



The Messenger

December 2025

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH
1901 MIDDLEBOROUGH RD, ESSEX MD 21221

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Wednesday, December 24
Family/Contemporary
Candlelight
Service 7:00 PM

Children are welcome at all our worship services, but this one is designed with children and families in mind. A more informal service with a Special children's message and a sermon, plenty of beloved Christmas carols and choir music, ending with Holy Communion and candle lighting.

Wednesday, December 24
Traditional Candlelight
Service 10:00 PM

Join us for this classic Lutheran "Midnight Mass" Filled with Christmas carols and choir music, the telling of the Christmas story and Holy Communion, ending with the candle lighting ceremony.

Sunday, December 28
Carols & Communion
Service 10:00 AM

We celebrate by worshipping Christmas, with carols, prayers and the Lord's Supper. Join us at our 10:00 a.m. Service. Come and greet the new-born king this Christmas season.



*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

– Philip Brooks, “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (1868)

To me, “O Little Town of Bethlehem” stands out among the carols that we sing each year at Christmas. It is not cheery or upbeat. It does not have the enthusiasm of “Angels We Have Heard on High,” nor does it sound as joyful as “O Come, All Ye Faithful.” It also doesn’t have the same sentimental value as so many of our other Christmas hymns. We would not sing “O Little Town of Bethlehem” as we light our candles in Christmas Eve worship, as we do with “Silent Night,” nor would we sing it instead of “Joy to the World” as we’re sent from worship to share the good news of Christ’s birth.

And yet, even with all the ways “O Little Town of Bethlehem” may differ from other Christmas hymns, it remains a powerful, prayerful, and beautiful hymn. It reminds us how our Lord was born in a small, ordinary, and overlooked town – not unlike where we worship in Middleborough, and the towns where we live. We hear in this hymn, too, that in the darkest of streets shines the light of Christ. In times when losses and loneliness surround us, yes, but also in the beauty, mystery, and quiet of the darkness, then and there Christ is born. Then and there his light shines to give us faith, hope, and love.

My favorite line of the hymn, though, is the final one of the verse above: “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” Christmastime brings hopes and fears to each and every one of us. We might be hoping for a particular gift, for joyful celebrations with our families, for peace in our world, or for just a bit of rest. We might be fearing what the new year will hold in store for us, or if Christmas will bring us nothing but more of the same pains and struggles that we know all too well. Whatever our hopes and fears, though, “O Little Town of Bethlehem” promises that Christ Jesus, born for us in Bethlehem, holds them all in his love. He is Immanuel, God for us and God with us. With our fears, our hopes, and all that we bring with us to Christmas: Jesus comes to us with a love which will give us strength for the days to come and life forever.

This Christmas, I pray that Christ would hold the hopes and fears of all our years together in his love, and that we would know that our Savior has come to us in the little town of Bethlehem. Read below for more information and announcements for our Christmas season together at Hope!

With my prayers and love,
Vicar Adam





**Join us on Sundays in the Sanctuary at
10:00 am. for worship.**

We are currently offering one worship service at 10 AM on Sundays. We are alternating between our Traditional and Family Worship Service format each Sunday, with a children's message and Children's Church/KBZone. Please join us for in-person Worship Service and Holy Communion in our sanctuary on Sundays at 10:00 AM.

Mission Statement

“Why are we here as a people of God? We are here to celebrate our faith, grow in faith and in God’s Word, and reach out in service to our community.

Go in peace to celebrate, grow and serve”!



Gail Anuszewski	David Eicher	Patti Baldwin	John Steiner
Bob Baker	Belinda Emge	Linsolato	Thom
Connie Baker	Susan Enclade	Margaret Linz	Vernon Wallacd
Susan Baucom	Evan	Harriet Lloyd	Frank Walls
Barbara Becker	Darlene Fisher	Julia Ly	Trish White
Carolyn Bell	Tim Flaherty	Phil Malpas	Elveta Williams
Bob Bellach	Al Fleischmann	Ruth Massaroni	Karen Williams
Gail Berry	Florence	John Micklos	Elnor Wilson
Jessica Berry	Derrick Fowler	Matilda Miller	Gail Wilson
Pat Berry	Sam Freels	Michelle Moore	Cass Wohlleben
Kathy Binas	Mike Gerald	Terry Novak	
John Boblitz	Fred Getz	Charmaine Ordak	
Don Bouce	Russ Getz	Beth Pattersonb	
Ken Brazerol	Cassidy Gore	Judy Crockett	
Debbie Bryant	Trudy Grauer	Peddiford	
Andres Buitrago	Cowyn Gustave	Krista Pellegrini	
Wilford Buitrago	Nicole Harden	Deloris Phillips	
Tony Bunk	J & K	Evelyn Porter	
Ethel Burke	Loved Ones of	Dorothy Prevost	
Carolee Calo	Susan Johnson	Cass Rayman	
Eric Carl	Lillian Jones	Dave Raynor	
David Clagget	David Kerner	Frank Schmidt	
Chris Coffey	Joan Kincaid	Nancy Scott	
Mary Jane Conrad	Michelle Kincaid	Mike Short, Jr.	
Tom Cox	Matt Kretzschmar	Charlene Simmons	
Chuck DeWitt	Christina Lacko	Lonny Smith	
Kimberly Dixon	Diane Lacko	Margaret Smith	
Jami Edga	Lynne Lake	Deni Starr	



Our Congregation and ministries, All First Responders, Medical Personnel and all active and reserve members of our armed forces.

Please notify our church office if you want to add or delete any names from the Prayer List.

Bible Study and Small Groups

At Hope Church we take seriously the Great Commission of the Risen Jesus to "go, make disciples of all nations... teaching them..." We offer a variety of opportunities for people of all ages to deepen their faith through small group Bible study. To register, call (410) 686-7587 or email hopelsecretary@outlook.com.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

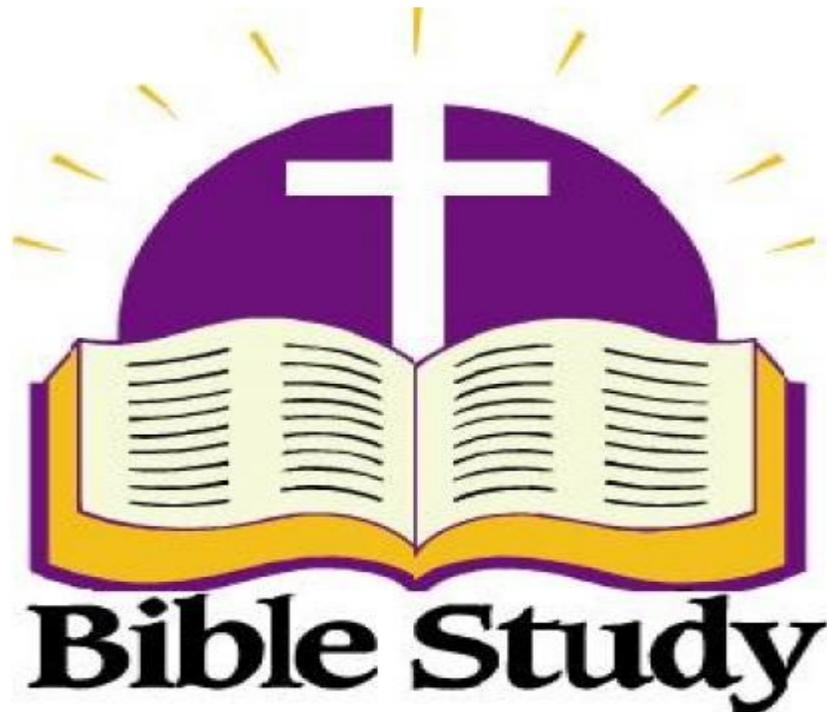
Meetings every Wednesday at **10:30 AM** in the Choir Room, where each week we'll take a deeper dive into the scriptures that we read from "in worship" each week. Please Join Us!

Wednesday Evening Bible Study (Zoom option available)

Meets at **7 PM** every Wednesday in the Choir Room, when each week we'll take a deeper dive into the scriptures that we read from "in worship" each week. For the study at 7:00 pm, we will have a Zoom option available - and the link will be shared closer to then. Please join us!

*****If you would like to join any of the Bible Studies, please let Vicar Adam know and he will share links, phone number and meeting ID with you and more information.**

Vicar Adam, adamfairchild@gmail.com, Cell: (443-974-1542)





PRAISE & WORSHIP

Every Sunday morning, 9:30-9:40 AM there will be an opportunity to shout, pray, sing, and give testimony & honor to God. Please join us in the sanctuary.

CHOIR REHEARSAL! WELCOME TO HOPE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHOIR, The definition of HOPE-a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.

CHOIR'S DESIRE: We are seeking new members to participate, fellowship, and meet people while serving the Lord.

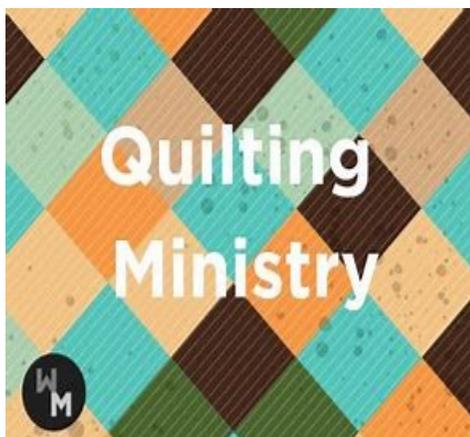
REQUIREMENTS: NONE

AUDITION: NONE

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE: Every Sunday, after the 10:00 service.

Any questions please contact Colin Eversley,

Music Minister.



Quilting Ministry

We are grateful for the hearts and hands of these quilters! They always have a wonderful time creating quilts for Lutheran World Relief. This quilt ministry provides warmth and comfort to people all over the world who need support and love. They meet every **Monday** at **10am** in the Choir room. Come join them!

The logo features the word "CONGREGATIONAL" in a white, all-caps, sans-serif font, positioned above the word "Meeting" in a larger, white, lowercase, serif font. Both words are enclosed within a white rectangular border. The background of the logo is a gradient from light green on the left to dark blue on the right.

CONGREGATIONAL Meeting

Winter Congregation Meeting Announcement

It's that time of year! Our Winter Congregation meeting will be held on Sunday, December 7, 2025 after the 10:00 am Worship Service and Fellowship. This is an important meeting as we will be discussing and voting on:

- 1. Approve minutes from the May Congregation Meeting***
- 2. HELC Treasurer Report***
- 3. ASLC Treasurer Report***
- 4. Adopt 2026 Budget***
- 5. Vote on new Council Officers and Members.***

We need to have as many members as possible to attend the meeting, so we meet our quorum requirements. Please mark your calendars and make a priority to attend the meeting.

God's Blessings,

Bob Schweitzer, Council President

Sunday Worship with our young people.





On November 16th we were blessed with a beautiful song from Joan.



NEW MEMBERS CLASS

Are you interested in becoming a member of Hope? Unsure what that means, or even why being a member would matter? If you said yes to any of these questions, then stay tuned! More information will be available soon about upcoming new member classes. These classes will offer an informal, inviting context to learn more about faith, church, and life here as people of Hope.

Our Youth Group!

We're having a blast at our **Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA Youth Retreat!**
What a joy to learn, serve, and grown in faith together!



Activities



**Service projects
and learning.**



Large group time!



**And of course,
we had to stop
for Chic Fil-A on
our way to the
Youth Event**



**Thank you, Lynne & Carolee for your
leadership!**



Youth Activities



On **December 21st at 1:30 pm**, our Youth will be Christmas Caroling at Caring Home Assistant Living, 929 Back River Neck Road, Baltimore.



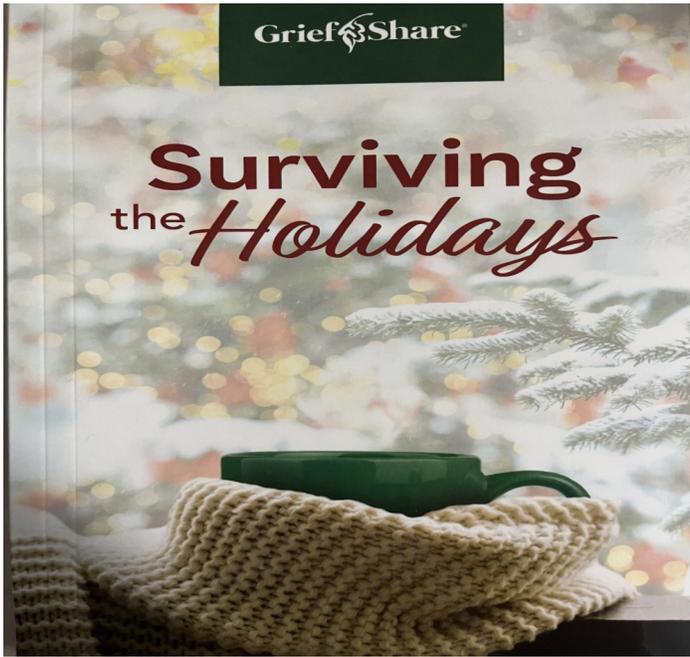
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COOKIE MAKING-YOU'RE INVITED: To support the Seafarers Ministry out of the Port of Baltimore, youth from our congregation will be making cookies to donate after worship on **January 4, 2026**. You would be most welcome to help our youth with the cookie-making, which will begin at the **All Stars Christian Learning Center at 12:30 pm**. We're also asking for donations of the ingredients listed below, which will be used when we make the cookies. Please help us support those at sea in and beyond this holiday season.

We need:

- white flour
- sugar
- brown sugar
- Semi-Sweet chocolate chips
- unsalted butter
- gallon-sized Ziploc Bags
- parchment paper.





GriefShare
Surviving the Holidays.
Took place on Saturday,
November 8th at Hope



All Stars Christian Learning Center

Hope Lutheran Church

1901 Middleborough Road

Essex, MD 21221

410-686-6060

allstarscenter@yahoo.com

All Stars Christian Learning Center Offers:



Pre-Kindergarten programs for children, ages 3-4

- 2-day, 3-day and 5-day programs
- 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.



Before & After School Care for children, ages 5-12

- For children who attend Middleborough Elementary School or who can be transported to All Stars
- 6:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
and 3:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.



Summer Program for children, ages 3-12

All Stars Christian Learning Center offers *safe, quality, and affordable* care within a *loving, Christian* setting. Our staff is *committed* to providing children with a *nurturing* environment by continually evaluating, improving, and enriching our teaching skills and techniques. We offer a **range of experiences** through our **Pre-K** program including *math, science, social studies, literature, language development, pre-reading and pre-writing skills, music, and art*. We also offer a range of *hands-on* and *fun* experiences through our **Before and After Care** program, as well as our **Summer** program.

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Please contact Nicole Raith at 410-686-6060
or email allstarscenter@yahoo.com for more information

Judy, bringing joy to our Fellowship Hour space with your many creations!

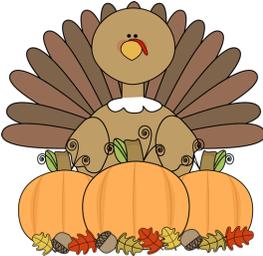
November 2nd



November 9th



November 23rd & 25th

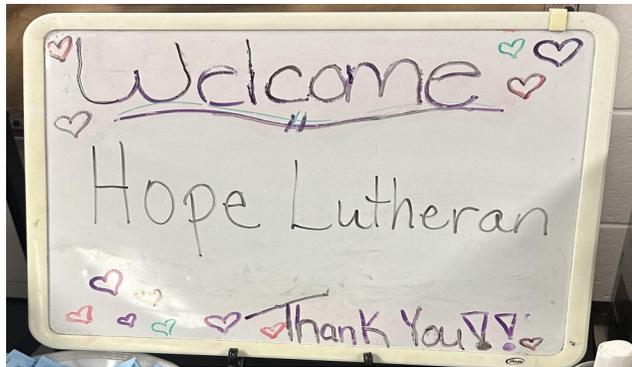


Streets of Hope

The Streets of Hope Men's Shelter is now open for a cold weather. **Our church will be providing dinner on the 4th of every month.** If anyone would be interested in helping to provide dinner and to serve it, please contact Sandy Cincinnati at (443) 324-8355 for further details.

We are always looking for volunteers to help out.

The shelter will be open thru April.





HOPE LADIES ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

We are excited and cordially invite the ladies of our congregation, family and friends (please ladies only) to our annual Christmas celebration, fellowship, dinner, game, gift exchange ... to be held on Tuesday, **December 9, 2025** at **6pm at LoonAsea Restaurant, 207 Nanticoke Rd, Essex, MD 21221**. Each lady is responsible for her own meal. Please bring a \$10-\$15 gift wrapped if you wish to participate in our gift exchange. Please RSVP as soon as you're able by signing up on the sheet provided in the Narthex or with Carol Ogle at ogle728@aol.com or 410-687-6580. Please review the menu prior to arrival so ordering will be quicker and easier for all.

All ladies are welcome to attend this annual fun event!

HOPE BASKETS

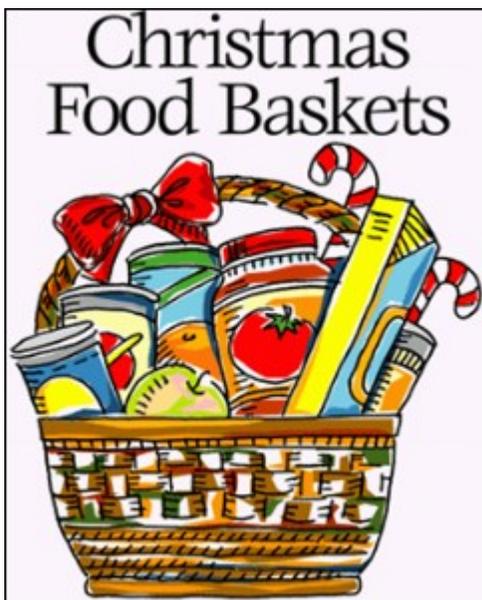
Thank you for joining in Spreading Holiday Joy with 14 families this year. Every year, as the leaves turn to hues of red and gold and a crisp autumn breeze fills the air, we come together as a community to celebrate not just the season, but the spirit of giving. Our beloved Thanksgiving Basket event is a cherished tradition that helps families in need in our community during the holiday season.

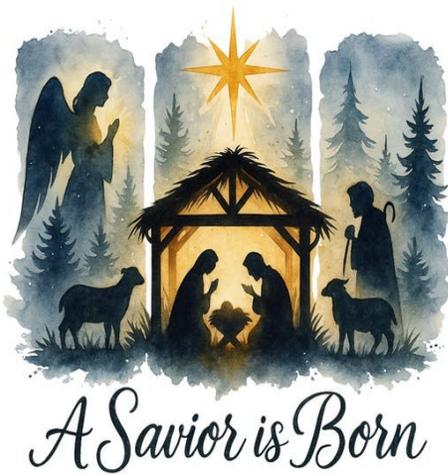
Thanksgiving is a , not everyone in our community has the means to enjoy a bountiful feast on this special day. That's where you came in! Thank you to our generous congregation, Thrivent Financial Services and Middleborough Elementary School for the food items and gift cards that could be used to purchase turkeys or ham that will create a delicious Thanksgiving meal for 14 families in need. Thank time for gratitude, reflection, and coming together with loved ones. Unfortunately you for joining in this meaningful endeavor. God bless our amazing team
Linda Moler and Sandy Cincinnati.

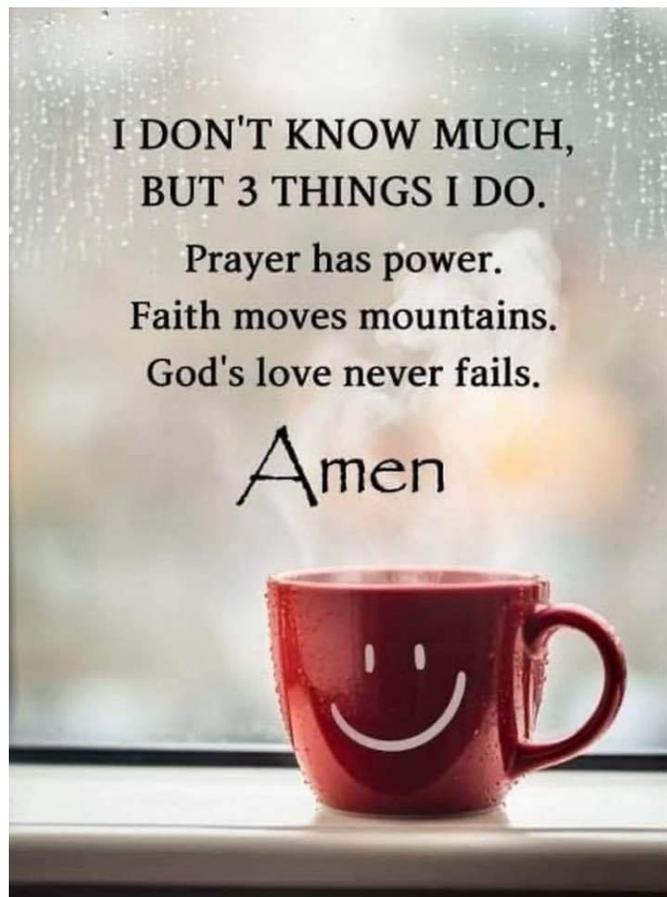
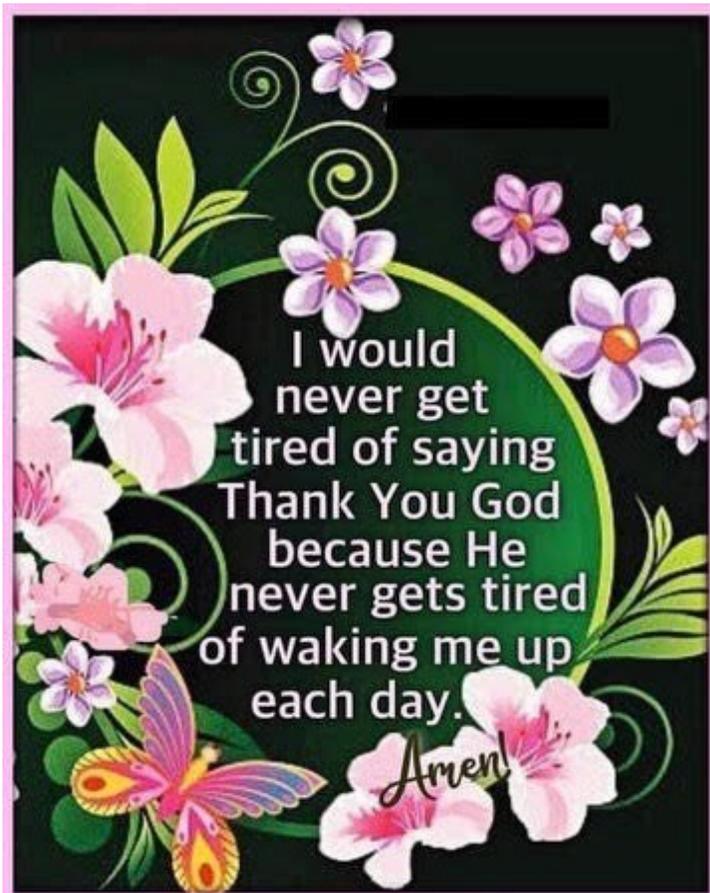
Happy Thanksgiving!

Christmas Hope Baskets

We will be preparing & distributing our Christmas Hope Baskets. We are looking for donations of the following items, which can be brought into church every week. **Turkey Gravy, Sauerkraut, Instant Potatoes, Yams, Cranberry Sauce, Bread/Rolls & Pies.** If you have any questions, please call Linda Moler at 443-730-3576 or Sandy Cincinnati at 443-324-8355. **Note: (Cash donations for Turkeys, purchase gift cards)**









December Duty Schedule 2025

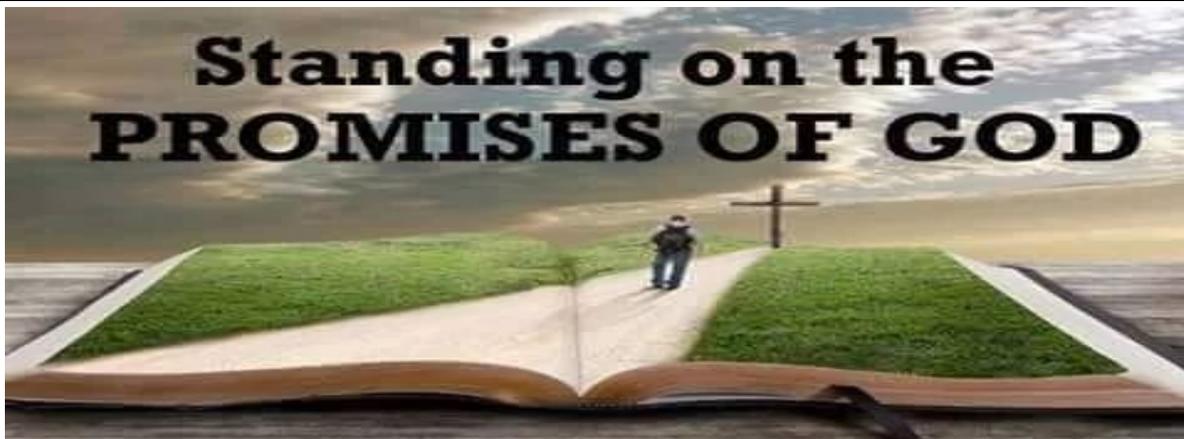
10:00	7	14	21	28
Assist	Eric Eszes	Colan Kahl	Thea Melton	Joan Schweitzer
Lector	Lynne Lake & Youth	Jess Kahl	Thea Coker	John Kelly
Server	Bob Schweitzer	None	None	None
Ushers	Sue Alexander Carol Ogle	Denise McLaughlin Debbie Schmidt	David Presnell Eric Eszes	Donna Jacob Steve Kahl
Counters	Bob Schweitzer Denise McLaughlin	Colan Kahl Joan Schweitzer	Linda Moler Thea Melton	Donna Jacob Steve Kahl
Flowers	Jeff & Kate Patten Allen Fleischmann	Ruth Kraeger Denise Mclaughlin	Carolee Calo Sign-up Available	Steve & Sharyn Kahl Trish Hays
Sunday School	Denise McLaughlin	Rachel Morgan	Carolee Calo	Ruth Kraeger
<u>Christmas Eve 7:00 PM</u>	<u>Assistant</u> TBD	<u>Lector</u> TBD	<u>Ushers</u> TBD	<u>Server</u> TBD
<u>Christmas Eve 10:00 PM</u>	<u>Assistant</u> TBD	<u>Lector</u> TBD	<u>Ushers</u> TBD	<u>Server</u> TBD



December 2025 Worship Scriptures



<p>December 7 Second Sunday in Advent</p>	<p><u>Isaiah 11:1-10</u> <i>From David's line, a ruler bringing justice and peace</i></p> <p><u>Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19</u> <i>May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace.</i></p> <p><u>Romans 15:4-13</u> <i>Live in harmony, welcoming one another</i></p> <p><u>Matthew 3:1-12</u> <i>A voice cries: Prepare the way of the Lord</i></p>
<p>December 14 Third Sunday in Advent</p>	<p><u>Isaiah 35:1-10</u> <i>The desert blooms as God's people return from exile</i></p> <p><u>Psalm 146:5-10</u> <i>He Lord lifts up those who are bowed down.</i></p> <p><u>James 5:7-10</u> <i>Patience until the coming of the Lord</i></p> <p><u>Matthew 11:2-11</u> <i>The forerunner of Christ</i></p>
<p>December 21 Fourth Sunday in Advent</p>	<p><u>Isaiah 7:10-16</u> <i>The sign of Immanuel</i></p> <p><u>Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19</u> <i>Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.</i></p> <p><u>Romans 1:1-7</u> <i>Paul's greeting to the church at Rome</i></p> <p><u>Matthew 1:18-25</u> <i>A god near at hand</i></p>
<p>December 28 First Sunday of Christmas</p>	<p><u>Isaiah 63:7-9</u> <i>Israel saved by God's own presence</i></p> <p><u>Psalm 148</u> <i>The splendor of the Lord is over earth and heaven.</i></p> <p><u>Hebrews 2:10-18</u> <i>Christ shares flesh and blood to free humankind</i></p> <p><u>Matthew 2:13-23</u> <i>The slaughter of innocent children</i></p>





December 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10:00 AM NO Quilters  QUILTING GROUP	2 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM All Stars Learning Center Chapel in Sanctuary	3 10:30 AM Bible Study in the Choir Room 7:00 PM Bible Study in the choir room & via Zoom	4	5	6 9:00 AM Decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas
7 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Congregational Meeting	8 10:00 AM NO Quilters  QUILTING GROUP	9 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM All Stars Learning Center Chapel in Sanctuary	10 10:30 AM Bible Study in the Choir Room 7:00 PM Bible Study in the choir room & via Zoom	11	12	13
14 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Choir Rehearsal	15 10:00 AM NO Quilters  QUILTING GROUP	16 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM All Stars Learning Center Chapel in Sanctuary	17 10:30 AM Bible Study in the Choir Room 7:00 PM Bible Study in the choir room & via Zoom	18	19	20
21 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Choir Rehearsal	 10:00 AM NO Quilters 7:00 PM NO Council Meeting  COUNCIL MEETING	23 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM All Stars Learning Center Chapel in Sanctuary	24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Communion 10:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion	25	26	27
28 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Choir Rehearsal	29 10:00 AM NO Quilters	30 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM All Stars Learning Center Chapel in Sanctuary	31 New Year's Eve			



Born in
December



11	Jane Fabrizio	27	Nicholas Eck
13	Pat Horney	29	Alex DeFosse
13	Cynthia Schmidt- Presnell	30	Destin Kahl
19	Addison Frueh	31	Marge Carl
20	Scott Faust		
23	Barbara Bender		





You and your family are invited to our Christmas Eve Candlelight Services on December 24th at 7 PM and 10 PM. We would be honored to celebrate the birth of our Savior with you during this very special event.

Join us.



Articles for the Jan./Feb. Messenger are due by Wednesday December 26, 2025

Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church

Our Staff

1901 Middleborough Rd. Baltimore, MD 21221

Vicar **Adam Fairchild** • Office 410-686-7587 • Cell 443-974-1542
E-Mail: adammfairchild@gmail.com

Music Director: **Colin Eversley** • Cell 410-499-2291
E-Mail: craeversley11@hotmail.com

Secretary: **Shirley Edmonston** • Office 410-686-7587
E-Mail: hopelsecretary@outlook.com Office Hours 8:30 AM-1:00 PM

Council President: **Bob Schweitzer** • Home 443-844-0065

Council VP: **Jeff Patten** • Cell 410-456-5464

Council Secretary: **Denise McLaughlin** • Cell 410-686-0199

Treasurer: **John Kelly** • Cell 443-770-0127

Council Members at Large

Gina Baker	410-456-9548
Nicole Eck	443-271-4014
Colan Kahl, Past Pres.–	410-292-2544
Sharyn Kahl	410-574-3060
Lynne Lake	443-854-0708 (Youth Leader)
Vicki Lesko	410-630-2228
Thea Melton	410-585-5670



**Christmas Decorating Saturday,
December 6, 2025
beginning 9:00 AM**



**Join the fun and get into the Christmas spirit
as we decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas season.**