie Combs

What a great summer we've had! I know there has been so much activity in the lives of the children of Hope Church. There was a great display of animals, plants, and other things from the Anderson and Perkins children at the Saratoga County Fair. I know Anna Turner had some things at the fair as well. I hope all have had some great family times together this summer as school is fast approaching the north-east!

We just finished Camp H.O.P.E. Reading Olympics! Almost all of our children/youth were involved in some way! We had many of our children come to the classes and we had many volunteers help in some way. What a great week it was! During Camp H.O.P.E. the teachers introduced students to many different countries participating in the Olympics, as well as many Olympic heroes—past and present. During the closing program the students were introduced to Eric Liddell, a famous Olympian/Missionary. The students had plenty of crafts to work on and games to play during the week as well.

We had 44 students from church, Spa Christian school, and the larger community. Thank the Lord for a good-weather week and for so many opportunities to minister to the Camp H.O.P.E. families. Thanks to all of you who took time to help with food, decorations, set-up, clean-up, and prayer. Thank you to the teachers and all our volunteers!

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Continuing Education for Parents



CCEF (Christian Counseling and Education Foundation) has been doing a series of videos this summer on a variety of topics. This is the ministry that published all the brochures on the rack in the church foyer. One of them has to do with talking to your children about a very sensitive topic: **Teaching Kids about Sex and Personal Safety**. I want to encourage all the parents who currently have children ranging in age from toddlers to teenagers to check out this link: www.ccef.org/events/ccef-live. Pastor Nate will also be putting it on the church website. That link will bring you to the video that really is a general overview with some very helpful hints and resources for you to use. We are hoping to get several of the books on that resource list for the church library soon.

Foster Loving Relationships

Summer Reading Olympics

By: Tiffanie Cheng

This summer, my family was blessed beyond measure to take part in the Camp H.O.P.E.'s Racing to Read in Rio program. At first, every mention made me nervous, as I tried to avoid making a commitment, which was really God's calling. Eventually, I signed Georgie up to attend the first grade team and volunteered to help wherever I was needed, which turned out to be with the third grade team (viva Mexico!). We were a bundle of nerves, pendulums swinging between fear and excitement. When Monday morning came, we split off into our teams for the week, and by the end of that first day, all my fearful nerves were gone. It turns out that third graders don't bite, instead they displayed a delightful and diverse group of abilities and personalities: shy, intellectual, goofy, and sweet. I learned a lot about geography and Olympics history. The kids learned reading skills as a basis for learning anything. They read maps and charts, did math problems, built vocabulary, and of course read a lot of books. The best part of the whole week was watching every one of them have fun.

I was able to see Georgie in between activities and during Mrs. Jenkins' amazing Olympic Games. I was nervous for him at first, but it turned out to be unnecessary. He took a real liking to his teacher, saying "She's very nice," "I want to show her this book," and my favorite of all, "I love you, Mrs. Whitehead." All week long, every morning, it was the same question, "Are we going to church, again!?" That Saturday he asked me, "Do you miss Camp H.O.P.E.?" Unfortunately, we were both a little sad it was over, but we are looking forward to going back next summer.



Fun and Learning at Camp H.O.P.E.

By Stephanie Stomski

Dear Lord, Thank you for the amazing opportunity of being a part of Camp H.O.P.E.!

As a participant in Camp H.O.P.E. I would like to say that the experience, as a whole, was wonderful and enlightening. I was part of a team. But not just a team, a well-oiled and refined machine. We all worked together and complemented the abilities of one another with the grace of God. Every team member donated their time to work together with one common goal in mind, to teach children. I have worked in a lot of different facilities that care for and teach children in one way or another. I have never seen a program where everyone works equally hard, and most of all never have I seen the passion to work with and for the children so equally strong. I feel very blessed to be a part of the Camp H.O.P.E. team.

As a parent of a Camp H.O.P.E. student I also feel blessed. I watched my son attend the program every day that he looked forward to. When I brought him to Camp H.O.P.E. in the morning he couldn't run to his class fast enough. When I picked him up at the end of the day he always had a smile on his face. His favorite part was his teacher, Mrs. Whitehead. He asked several times if Mrs. Whitehead could be his teacher for the upcoming year. This amazed me. My son had a lot of trouble, over the school year, with paying attention as well as staying on task. This made it hard for him to "love" school. He liked school and his teacher, however, he didn't love it. He loved Camp H.O.P.E.. This just proved to me, even more so, that Mrs. Whitehead and every other teacher at Camp H.O.P.E. wanted to be there and put their all into it.

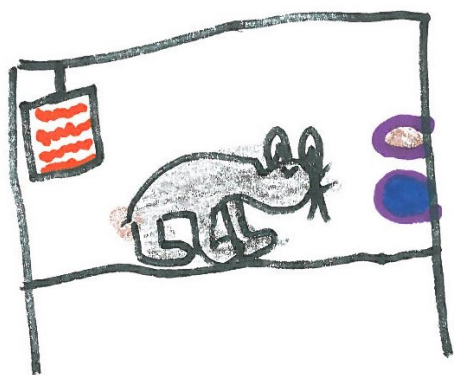
When I helped out in Mr. Whitehead's class room I could tell that he kept his class interesting to keep the students' attention. Mrs. Galarneau set up a tent in her class for her students to read in. Miss Combs not only taught a wonderful class but also did a good portion of the planning, organizing, set up and clean up. Mrs. Thompson did an amazing job planning and distributing the snacks and the food for the picnic. There were also so many other helpers in the classrooms and behind the scenes. I just know the Lord is smiling as he is watching all of us.

Foster Loving Relationships

Saratoga County Fair Time With Colin and Eva Anderson

This summer at the Saratoga County Fair I was very busy showing cows, sheep, chickens, rabbits and guinea pgs. I was so busy my grandmother and Papa let me borrow their camper to use at Fair. My favorite part about Fair was showing my cows and sheep because I did pretty well. I won my Showmanship for cows and sheep in my class and got 4th best Showmanship in the county for both cows and sheep. My cow, Ivy, was champion in grade heifer and my calf, Olaf, won his class, but lost when he moved on because he was the smallest. Olaf was a bottle-fed calf. This summer for the first time I showed my cows in open show along with all ages including adults, and my cow, Ivy, won Champion grade heifer, and Olaf won his class.

I also got to dress up for costume class. I was Elsa and Olaf the calf was Olaf from the movie "Frozen." I had a blast at the Fair and I even got to make some money.

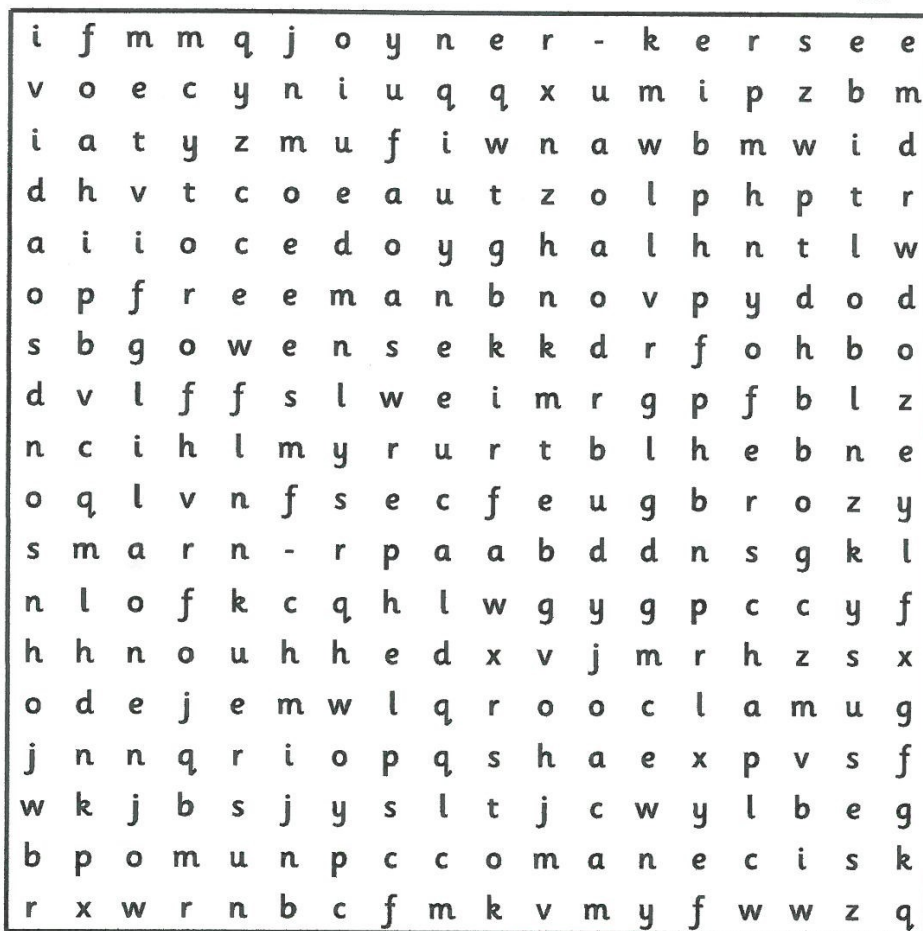


**Eva Anderson
showed her chicken
and her rabbit at the
Saratoga County
Fair as well.**



Famous Olympians

Word Search



Ali

Blankers-Koen

Bolt

Coe

Comaneci

Freeman

Johnson

Joyner-Kersee

Lewis

Owens

Phelps

Redgrave

Spitz

Thompson

Thorpe

Foster Loving Relationships

A New Year Begins for Spa Christian School

Mandy Klint <><
Spa Christian School

Dear Hope Family,

It feels like so much has happened since the last time I wrote. The school year finished and we sadly said goodbye to several of our families who are moving out of state due to job transfers. Because of that, as well as our growing middle school, and a couple of our teachers reaching retirement age, we had a few job openings to fill. We are happy to welcome Lorien Albertson and Jacque Detweiler as our new preschool teachers, Kelly Mayne as our new middle school math teacher, April Brustle as 1st grade teacher, Catherine Gideon as 3/4th grade teacher, Robin Murphy as art, and Alayna Marland as our new teacher's aide. Thankfully, most of these new hires are not new faces to the school and I am confident that this year God is going to do great and marvelous things as we continue to serve Him as a school. We are also excited to welcome 9 new families to our school! These new families have children in preschool, K, 1, 3, 5 and 7.

As we ramp up for the school year to begin I am reminded of the need to rely on the Lord for all of our needs. Our school verse for the year is Colossians 3:12-17

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Our theme is "Whatever You Do." Whatever! The Greek word means all, everything. Such a simple concept, and yet sometimes so difficult to live out. Our student body, as well as our staff, board, and parents, will be striving for love that will bind us together in unity, peace that will rule our hearts, and thankfulness that will cause us to always have a song of praise. We would love for you to come alongside us in this journey. Walk with us as we seek to honor God in "whatever we do".

In our desire to continue toward love and unity, we'd really enjoy someone from the church to join our board: Someone who has a love for both the church and school, and wouldn't mind giving up their time to serve as a bit of a mediator between the two bodies. We usually meet on the second Tuesday of every month. Please contact Mandy Klint if you'd like an application.

Additionally, we are still on the look-out for a middle school science teacher. This position requires approximately 45 minutes of teaching every day. Please contact Mandy Klint for more information.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for allowing us to share your space with you. It was such a blessing to hear children throughout the building last week, during Camp H.O.P.E., and I was struck by the wonderful tool that this building is in bringing the next generation to a saving knowledge of their Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you!

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Camp H.O.P.E. Daily Closing Time in the Olympic Stadium (Our Sanctuary)

Extend God's Hope

German Fruit Salad

Submitted by Anne Mastro

2 jars (16 oz. each) Maraschino cherries, drained

2 cans (11 oz. Each) mandarin oranges, drained

1 can (20 oz.) fruit cocktail, drained

1 container (16 oz.) sour cream

1 tbsp. mayonnaise

Chopped Walnuts (optional)

2 large red apples, cut into bite-size pieces

2 bananas, cut into bite-size pieces

1. Combine cherries, oranges and fruit cocktail in large bowl.
2. Combine sour cream and mayonnaise in medium bowl; stir into fruit mixture. Add chopped walnut, if desired; mix well.
3. Cover; refrigerate 2 hours. Add apples and bananas just before serving; mix well.

Makes 8 servings



**Next Doorway to Hope
Deadline is October 15th.**

DOORWAY TO HOPE STAFF

DIRECTOR: LORD JESUS
TYPIST & LAYOUT Sally Jenkins
EDITOR: Rae Whitehead

SUPPORT: All the Prayers of All of
the Church family



Have you noticed the Booklet Display next to our Elevator?

The Elders have placed a new resource for your use as you seek to apply the Scriptures to your life and minister to those around you.

These resources are from CCEF (Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation) and are part of the series, "Resources for Personal Change."

Some of the topics included are as follows:

A Father's Guide to Raising Boys
Controlling Anger
Grief
When Bad Things Happen
When the Money Runs Out

Please stop and take a look and make good use of these booklets.

And Then There Was Light!

If you have stepped into our restrooms lately, you will have undoubtedly noticed a big change. They are very bright with new light fixtures, fresh paint and new flooring. They look great due largely to the hours of endless work and effort on the part of our Deacon, Jim Cornick and his able-bodied painter, Terry. These improvements and upgrades have made these rooms bright and welcoming and something that we can all appreciate. Thanks, Jim.



BIRTHDAYS

1	Ruth Richards
8	Joe Galarneau
9	Connor Anderson
11	Jill Miller
20	Jonathan Cutler
21	Isabella Bodine
22	Tammy Anderson
23	Nancy Trestick
28	Jim Farinacci

ANNIVERSARIES

10	Stan and Nancy Trestick
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Operation Christmas Child

This year once again, Hope Church will be participating in the Operation Christmas Child Project, which involves filling shoeboxes with gifts.

This year you will have the opportunity to sign out a pre-wrapped shoebox for you to fill. The shoeboxes will be available in the church foyer starting Sunday, September 11th.

This is a great fun Christmas project for all to be involved in. Guidelines for filling your box will be hanging in the foyer. Your filled shoebox needs to be returned early in November. A donation of \$7 per box is very critical for the shipment of your box. Thank you for participating in this Christmas project!

If you have any questions, please see Marybeth Gibbins.

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