

Words from Pastor Mike Parsh Sisters and brothers in Christ,

I am going to start by asking you a question that may seem rather difficult at first. Do you believe that God is still active in the world? See, that wasn't that complicated. Or is it? Walter Bruegemann once said, "Few people imagine God to be an active character in the story of their lives." And I suspect he's right to some degree. Don't get me wrong. It's not that I think people don't believe in God. It's more that, day in and day out, God seems to most people, including myself from time to time, as fairly passive; you know that if God is doing anything, it's pretty much hanging out in the background, watching, waiting, being supportive, encouraging. Kind of like the refrain of the Bette Midler song of a few years back, "God is watching us, God is watching us...from a distance."

That's not, of course, the biblical picture of God. Sure, God watches. But God also gets involved - God does things, all kinds of things -- great and small, mighty, mundane, or miraculous, God is constantly at work. More than that, God regularly uses other people to point out and tell about what God is doing. Take the story from the Gospel of Matthew, for instance, where the angel of the Lord visits Joseph in a dream to tell him, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Whew -- talk about news!

The season of Advent is about waiting for the coming of the Lord. We wait for Christ's arrival that happened two thousand years ago and for the arrival that is yet to occur. We journey toward Bethlehem in the comforting but challenging reality of the "already" and the "not yet." We travel with holy anticipation to meet the newborn king in the manger. The mood or tone of Advent is one of longing.

As the body of Christ, we carry different longings. What were the deep longings stirring in the hearts of the original hearers of the gospel good news? What did they expect from the promised Messiah? A conquering king? A mighty warrior? An avenger? The season of Advent unfolds against the backdrop of deliverance from oppression. Yet even today, oppression persists, and the long-awaited deliverance is delayed, especially for people who live on the margins of society. In the season of Advent, we are encouraged to remember the people who are struggling during the holiday season and cannot wait one more minute for Jesus. The season of Advent is about hope for today, and Jesus is with us in the time between the already and the not yet.

Now to get back to the question I started with, do you believe that God is still active in the world? It has been over two thousand years since Jesus physically walked the earth. In this day and age, it is sometimes hard to see where God is at work, especially when we are bombarded by so much negative news each and every day. However, even in the face of so much distracting negative news, I believe God is still at work in the world through all of creation. God works in quiet ways through our hands, feet, and voices. We may not recognize it when it happens, but we shine forth the light of God's hope and grace when we live out our baptismal calling to be bearers of the Good News. Now, I do not always understand how and why God is at work. However, I can still answer, "Here am I, a servant of the Lord. Let it be with me according to your world."

One way you could live out our baptismal calling to proclaim the Good News and serve our neighbors during the Advent season is by using a random acts of kindness calendar. The following link provides an example of what you and your family could try.

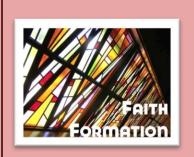
https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/printables

I encourage you to give this idea a try. Who knows where it will lead you.

So, as you celebrate this season with family and friends, remember that the greatest gift that was ever given was wrapped in swaddling clothes and lay in a manger and that we are called through the waters of our baptism to proclaim this good news to all of creation! I wish you a faith filled Advent season of preparation for the coming of Christ at Christmas!

Blessings, Pastor J. Michael Parsh

- Holy Child, loving Savior, we sense the coming of your birth. We feel the creeping hustle and bustle that pushes you to the side. We feel the burden of lists and obligations that drain our joy and dull our spirit. We see the flurry of holiday bargains that know not of the holy day that is to come. So, we join with prophet Isaiah and pray, "Tear the heavens open and come down." Come and make your presence known and felt. Come and guide us through this wondrous and hectic season. Come and open our hearts to the unexpected moments of joy. Come and light your candles of peace in our troubled world. Come and fill us with your patient love. Holy Child, loving Savior, come. Amen.



Youth & Adult Sunday School Sundays - 9:15am

No Sunday School on December 25, 2022 January 1, 2023

Sunday School

Youth and adults will continue to meet at 9:15am for Sunday School/Confirmation classes. There will be no Sunday school classes on December 25, 2022, or January 1, 2023.

Youth

Upcoming youth events:

December 4 – Carolling, Dinner, Decorating!

December 9 - Parent's Night Out @GH

All Ages Event

All members and family of Good Hope and Zion are invited to join together for an evening of fun and fellowship.

We will start the day off Christmas carolling. Meet at Good Hope at 3:00pm. After Christmas carolling in the neighborhood, we will return to Good Hope for a light dinner at 5:00pm. After dinner, we will have the Hanging of the Greens in the sanctuary and will be decorating for the holidays.

We hope to see you there!

THANK YOU!

A huge thank you to the Quilters of Hope! They made beautiful bags for the confirmation students to carry their books and Bibles to class. We have so many talented and good people supporting our youth.







Good Hope Lutheran Christian Preschool

Preschool news

We are all settling into Preschool and Toddler Time quite well. We have learned a lot so far and have so much more to learn.

We would like to thank everyone that attended Trunk-or-Treat at our Halloween party. Even though the weather didn't cooperate with us, the children enjoyed singing for you in the Fellowship Hall and they really appreciated all the treats.

In November the children enjoyed dressing up like Pilgrims and Indians for their Thanksgiving Feast and now we are focusing on the birth of Jesus. We will be having another little signing program in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, December 14th at 9am if anyone would like to come hear the children.

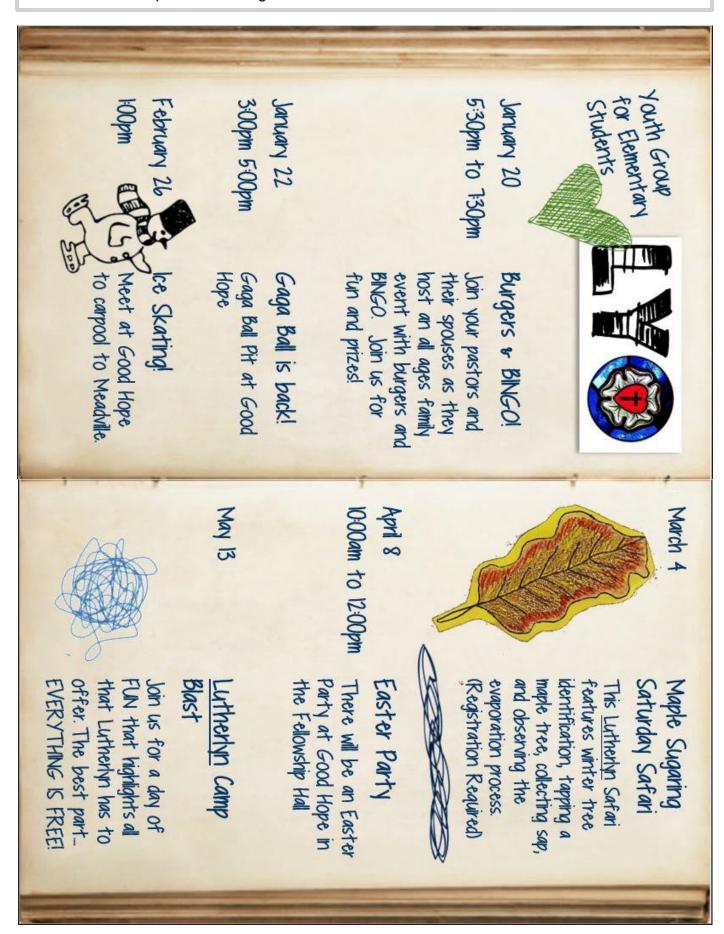
As always, we would like to thank the staff and congregation at Good Hope for all you do to support the preschool program.

We hope you all have a very blessed Christmas season.













Remembering the Saints

November 6, 2022, was All Saints Day. On this day we remember all the saints who died in the year since the last Saints Day. This year we remembered:

Members of Good Hope

Kelly O'Neil
Mabel Beers Sherman
Mary Jeanne Gavin
William Clark
Wayne Roach
James Bruce McGinnis
John Barber

Members of Zion

Elizabeth "Betty" Porter Virginia Joyce Gibson Skyler Penn Gibson Alma Ruth Thurau Carlson

Friends and Loved Ones

John Bashline
Kathy Ann Brown
Rev. Frederick Buechner
Larry Eisenman
Rev. Daniel Erlander
Kenneth Kahle
Bruce McGinnis

Hannah L. Myers

Beth Sarver Psalmonds

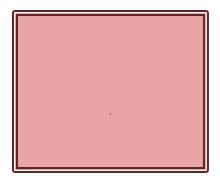
Ruth Rogers Cheryl Scott Karen Shepard Rev. Roy Washill Shirley Zacherl



To all who contribute and help with the free meals. Thank you for being so kind. May God richly bless you. The meal on October 27th was very good. Everything was warm. Everything was tender and tasty to eat. The apple was a pleasant surprise.

Thanks for all!

Bonita Swanberg
Town Towers



Dear Good Hope Family,

Here's a little update on the situation with the Ukrainians. <u>Thank</u> <u>you so much</u> for you continued prayer, support, and love. Feel free to share this letter as you wish



Marianne Orris Kasch

Dear Friends, October 20, 2022

Thank you so much for your continued support of the Ukrainian families that we are privileged to be able to help. Here's a little update:

The Shynkarenko family has started setting up their permanent move to Germany. Natalya (mom) has been taking German classes three evenings a week, as well as additional online courses. To relieve the tight living quarters and be closer to their daily activities, they have moved to another home in Celle (our neighboring town) and will finally get their own apartment in December. Polina (age 11) has transferred to a new high school there that she really likes. She's making new friends and picking up skills like English, German and knitting! Matvii (recently turned 18) is still attending the International School in Hannover (the large city nearby) where he can finish his high school education in English. He lives with an American family in Hannover from Monday-Friday and then either joins us or his mom and sister for the weekends. They are doing well, but awaiting news when their father can join them. Without him, they don't feel complete; but he is required to stay in Ukraine to help his country as needed.

The Kyrpa family is still staying in our house with us. They have a fully self-contained 3-bedroom apartment on the 2nd floor of our house. They, too, are working hard on settling in Germany, though it's still unsure if this is a permanent move for them or not, depending on how this war will pan out. In the meantime, they are all working to learn German and settle into a new lifestyle and rhythm. Miron, who is turning 2 in a week, attends a private day care home a few hours a day. He doesn't speak clearly yet in any language, but those of us who know him are hearing snippets of Russian, Ukrainian, German and English mixed up in what he's pointing at and trying to name. He's obsessed with "Baby Shark," our dog, and tractors. The girls, Varya (almost 13) and Solomiia (11,) both attend a local high school where they can take the bus from our village to their school in a small town nearby. Varya claims that this is the best school she's ever dreamed of and both girls have made friends. Their German is coming along slowly and we've changed our house language from English (which they have a basic competency in) to 00German to help speed the process for them. Solomiia is in an after school sports club that she loves and Varya shows us that she's a teenager by spending a lot of time in her room, on her phone. Still, both girls are awesome, smart, and kind. They love hanging out with our daughter, Annie (12) and are quick to join us for an evening dog walk or gardening project when we ask for helpers. Yuliia (mom) is taking online German courses while waiting for new courses to open up to learn German in a school. With a quick influx of immigrants and refugees, Germany's waiting lists are full and long for such things. We hope that she can get into a course soon. She impresses us continually with her good attitude and positive outlook. Igor, our friend and the family-father, is in Dnipro, Ukraine still as a neurosurgeon. However, he will visit next week to surprise his family for a short visit and is planning on visiting local hospitals in our region to see about job opportunities for himself in Germany. He is planning on moving to join his family in Germany around Christmas time this year. Because of his family situation with three small children, he is permitted to leave Ukraine. We'll all feel relieved to know that he's out of harm's way in a country that is being relentlessly and ridiculously terrorized and damaged daily by Russia.

We don't know how long the Kyrpas will continue to live in the apartment above our home, but we have made clear to them that it's theirs as long as they need it. We receive a stipend from the German government to help support their living costs, which we appreciate. In addition, donations from amazing people around the globe help us with our drastically increased electricity and heating costs, fund family dinners and birthday parties, and ensure that these children and mothers have what they need to live as "normally" as possible.

In addition to these two families, we have been able to reach out to other families from the Ukraine that we have learned about through our contacts. For example, we were able to send money to Igor's sister, Lena, who has moved back to war torn Kiev with her 2 children. We have donated to the hospital that Igor is working in. We have also helped support the rehabilitation therapy for a 3-year old Ukrainian boy who is neurologically damaged so that his mother and father have transportation costs covered to get him to therapy regularly near where they live in Germany.

This war is very present in our lives, but we are also so thankful to live in the peaceful, comfortable state that we're in. We shouldn't take that for granted.

As for us, we're still working full time at our jobs, taking extra little jobs as spending money. We enjoy playing good music, going for walks in the forests around our home, and renovating our old house and property... Same ol', same ol'. We haven't had to uproot our lives too much for this expansion in our family as our house has always been one where people gather. We feel honored that this is the case.



Thank you for your continued prayers, support, texts and messages, and donations. Please be assured that we're passing these on straight to the people who need them.

In Peace, Christoph and Marianne Kasch



On Monday, November 22, 2022, a tree was planted in the triangle of the Good Hope Lutheran Church driveway.

This red maple is in honor of the Sarver family and was donated by Becky Sarver Bloom and Phil Sarver and planted by C & A Trees.





Zion Worship Indoors – 11:00am

Worship Volunteers – December

Lectors:

12/4 – Rick Sabousky 12/11 – Leigh Ann Pikna 12/18 – Yvonne Paranick

12/25 – David Mayer

Ushers:

David Mayer Rick Sabousky

Altar Care: Communion Assistant:

Leigh Ann Pikna, Diane D'Olympio Yvonne Paranick

Birthdays

02/ Nancy Wigren26/ Joyce Gibson30/ Ron Paranick

Financial Report - October

Actual Receipts \$5,240.00 Budgeted Receipts \$6,826.66 Actual Expenditures \$6,042.08

Thank You

Zion thanks John Bolton, Robyn Bolton and Matt Jarman, and Diana, Adam, Claire and Isaac Welmerink for their contribution to provide the sanctuary advent wreath and door wreaths this Christmas season in loving memory of Evelyn and Willard Bolton, Lorretta Bolton, and James Bolton.

Notes

Fill A Glass with Hope provides one of the most sought after products at Food Banks. Due to milk being a perishable item and lack of refrigeration, it is not available on a regular basis. Milk is one of Nature's most wholesome products, supplying our bodies with 13 essential nutrients in just an 8 oz. serving. The Clarion/Venango County Dairy Princess Kaylee Knapp made

connections with a few Food Banks or Churches that provide meals/food to members in the community that are in need. Yesterday, Kaylee presented a check to the Good Hope/Zion Lutheran Ministry of Oil City.



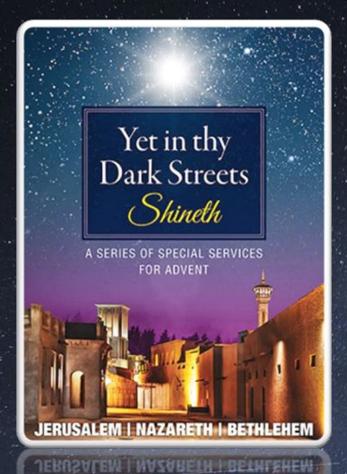
Advent Midweek Services

Presented online - Wednesdays:

November 30, 2022

December 7, 2022

December 14, 2022



The three services in this worship series for Advent invite us on a journey to three significant locations in ancient Israel:

Jerusalem, site of sacrifice and forgiveness, where an aged priest entering the temple will confront the angel Gabriel

Nazareth, where a humble maiden will be told her part in the family of God

Bethlehem, where a young couple are just now being directed to a nearby stable.

Services can be found on our website www.goodhopezionlutheranoilcity.org/worship-together

The "O Antiphons" of Advent

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is one of the most popular of all Advent hymns and most congregations start singing it on the First Sunday in Advent. But do you know where the hymn comes from?

Its origins go back almost 1,500 years, to medieval Europe, where an unknown author wrote seven antiphons—short lines to be sung before and after psalms. Those seven antiphons all begin with the "O," and thus became known as "The O Antiphons."

Composed in the sixth or seventh century, the O Antiphons are traditionally used in worship services for December 17-23. We have been using an adaptation of these prayers for our Advent services online. Each begins with a title for Christ, drawn from the Book of Isaiah. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all creation for the Divine Messiah.

We can make the O Antiphons part of our <u>Advent preparation</u> by including them in our prayers or Advent Scripture readings on the appropriate day.

December 17

O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: Come to teach us the path of knowledge!

December 18

O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: Come to rescue us with your mighty power!

December 19

O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: Come to save us without delay!

December 20

O Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: Come and free the prisoners of darkness!

December 21

O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: Come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

December 22

O King of all nations and keystone of the Church: Come and save humanity, whom you formed from the dust!

December 23

O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: Come to save us. Lord our God!

References: Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers and ThoughtCo



















Calendar

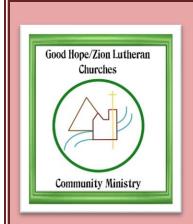
In the fall, the Good Hope senior choir along with Venango Chorus members made a contribution to the "Singing Advent Calendar" that was organized by the Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland.

The Evangelical Church in Central Germany (EKM) has around 640,000 members in more than 3,000 parishes and 37 church districts. It was created in 2009 from the merger of the Evangelical Church in the Church Province of Saxony and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thuringia.

The whole Advent calendar can be found online and there will also be daily postings on the EKM Facebook and Instagram: www.ekmd.de/advent

The entire project starts on December 1 and the Good Hope/Venango Chorus song will be published December 14.





Community Meals
December 13
December 27

Coffee Break Thursdays @ 9:30amv Thank You! Thank You! I cannot say it enough!

Thank you for your continuing support for all our projects, but especially for our annual Thanksgiving meal delivery. It always amazes me that when something is needed, we ask, and YOU provide!

What a wonderful group of volunteers, doing God's work in our community.

Providing everything from donations to clean-up and everything in between. YOU make it happen! This year's Thanksgiving Dinner was no exception. Many homebound and elderly within our community were blessed with a fresh, hot, meal because of YOUR generosity. This year over 300 meals were prepared. Thank you once again!

Now we move on to Shrove Tuesday! (Yes.... It is just a short 3 months away!!)

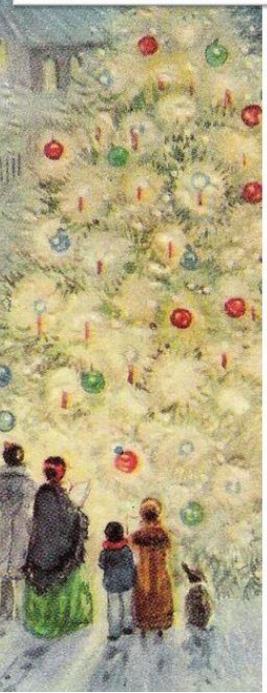
Serving All for His Sake! Joyce Frenz and the Community Ministry Committee



Completed "Pie Chart"



WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14, 2022



Holiday Music

Choirs from Oil City Middle/High Schools

Program:

Choirs from the Oil City Middle/High Schools, directed by Steven Luxbacher, will be present to sing some holiday classics.

Worship: 11:30am

Luncheon: 12:15pm - Hosted by Jim &

Maribeth Masquelier

Program: 12:50pm to 1:30pm

Invite a friend and RSVP by calling the Good Hope office (814-676-9122) or email at officegoodhope@gmail.com

Reservations Due: Monday, December 12



Quilters of Hope Tuesdays @ 10:00am

Fvents

Coffee Hour December 11 After Worship

Mitten Tree Nov. 20-Dec. 25

Circle Schedules

Hope: December 8
Ruth: December 11

Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree will be in the narthex from Sunday, November 20 through Sunday, December 25.

The Women of the Church are requesting donations of the following NEW (including handmade) items for all ages:

- Winter gloves and mittens
- Winter hats
- Winter scarves
- Socks
- <u>NEW</u> underwear, especially for elementary school age boys and girls



Quilters of Hope

The Quilters of Hope will be meeting Tuesdays, 10:00am to 2:30pm. Please bring a lunch and join us! No sewing experience is needed.

Hope Circle

Hope Circle meeting will be December 8,2022, in the Fellowship Hall at Good Hope. They will be holding their Christmas party. The event will be catered and will start at 11.00 am.

Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle will meet Sunday, December 11, 2022, at Linda Vogt's residence at 5:30pm. This will be the Ruth Circle Christmas party. Please bring a dish to share.



Save the Date

Save the Date

January 1 - 10:30am - joint worship service at GH

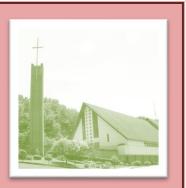
January 4 – 7:00pm - resume Overview of the Bible class schedule

January 8 - 9:15am - resume Sunday class schedule

January 14 – 9:00am to Noon - Leadership Retreat at GH

January 20 – Burgers & Bingo (snow date 1/27)

Ushers:



Good Hope Worship Indoors – 10:30am

REMINDER

If you cannot serve, you are responsible to find a replacement

December Birthdays / Anniversaries

01/	Scott Graham	08/	Suzanne Gagliardo		
02/	Jenna Mae Biltz	13/	Avonelle Eakin		
	Ted & Susen Rossino	14/	Elizabeth Orris		
03/	Joseph & Andrea Grosso	17/	Barbra McVay		
04/	Chérie Wessell		Dennis Wessell		
05/	Sam Pagliari	20/	Andrew Godinich		
	Douglas Suhr	26/	Chuck & Jan Schultz		
07/	Kevin Roth	30/	Anne Bedow		
	Paula Altman	31/	Steve Plummer		
			Gary McElhaney		

Worship Volunteers

Lectors:

Ron Campbell (Capt.)	12/4 – Andy Godinich		
Steve Plummer	12/11 – Tom Neely		
	12/18 – Beth Orris		
	12/24 – Linda Vogt		

Counters: Altar Guild:

12/6 – Sharon McDowell	Sharon McDowell
12/12 – Linda Campbell	Melodye Neely
12/20 – Chérie Wessell	
12/27 – Melodye Neely,	

Communion Assistants:

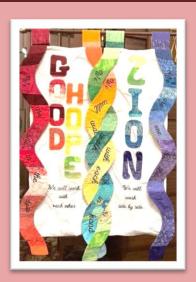
Linda Vogt

12/4 & 12/11 – Margie Hart AA, Marcia Hoffman, Bill Exley 12/18 & 12/24 – Ralph Jones AA, Linda Vogt, Hilda Bailey

December						1
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday			November 30 Online Advent Service "Jerusalem"- 6:30pm	1 Coffee Break @Z-9:30am Ministerium- 11am Property Mtg @GH-7pm	2	3 Venango Chorus Rehearsal- 9:30am Venango Chorus Concert-7pm
* Sunday Sch. @GH 9:15am * Worship @GH- 10:30am * Sr. Choir @GH- after worship * Worship @Z-11am Carolling-3pm @GH Dinner-5pm @GH Decorating-6pm @GH	5 Venango Youth Choir @GH- <i>3:45pm</i>	6 Quilters @GH- 10am Worship Com. Mtg. @GH- 10:30am	7 Staff Mtg. @GH- 9:15am Online Advent Service "Nazareth"- 6:30pm Adult Bible Study @GH-7pm	8 Coffee Break @Z-9:30am Hope Circle @GH-10am	9 Parents Night Out @GH- 5pm	10
* Sunday Sch. @GH 9:15am * Worship @GH- 10:30am * Coffee Hour after worship * Worship @Z-11am * Ruth Circle Christmas Party- @Vogt's 5:30pm	12 Venango Youth Choir @GH- <i>3:45pm</i>	13 Quilters @GH- 10am CMC Mtg. @Z- 10:30am Community Meal @Z-4:30pm-6pm	14 Preschool Christmas-9am WOW-11:30am Online Advent Service "Bethlehem"- 6:30pm Adult Bible Study @GH-7pm	15 Coffee Break @Z-9:30am Good Hope Council @GH- 7pm	16	17
18 Advent 4 * Sunday Sch. @GH 9:15am * Worship @GH- 10:30am-Thankoffering * Sr. Choir after worship * Worship @Z-11am	19 Venango Youth Choir @GH-3:45pm Venango Youth Choir Concert @CH-6pm	20 Quilters @GH- 10am Zion Council @Z- 6pm	21 Longest Night Service @GH- 6:30pm	22 Coffee Break @Z-9:30am	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship @GH-7pm Worship @Z-7pm
25 Christmas Day * Worship @Z-11am	26 Kristen will be	27 Quilters @GH- 10am Community Meal @Z-4:30pm-6pm on Vacation – Offi	28 ce hours may be rai	29 Coffee Break @Z-9:30am adom this week.	30	31

 $^{^{\}ast}$ Stay & Play Schedule – Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 3pm to 8pm & the 3^{rd} Saturday of the month 11am to 3pm @ Zion

814-676-9122



Pastor On Call-December

Pastor Mike Parsh

Cell: 814-572-1189 Home: 814-570-0887 pastormparsh@gmail.com

Good Hope Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday 8:30am-2:30pm

814-676-9122 officegoodhope@gmail.com

Staff

Good Hope

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GH Music Dir. GH Preschool Dir. Treasurer
Beth Orris Marcy Amero Tom Neely
814-758-0353

GH Organist/Communications

Mgr. /Office Admin.

Kristen Criado

Grounds Super.

Bruce Dodd

Zion

SecretaryPropertyCustodianJan RuditisJesse GibsonAlex Dulaney814-676-9115

Organist Stay & Play Sup. Stay & Play Asst. Sup.
Cheryl Bailey Jaimee Cohen Dustin Harrison
814-516-1063
stayandplay3@gmail.com

Church Councils

GH President
Pat GavinGH Vice President
Sandy ZacherlGH Worship
Debbie BestGH Mission
Charles SchultzGH Finance
Ashlee GoodmanGH Faith Formation
Margie Hart

GH Property GH Treasurer GH Secretary
Scott Graham Tom Neely Linda Vogt

Z President Z Vice President Z Secretary Yvonne Paranick Nancy Wigren Diane D'Olympio

Z Financial Sec. Z Treasurer Z Council Members
Nancy Wigren Sue Fisher Allison McNamara
Karen Horn



Good Hope/Zion Lutheran Ministry 800 Moran Street Oil City, PA 16301

Herald of
Hope/Lutheran Light
Good News Letter
December 2022
Serving all in the manner
of Jesus

Deadline: the 15th of the month

Hard copies of the newsletter are available at the church.

To submit news or articles, please email to:

officegoodhope@gmail.com

Newsletter

Recorded service will be posted on Monday afternoon on our website.

www.goodhopezionlutheranoilcity.org/worship-together

Worship Schedule Good Hope – Indoors – 10:30am Zion – Indoors – 11:00am

