



"We have this hope as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" Hebrews 6:19

Where's My Party?

I think we are all familiar with the parable of the Prodigal Son. The younger son of a wealthy man took his half of the inheritance and spent it all in a manner of a few weeks in a distant country. A famine struck the land and the younger son went hungry, and was reduced to working in the fields feeding the pigs. The younger son vowed to return to his father humbling himself, promising to be a servant rather than a son. But the father welcomed him back with open arms, running out to greet him. He quickly ordered his servants to begin a celebration because "this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" The older brother returning from the fields heard the music and dancing. He became angry when we found out it was for his no-good brother. "How could my father celebrate and honor my younger brother who squandered everything he was given? I have always been loyal to my father and I have never received a party like this." The father reassured the older son by saying "Son you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life."

The older brother asked his father, why isn't life fair? You do everything you can to be a faithful worker and a dedicated Christian. Yet someone else always gets the job promotion or someone else manages to do more at church than you do. We know life is not all about getting glory from others but it is hard to see everyone else *but us* getting recognition for their work. Where is our reward for being good and decent Christians? What is the point of being a loyal Christian if my life is not getting any better? It is hard to stay committed when life hands you bad apples day after day. Where are my blessings, Lord? What we can learn from the parable is found in the father's answer to the older brother. "Son you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours." Even during our worst days, God is with us. We have been guaranteed a life with God no matter what happens. The reason bad things happen to good people is because this world is broken, full of sin. But this doesn't mean that God has abandoned us. Quite the opposite, we have been given the faith to keep going no matter what happens. The promise is that God is always with us through the good and the bad days. That is God's promise for the dedicated and hard working followers of Christ.

Yet we are sinners too, aren't we? Sometimes we are like the younger brother in the parable, losing ourselves in sin. We still need God to forgive us and receive us in his welcoming arms no matter what we did. We have reassurance that God will be there to take us back if we stray from the righteous path.

Finally, sometimes we need to forgive those who have hurt us as the father did. Reconciliation is an important part of being a faithful Christian. We have to receive those who ask for forgiveness with joy and praise because that is the way God has received us. Holding onto bitterness instead of forgiving others, leads us away from God. Give a hug to that person who has asked for forgiveness and tell them that you accept their apology. In forgiving others, we will be forgiven for the things that we do wrong. It will always be a struggle but strive for forgiveness.

Which character are you learning from in the parable of the Prodigal Son, the father, the returning son or the jealous brother?

We hold up in prayer:

Sally Michell
Jean Jensen
Ed Hawkins
Katie Boehm
Kay Bostrum
Jo Wier
Jeanne Ogden
Keith & Lucile Moore



To our Hope Church family,
John and I would like to thank everyone for all of the loving care given our family at the passing of his mother. The many cards, visits, calls, and hugs were so appreciated, especially those "hugs"! We are so blessed in our congregation to have so many thoughtful friends.

Again, many thanks and Blessings to each of you!
Fondly, Jody Harvey and family

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Flu Shot Clinic was a huge success!

70 people from a 2 year old to the elderly received either a flu shot or the flu mist at our Visiting Nurse's Clinic held at our church. A big "thank you" to Ken Thompson for organizing this Deacon sponsored event and to Betty Lydick, Anne Williamson and Shirley Jones for volunteering their services throughout the course of the day.

**Deacon's
Corner**

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR

On **November 22nd** we will have the "HANGING OF THE GREENS" to decorate the church for Christmas. THIS IS AN ALL CHURCH PROJECT! You are asked to come to church in your old clothes and bring a "sack" lunch for you and your family. The Deacons will furnish dessert, coffee, lemonade and iced tea. After lunch we will decorate the church and when that is all done we will go into the Sanctuary and sing a few Christmas carols. WE HOPE ALL THE CHURCH FAMILY WILL COME TO MAKE THIS A VERY FESTIVE OCCASION!!

The Deacons will be remembering four families at Thanksgiving with a gift card from one of the local stores.

Two weeks before Thanksgiving the Deacons will put up the "GIVING TREE" once again with the names of three families to be remembered at Christmas. Tags will be put on the tree with the names, what gifts they would like and sizes of clothes for the congregation to purchase for these families. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU PUT THE TAG SECURELY ON THE GIFT AFTER YOU HAVE WRAPPED IT.

Treats for Tots Food Drive

"Trick or treat" is a phrase often heard in October because of Halloween, which is why the Hendricks County Food Pantry Coalition chose to call their October food drive **Treats for Tots**. The goal of the food drive is to stock local food pantries with products that will improve the nutrition of infants and young children. Baby formula is especially needed. Any brand of formula is OK, because federal guidelines regulate the ingredients and quality of all baby formulas. Other "kid friendly" items are also needed, such as baby food, fruit juice, macaroni and cheese, and similar items. The food drive will take place the last two weeks of October, so watch for the box that will be placed in the narthex. Let's fill it with "treats" that will help to improve the health and well being of infants and children in our county.

(Please see Linda Parker if you would still like to donate)

Hope United Presbyterian Church News for November 2009



- **Pastor Gray will be attending a continuing education seminar on the Small Church in Richmond, Virginia.** He will be gone November 9th through the 12th. The following Sunday he will share in his sermon some of the things he learned in this class. It will be a good opportunity to contemplate and examine our identity as a church.
- **Sunday November 8th is Stewardship Sunday and it will mark the culmination of our "Count Your Blessings" campaign.** We ask that you continue to consider how you have been blessed by God and how in turn you can be a blessing to this church through your gifts, talents, time and offering. This Sunday, you will have an opportunity to continue your commitment to this church as a valued member and friend. Please pray about this commitment and give as you can.
- **Sunday November 1st is All Saints' Day.** We will lift up those who have entered into God's glory. It will be a special service of remembrance and praise to the Lord who has promised to overturn the power of death through Christ. Make an effort to attend this special service and write down any names that you would like to lift up on Sunday October 25th and the morning of November 1st in the narthex.
- **Preparations are being made for our Christmas Cantata on December 20th.** We need volunteers for this wonderful worship service. If you are interested in participating in this wonderful opportunity, talk with our Choir director Rebekah or Pastor Gray.
- The Session and Deacons will be having a Joint Meeting on November 16th at 6:00pm.
- **The Deacons will be hosting Hanging of the Greens on Sunday November 22nd right after church.** Refreshments will be provided. It will be a great way to hang out with your fellow church members and beautify the church for the Advent and Christmas season.
- Harvest Dinner will take place on Saturday November 14th.
- 1st Sunday of Advent is on Sunday November 29th.
- Session Meeting on November 2nd.

Sermon Topics for November

November 8th – Stewardship Sunday

Genesis 12:1-4

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Mark 12:38-44

Sermon Focus: We are blessed by God so that we can be a blessing to others.

November 15th

1st Samuel 1:4-20

Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25

Mark 13:1-8

Sermon Focus: God is breaking through this world, calling us to challenge the apathetic and the status-quo.

November 22nd – Christ the King Sunday

2 Samuel 23:1-7

Revelation 1:4b-8

John 18:33-37

Sermon Focus: What does it mean to crown Christ king?

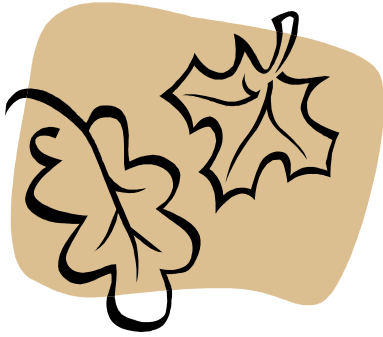
November 29th – 1st Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

Sermon Focus: Change never comes without a price



PW News

The Presbyterian Women of Hope are once again planning for the annual

Harvest Dinner to be held
Saturday, November 14th from
4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

This is an ALL CHURCH event. Proceeds are used to benefit the entire church.

Everyone has always pitched in to help provide the numerous dishes needed to supplement the food prepared in our church kitchen. Ex: Food donations, such as vegetable dishes (a 9X13 pan or enough to feed 20 people). You can also help with other tasks such as:

- selling tickets
- setting up tables and chairs
- helping in the kitchen
- serving dinner
- clearing tables
- clean up afterwards

Help will be needed throughout the day!

We will be looking for all to get involved. Even if you are unable to do any of the above, we hope you will come and bring your family and friends for dinner. It is always delicious and a good time to fellowship together .

Look for the sign up poster in the Narthex. Tickets available at church today and November 8, or you may buy at the door. Ticket Prices: Adults \$8.00, Children (4-10) \$3.50, 3 and under FREE.



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Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on fine, good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad for it. Phil. 4:8

Msg. Bible