



# THE ANCHOR

A NEWS PUBLICATION OF MT. HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH; GRAYLING, MI

July 2022

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[www.mthopelcmsgrayling.org](http://www.mthopelcmsgrayling.org)

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## WE VALUE

Bible-centered  
Preaching &  
Teaching

Dynamic Praise &  
Worship

The Sacraments

Prayer

Evangelism

Christian Education  
for All Ages

Loving Relationships

Strong Christian  
Families

## OUR VISION

By the love of Christ,  
our vision is to work together,  
reaching out to all people,  
through the Gospel,  
in our various activities and events.  
As we encourage each other to worship  
and grow in God's Word,  
we will be a Christian influence  
in our community.

## OUR MISSION

BUILDING TOGETHER SPIRITUALLY  
FOLLOWING THE TRIUNE GOD

## OUR PURPOSE

Glorifying God through *WORSHIP*  
Reaching out to all with the Good News of  
salvation in Christ through *EVANGELISM*  
Actively caring for God's people in Christ  
through *FELLOWSHIP*  
Creating a family of God by Word and Sacrament  
through *MINISTRY*  
Equipping people of all ages for life in Christ  
through *DISCIPLESHIP*

## **Notes and Announcements**

Ladies Bible Study is taking the summer off. We will start back up on September 6th.

LWML is looking for used sheets to use as middles in quilts. If you are cleaning out & find any, please donate them for quilts.  
Thank you!



### **Family Fare Receipts**

There is a basket on the table in the narthex for these receipts. We are collecting them for the Day Care. If you have questions, please talk to Terry Tody.

Food Truck-Friday, July 15th.  
Volunteers will need to be at the church by 9am.

### **Altar**

3rd-Marj Kelsey  
10th-Susie Moore  
17th-Martha Pregler  
24th-Kay Vedder  
31st-

### **Elders**

3rd-Dave Jansen  
10th-Jason Hartman  
17th-Jeff Pregler  
24th-Steve Koch  
31st-Jack Owens

### **MT. HOPE'S WEBSITE**

Did you know that Mt. Hope has a website? If you go to <http://www.mthopelcmsgrayling.org/> our website will come up. It is a multi page site with much information about our church, our congregation, our Pastor, what programs we are involved with and much more! Although there is a "member log-in" area, this is just for those who work on the site. Nancy Hatfield is our webmaster who keeps our website updated and makes any necessary changes. Anyone who goes to our site can access all pages. So...check it out!



## Mt. Hope Financial Report - Mary Heinlein, Bookkeeper

GENERAL FUND	MAY 2022	YTD JUL-MAY
Income	16,658.50	134,622.24
Expense	-9,117.12	-104,680.73
Net	7,541.38	29,941.51
<b>EARMARKED FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>65,526.40</b>
	<b>MAY 2022</b>	<b>YTD JUL-MAY</b>
Together in Mis-		
sions	70.00	1,555.00
Christian Help Cen-		
ter	20.00	1,723.05
Noisy Offering	73.18	479.64
	<b>MAY 2022</b>	
<b>Church Extension Mortgage</b>		<b>470,000.00</b>
Mortgage Principal Payment	1,163.80	21,777.00
Earmarked Principal Payment	495.00	46,798.20
Mortgage Interest Payment	1,221.20	
<b>MORTGAGE BALANCE</b>		<b>401,424.80</b>

## Attendance

May	1	47
	8	47
	15	54
	22	55
	29	61



Attention: People need to sign up to host coffee hour or there will not be one.



TO PLACE  
SOMEONE ON  
PRAYER CHAIN:

Call Lynn Richmond at  
989-390-8632 or  
[lynncarolmorris@yahoo.com](mailto:lynncarolmorris@yahoo.com)

Jamie Wohn will be handling the **sign changes**. Please email him with any necessary info for the sign at [jackwohn3@gmail.com](mailto:jackwohn3@gmail.com) or [jackwohn3@aol.com](mailto:jackwohn3@aol.com). If urgent, text him at (810) 965-1891

**Council Approved Minutes  
Council Meeting April 19, 2022  
Mt. Hope Lutheran Church-LCMS**

Meeting Called to Order by Ken Bendick at 3:10 pm.

Opening Devotion was given. Jack Owens' devotion was from Portals of Prayer based on Psalm 73.

Opening Prayer was given by Pastor Paul Schneider.

**Attendance:**

Pastor: Paul Schneider P	Chairman: Ken Bendick P	Vice Chairman:
Secretary: Sharon Hopkins P	Treasurer: Mitch Linendoll A	
Bookkeeper: Mary Heinlein P	Elders: Jack Owens P	
Education:	Evangelism: Terry Tody A	
Stewardship: Shirley Koch A	Stewardship: Paul Mesack A	Trustees: Mike Shields P
CADC: Salena Laskowski A	CADC: Steve Koch A	Youth: Salena Laskowski A

Guest:

Jack moved the approval of the March 15, 2022 Minutes, seconded by Mike, approved. Ken said, "That was easy!"

**Reports: Council and Boards:**

Bookkeeper: Mary Heinlein emailed ahead of the meeting.

March 2022      **Income: \$11,000.76**      **Expenses: \$10,177.41**

**Net gain \$823.35**

2021-2022 YTD      **Income: \$106,440.74**      **Expenses: \$87,353.22**

**Net gain \$19,087.52**

Pastor Paul spoke of all of us encouraging the congregation members to attend Church, Bible studies, and doing personal devotions.

Treasurer Mitch Linendoll: No report.

Council Secretary Sharon Hopkins: No report.

Chairman Ken Bendick: No report.

Vice Chairman

Board of Elders Jack Owens:

The church secretary, Nicole, received a 5% pay raise based on her actual hourly wage.

Evan Schwartz is now assisting with the recording of the services when Mitch is unavailable.

Kay Greg has been transferred to Trinity.

Terry is taking the lead for obtaining meals for a shut in.

A large number of leadership positions has opened up. Nominations/candidates are being worked on and will have them ready for the May Council meeting.

Board of Trustee Mike Shields:

Over the last few months, the Trustee group have addressed several items. We are working on items included in our Goals and objectives for this fiscal year.

It has been brought to our attention that the window treatments no longer meet minimum safety standards. We are working on a plan to replace all of the window blinds. A proposal will be presented as new business.

It has been suggested that an entry door to the "Cry Room" from the Sanctuary be installed. Pete is seeking a bid from a local contractor.

The Kitchen sprayer has been replaced. The old sprayer had bad seals. The kitchen faucet also has been reported to leak. Replacement may be necessary depending on whether repair parts are still available.

Also waiting on kitchen remodeling blueprints from kitchen ladies.

The Trustees will be contacting A+ Lawncare to service the sprinkler system when the weather breaks.

Lee will be contacting Zaremba Equipment to pick up the zero-turn lawn mower for annual service.

Board of Education : No report

Board of Evangelism Terry Tody:

First food truck is scheduled for Friday May 13<sup>th</sup>. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board and volunteers need to be at church by 9:00 am.

LWML Land of Lakes Zone Spring Rally is May 7<sup>th</sup> at Mt. Hope. Ann Hume will be the speaker. See bulletin board for additional info.

Evangelism will sponsor a rummage sale, June 9 & 10 with proceeds going to Crawford County Toys for Tots program to purchase toys for the kids in Crawford County. You may start bringing sale donations after May 15<sup>th</sup>.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board for hosts and hostesses for Sunday coffee hours after Sunday services. You're responsible for set-up and clean-up. Furnishing snacks is NOT necessary, others always bring in food.

Council has the June 12<sup>th</sup> Pot Luck meal.

Board of Stewardship Shirley Koch: A written report was given.

The Chewing Stewardship message was placed in the Anchor each month upon receiving the information.

The Stewardship message for the May Anchor has been sent to Nicole in the office.

The Easter Wreaths at the Church entrance were put in place.

Mt. Hope/Crawford Au Sable Day Care Salena Laskowski:

One more staff member is needed.

CADC paid for books for the Literacy program for April and May while Mt. Hope's total would be \$224.49.

\$325 additional monthly payment is being made on the principle of the mortgage.

Applied and received a Child Care Stabilization Grant for 2022:

Funds to be used for any operational costs/expenses.

Includes a staff bonus for childcare workers (\$1,000 for full-time and \$500 for part-time.)

Building Concerns:

Licensed the Multi-purpose Room as a classroom and increased our capacity from 72 to 75 children. This is the most we can have because you need 1 bathroom per 15 children.

New Licensing Consultant temporally assigned until a permanent one is assigned.

Added 2 more security cameras:

Multi-purpose Room and front of building and parking lot.

Heating inconsistency throughout the building. The Bryant distributor who sold the units was contacted and he evaluated the system and issues. He will be in contact with Steve Koch. Hometown will put together a price package on what they believe the cost would be to bring the system up to fully functioning correctly.

Board of Youth Salena Laskowski:

Goals and Objectives:

Establish a Youth Bible study.

Raise funds/establish a budget for youth to be able to attend Lutheran Summer Camps,

other youth group outings, etc.

Members and Participants:

Salena Laskowski  
Sharon Hopkins  
Terry Tody  
Brooklynn Laskowski

Happenings:

Trinity has reached out to Jason Hartman about combining Youth Groups. Told him yes it could be a possibility.  
Purchased items (storage bins, markers, stickers, paint, etc.) for the Sunday school room. It was cleaned and organized prior to Pastor Wayland's visit.  
Purchased goodies for an Easter bag for the Sunday school children.  
Brooklynn has agreed to take the children – when they are present – out of service when the Sermon begins and will have a craft planned for them as well, when she is available.

Pastor's Report: No report.

Call Committee meeting Ken Bendick:

Rev. James Mayland returned the Call.  
Nominations have been received by some congregation members.

LFL Life Team Sharon Hopkins:

Collection of diapers & wipes to River House Shelter, Grayling & **New Life Pregnancy Resource Center**, Gaylord. Mother's Day and Father's Day.  
\$128.41 was collected from the Noisy Offering and sent LFL of MI.

Mike moved to accept all reports, seconded by Jack, accepted.

Unfinished Business:

CADC: Building Concerns were addressed under Salena's report and Steve Koch, Mike Shields and Salena are handling the issues with the Builder as he cut corners and didn't install some equipment properly.

Sunday school began on Easter Sunday with Pastor's Paul and Ken delivering a children's message.  
New Business:

Window Blinds – see Trustee report for issue and Mike spoke on the information he presented:  
There are 15 windows in question of one size while there are 3 sections in the Church of a different size.  
Mike contacted "Decorating Today" and their prices ranged from \$3,350.00 - \$6,000.00 depending on sizes with either a 15% - 20% discount.  
He then went to Lowe's and their prices ranged from \$1,500.00 to \$500.00 without installation and receiving vertical blinds for the sanctuary.  
Jack Owens moved to replace the blinds with Mike Shield's suggestion and pricing, seconded by Sharon Hopkins, approved.

The next meeting will be on May 17, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

The Devotion will be led by Sharon Hopkins. .

We adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Ken Bendick closed with a prayer.

Respectively submitted by, Sharon Hopkins, Church Secretary

**Council Approved Minutes  
Council Meeting May 22, 2022  
Mt. Hope Lutheran Church-LCMS**

Meeting Called to Order by Ken Bendick at 12:00 pm.

Opening Devotion was given. None was given.

Opening Prayer was given by Ken Bendick

Attendance:

Pastor: Paul Schneider P	Chairman: Ken Bendick P	Vice Chairman:
Secretary: Sharon Hopkins P	Treasurer: Mitch Linendoll A	
Bookkeeper: Mary Heinlein P	Elders: Jack Owens P	
Education:	Evangelism: Terry Tody P	
Stewardship: Shirley Koch P	Stewardship: Paul Mesack P	Trustees: Mike Shields A
CADC: Salena Laskowski A	CADC: Steve Koch P	Youth: Salena Laskowski A

Guest: Jason Hartman, Dave Jansen, Frank Moore

Jack Owens moved the approval of the April 19, 2022 Minutes, seconded by Shirley Koch, approved.

Reports: Council and Boards: Chairman Ken Bendick dispensed with reports. Listed below are summarized reports given to Council Secretary.

Bookkeeper: Mary Heinlein emailed ahead of the meeting.

April 2022	<b>Income: \$11,523.00</b>	<b>Expenses: \$8,210.39</b>
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**Net gain \$3,312.61**

2021-2022 YTD	<b>Income: \$117,963.74</b>	<b>Expenses: \$95,563.61</b>
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**Net gain \$22,400.13**

Treasurer Mitch Linendoll: No report.

Council Secretary Sharon Hopkins:

A thank you letter was received from Crawford County Community Christian Help Center for \$250.00 received from Mt. Hope for the food pantry. Every \$1.00 donated purchase \$6.00 worth of food.

Chairman Ken Bendick: No report.

Vice Chairman: No report.

Board of Elders Jack Owens: No report.

Board of Trustee Mike Shields:

A grab bar was installed in the female rest room.

New window blinds were ordered and installed, except for the vertical blinds in the Sanctuary.

Pete has contacted a contractor to make an entry door to the "Cry Room" from the Sanctuary.

The kitchen committee has stopped the renovation process at this time.

A+ Lawncare will turn on sprinkler system May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The zero-turn lawn mower has been serviced by Zaremba Equipment.

We will be scheduling septic tank pumping with Milliken in the near future.

The janitor will be doing extra spring cleaning as time permits.

Board of Education : No report

Continued on page 12

Board of Evangelism Terry Tody:

The first Food Truck, Friday May 13<sup>th</sup>, serviced 215 families.

LWML Land of Lakes Zone Spring Rally, May 7<sup>th</sup> at Mt. Hope, had 32 ladies from 6 churches attend. Ann Hume was a very informative speaker. A lunch was furnished by Mt. Hope members afterwards.

Evangelism will sponsor a rummage sale, June 9 & 10 with proceeds going to Crawford County

Toys for Tots program to purchase toys for the kids in Crawford County.

The next Food Trucks are scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Board of Stewardship Shirley Koch:

The Chewing Stewardship message was placed in the Anchor each month upon receiving the information.

The Stewardship message for the June Anchor has been sent to Nicole in the office.

The Easter Wreaths at the Church entrance look good and will remain till Memorial Day weekend and then removed.

Either the Elders or a Pastor needs to submit a letter to Nicole when there is a New Member so she can give that person the Welcome Folder. They need to do this for Joan Thompson.

Mt. Hope/Crawford Au Sable Day Care Salena Laskowski: No report.

Board of Youth Salena Laskowski: No report.

Pastor's Report: No report.

Call Committee meeting Ken Bendick: No report.

LFL Life Team Sharon Hopkins:

Collection of diapers & wipes to **River House Shelter**, Grayling & **New Life Pregnancy Resource Center**, Gaylord. Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Placed Life articles in the monthly **Anchor**.

Wrote the 2022-2023 LFL Life Team Budget and Goals.

Unfinished Business: None discussed.

New Business: Meeting presentations/discussions.

Congregation meeting:

Jack moved that the Congregation meeting be scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup> directly after worship, seconded by Terry, approved.

Budget: Mary Heinlein gave her financial report and she will have the Budget for both June Council and Congregation meetings ready.

Nominating Committee: Elder recommendations office candidates was presented by Steve Koch:

Chairman: Jeff Pregler

Vice Chairman: Salena Laskowski

Treasurer: Steve Koch

Education: Paul and Judi Mesack

Evangelism: Sherry Hanson

Stewardship: Elaine Jansen

Trustee: Lee Sperry and Dave Hall and Charlie Belt

Youth: Jason Hartman

Terry Tody moved to remove non-Christian books from the library at Dee Mussleman's request, Shirley Koch seconded, approved.



Ken Bendick announced his appreciation of the Elders and his concern for a Board of Education.

Dave Jansen announced that Alberta Sperry will help with VBS, but not chair it.

The next meeting will be on June 21, 2022 at 3:00 pm.

The Devotion will be led by Sharon Hopkins

We adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Ken Bendick closed with a prayer.

Respectively submitted by,

Sharon Hopkins, Church Secretary

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A Seattle-area public high school recently demanded that students sign a pledge to support abortion and other leftist causes in order to participate in a mentoring program, according to [a new report by KTTH 770 AM](#).

The pledge, which requires support for abortion, Black Lives Matter, open borders and more, is mandatory for the Eastlake High School Link Crew, a program that provides junior and senior mentors to freshmen students, KTTH found.

KTTH talkshow host Jason Rantz said students have contacted him about this and other leftist political actions at the school, and some are afraid to express their conservative views.

“That means they’re not in a healthy environment,” Rantz said.

According to the investigation, students at the Sammamish school who want to participate in Link Crew must sign a “Code of Conduct” pledge. While some of the requirements are reasonable, such as having a positive attitude and being a good role model, others are political.

**[Follow LifeNews on the Parler social media network for the latest pro-life news!](#)**

“Students must initial next to the statements that they believe ‘Black Lives Matter,’ ‘Love is Love,’ ‘No Human is Illegal,’ ‘Women’s rights are human rights,’ and ‘Kindness is everything,’” the report continues.

It identified teachers Jason Wessels and Michelle Okroy as the faculty advisors for the program. When contacted for comment, the school district told KTTH: “Thank you for your questions and for bringing this to our attention. We will address this matter with the school and the Link Crew advisors.”

The school has a reputation for leftist views, and some teachers openly defend pushing their political opinions on students.

Shila Hodgins, a humanities teacher at the high school, [told the podcast Indy on Air](#) that she and other teachers “always bring in our politics” in the classroom.

“I do my best to teach through the lens of justice in a way that centers a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds,” Hodgins said in December. “I want my students to see ... that they are valued, heard, and supported. And I want them to know that I stand with them and the continued fight for equal rights in a more equitable world.”

Asked about indoctrination, Hodgins did not seem to see anything wrong with what she and other teachers are doing.

“It’s been said that it’s too liberal. Right? What is controversial about talking about systems of oppression? What is controversial about talking about race and equal rights?” she asked.

Rantz said the problem is that she and other teachers are being one-sided by not presenting the whole picture and allowing students to think for themselves.

Students should not “feel like they must parrot the view of the teacher out of fear they will receive poor grades for taking the wrong position,” he said, mentioning some of the Eastlake students whom he has spoken with.

“If a frequent criticism of a class is that it’s too liberal, then the teacher is bringing personal politics to the classroom,” he said. “When a teacher truly brings all sides to a discussion — which Hodgins claims to do — then you’re unlikely to be hit with criticisms of being one-sided.”



Rev. Robert Fleischmann, National Director, Christian Life Resources

In early May 2022, a working draft of a majority opinion in the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* was leaked. In it, the Court looked ready to severely weaken if not overturn the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, which liberalized abortion laws throughout the United States and its territories.

For those favoring abortion rights, the outcry was quick and loud.

What was troubling is a statement that came from the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), which read in part: "...the leaked draft does not represent the Supreme Court's ruling in its final form; nevertheless, it contradicts this church's teaching. This church teaches that abortion and reproductive health care, including contraception, must be legal and accessible."

In contrast, the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) find and teach that abortion is clearly contrary to the Word of God.

Both positions cannot be correct, yet how can each church body speak so confidently? We see similar contrasts on such issues as marriage, gender, birth control, and assisted suicide.

### Ideology vs. Theology

The Apostle Paul provided Timothy with an interesting observation about the nature of people. He wrote:

*Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. (2 Timothy 4:2,3)*

When people look for a teacher to tell them what they want to hear, what do they point to as their source of authority? They themselves become that authority. They want instruction that fortifies what they already believe.

This is understandable. Most of us create circles of friends based on shared interests and likes. We welcome the like-minded and ostracize those with whom we differ.

That is fine when talking about ways to decorate, what to plant in a vegetable garden, or what to wear at a picnic. It becomes problematic, however, when the issue takes on a moral or theological tone.

It is our nature to think ideologically. We think in terms of issues (ideas that we highly value or believe in) and then construct a support base around those convictions. Ideology is what drives people to seek out teachers who will say what their itching ears want to hear. Some people like to think they don't have any ideology – that they just work with facts – but of course, defining certain things as "fact" and others as not is itself an ideology.

We run into problems when ideology clashes with theology. In other words, when our ideas clash with what is revealed as authoritative instruction, we are faced with a question: Does our theology drive our ideology, or does our ideology drive our theology?

The answer seems easy for those of us who have been raised in our Christian faith. Of course, our theology drives our ideology. In practice, however, it is much more difficult for two reasons:

#### REASON #1: AUTHORITY

What is the standard by which we make judgments involving right and wrong? Let's take slavery as an example. Slavery is pretty much universally unacceptable in our society today. There was, however, a time in our history when many people believed slavery to be an acceptable and perhaps even good thing. Are we "right" to oppose slavery, or were they "right" to favor slavery? Why? Was it just a matter of opinion? Is that enough to take a stand? What is it that makes our anti-slavery position correct, and the pro-slavery position wrong?

Now let's wade into the deep end of the pool:

What if an adult wants to be sexually active with a 14-year-old child? What if the child is agreeable? Is it still wrong? Why? What makes it wrong if both the adult and child think it is right?

What about abortion? Why is it wrong? Why would it be acceptable? How do we know the right and wrong position?

Ask yourself: “Am I led theologically or ideologically?” Ideological convictions unite us on issues like slavery and pedophilia, yet separate us on issues like abortion, gender, and marriage. For many of us, the Bible answers the questions.

So, how do we handle this source of authority? Do we believe the Bible “contains” the Word of God, or that it “is” the Word of God?

Historical Lutheranism holds to what are called the “Three Solas”: *Sola Fide* (faith alone), *Sola Gratia* (grace alone), and *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone). In other words, we believe we are saved by faith, it is entirely without works (grace), and that Scripture is the only reliable, inspired, and inerrant standard for truth. The Bible not only contains God’s Word but *is* God’s Word.

Some Lutheran churches (and other church bodies in general) have spun the meaning of *Sola Scriptura*. Here is an example of how they do that:

*Lutherans follow a man, Jesus Christ, not a book. The Holy Scriptures testify to the Word of God becoming flesh in Jesus Christ. The authority of the Lutheran church is rooted in the testimony of scripture. The Lutheran church reads that testimony through the eyes of the gospel, which is the good news of Jesus Christ who defeated death and bridged the gap between humans and God. [ELCA church in the state of Washington]*

This is a convoluted way of saying “The Bible ‘contains’ the Word of God.” What follows from that position is that not all parts of the Bible are true, reliable, or binding on Christians.

What is important to note is that the statement is presumptive (i.e., “Lutherans follow...”) as if it speaks for all Lutherans (it doesn’t). Second, it distinguishes between “The Holy Scriptures” and “The Word of God.” Finally, it subordinates all of Scripture to the “eyes of the gospel.” Notice how those obscures, rather than clarifies: Because only the message of Jesus defeating death defines the rest of Scripture, that position permits the church or any person to ignore the parts that are uncomfortable. That brings us to the second reason that living by theology is difficult:

## REASON #2: INCLINATION

Three passages of Scripture are especially haunting for me:

*The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood.” ([Genesis 8:21](#)) [emphasis added]*

*Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.” ([Matthew 24:12](#)) [emphasis added]*

*For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.” ([Romans 7:19](#)) [emphasis added]*

In my younger days I looked at the evil *others* did, I read the stories of *others* who did not help those in their time of need, and I understood Paul had a problem practicing what he preached. That examination was superficial. In time I came to understand the inclination of my heart is evil, my love grows cold, and my actions do not always reflect the good I desire. In other words, I had to discover the plank in my own eye ([Matthew 7:3,4](#)).

So, to ask the old Lutheran question: “What does this mean?” This means that even while recognizing the authority of Scripture I am engaged in a constant and unrelenting battle with an inclination to reject the authority of Scripture. As Paul also said:

*The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.*

*Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. ([Romans 8:7,8](#))*

The problem with chasing after teachers to tell us what our itching ears want to hear is that our itching ears are not a reliable standard of what is right and wrong. And when we gather people around us who think and feel as we do about passionate issues, we become reinforced in notions that may very well be wrong.

## Tension

Often when I preach or teach, I say something on the order of, “If you find living the Christian faith is going well for you, you are likely doing it wrong.” When considering my own inclinations, it means there are all sorts of things God says that should make me squirm. I am at war with him. Like Paul, the good that I would do, I do not.

Sometimes I sense what is right and wrong, without ever knowing what the Bible says on the matter.

We are told:

*Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. ([Romans 2:14](#))*

That is why my inner being rebels against things like slavery and pedophilia. Yet even those with what would be considered an especially strong faith can stumble in their faith life. There is infidelity, slander, thievery, and worse from those who seemed to live exemplary lives of faith. We see it even in the people the Bible gives us as examples of faith, and we see it around us today. And we feel it within ourselves. When society says one thing and the Bible states another, it is so, so, so much easier to side with society. In examining this reality Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:

*Those who wish even to focus on the problem of a Christian ethic are faced with an outrageous demand—from the outset they must give up, as inappropriate to this topic, the very two questions that led them to deal with the ethical problem: “How can I be good?” and “How can I do something good?” Instead, they must ask the wholly other, completely different question: “What is the will of God?” [Ethics]*

My point is simple: Left to our own reasoning, we are flawed. It is within our nature to rebel, challenge, bend, and twist the truth to suit our desires. We, too, have itching ears.

This is how Christians, who in one breath proclaim salvation through faith in Christ alone, will in another breath take a position contrary to what is found in Scripture. When finding portions of Scripture uncomfortable, they contrive a reason to ignore it. This is why abortion-rights advocates focus on how “God is love” and then presume that “love” permits what they wish to promote, without consulting the more uncomfortable portions of Scripture that might actually show their presumptions are wrong.

## Surrender

So, now what do we do? First, let’s focus for a moment on the plank in our own eyes. It is harder to be pro-life when we could be the ones facing an unwanted pregnancy. It is harder to recognize two genders (male and female) when we are facing gender confusion. It is harder to want to go on with a life that has become filled with discomfort and sadness. Yet, we surrender to an authority beyond our comfort levels. We acknowledge that our inclination shifts with the degree to which we find ourselves in crisis. And we recognize our inclinations need to be checked and balanced.

That is why we talk about a “surrender” in the Christian faith. We do not surrender to be saved or to earn God’s attention and forgiveness. We surrender because life is not about earning God’s favor. Rather, it is a demonstration of what it means for us to be favored by God. We surrender to the Scriptures not in worship but in obedience. We are told:

*In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. ([1 John 5:3](#))*

The Apostle is not talking about keeping the commands we like or those that make us happy or bring us pleasure. We keep all God’s commands in surrender to a wisdom and truth that far exceeds our notions of good and evil. We surrender to God’s commands because our desire is to first demonstrate to God our love for him and the sacrifice he made with the gift of his own Son for our sins.

The Apostle Paul described life as a “good fight” and a “race” to be finished ([2 Timothy 4:7](#)). Jesus said, when we follow his Word, the world hates us because it hated him first ([Matthew 10:22](#)). When Paul and Barnabas lived God’s Word and suffered for it, they reminded the people:

*We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God. ([Acts 14:22](#))*

It is not easy. It is seldom popular. It is rarely comfortable. Yet, submission to the authority of Scripture is always right.

## Correction

Identifying a problem is of little value if we do not serve as a force of good to bring about correction. Once we surrender our will to the perfect will of God expressed through his Word, we can then begin to help others correct themselves. We do it not like a wild man beating off an attacking bear. Instead, we are told to:

*Correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. ([2 Timothy 4:2](#))*

People spend a lifetime forming their opinions and values. Rarely can change be brought about overnight. Think of what that involves. What do you think it would take for the president of the ELCA to back away from what she wrote about abortion? She is a theologian and holds the highest position in that church body. Even getting past the obstacle of illogic, everyone’s great internal foe must be tackled, namely: pride. Change comes hard.

So, if we wish to see Christians with unbiblical positions change them to biblical ones, we need to approach them with “great patience and careful instruction.” Loving correction means showing error, not just in their position, but also in the process used to arrive at their position.

The most powerful word in your arsenal is “Why?” When someone argues in favor of abortion rights, ask, “Why do you feel abortion is a right to be protected?” Because there is no right to abortion in Scripture, there is ultimately some perceived sense of rightness extracted from a flawed notion about themselves.

In a world of sin, there are many examples of generally unacceptable behavior, prompted by an individual’s suspicions, notions, or sense of justice. It could be a brutal murder, an act of rape, terrible vandalism, horrible slander, and the list goes on. These examples point out how others, using their own internal sense of right and wrong, arrive at very unpopular (wrong?!?) conclusions. How can we be certain that they are not right, and we are not wrong?

Do not look for a mountaintop conversion experience. As with most of our ministry of God’s Word, we are planting seeds and fertilizing. God, in his own time and through his Holy Spirit, will not permit his words to have been wasted when we speak them ([Isaiah](#)



[55:11](#)).

Also, remember why you seek correction. For the unbeliever, our motive is to connect them with their Creator. Correction is of secondary concern as we set out to illustrate the consequences of sin and God's solution in Jesus Christ. Our premier concern is for their soul. For believers who have pursued the conclusions of itching ears rather than the truth, we need to help them get back to the truth. We need to help them realize that the right obedience of God's Word is the expression of gratitude for God's solution to sin. To do that, we want to seek out and find common ground.

Remember that in a world driven by ideology rather than theology, the rapport is built around a common ideology that, for us, is rooted in Scripture. Maybe we can't find common ground on abortion, but perhaps that common ground is in fighting for better care for single mothers and babies. Maybe we cannot find common ground on a binary (male/female) understanding of sexuality. Maybe our common ground is to feed the hungry or house the homeless.

As we build a rapport, we earn a place at the table to discuss the more delicate differences that divide us. Because our goal is NOT to win the argument but to either lead someone to Christ or to help someone improve as God's servant, we walk the difficult and time-demanding path of correction rather than conquest.

Again, it is a process. The Apostle Paul said:

*All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ([Philippians 3:15](#))*

Be as patient with others as you know God is with you. In so doing, you will be keeping your head in all circumstances ([2 Timothy 4:5](#)). You will find the resolve to remain calm and patient, even though ideologically you may become incensed. Theologically, you know what it means to be the object of perfect love. Let Christ be your role model.

It is troubling when anyone expresses a view that speaks "for the church" when it is lacking a biblical foundation for what it says.

While it is tempting to get into a battle with words, our greater concern is to speak the truth with clarity, love, and patience. We shall continue to do so.

## Doctors give premature baby a tiny pacemaker in a groundbreaking surgery

By [Bridget Sielicki](#) | June 5, 2022 , 11:36am



Doctors in Kentucky are celebrating after successfully completing a first-of-its kind surgery to save the life of a premature baby. A [news release](#) from the Norton Children's Heart Institute, which is affiliated with the University of Louisville School of Medicine, detailed how physicians used an innovative surgery to transplant a tiny pacemaker into the infant.

According to the release, the baby was born with congenital structural heart defects and complete atrioventricular block (CCAVB), which results in a slow heart rate. It's a condition that affects roughly one in every 22,000 infants. Traditionally, doctors would have [waited](#) until the baby was at least 4.5 to 5.5 pounds to put in the pacemaker, but they determined that any delay may have had fatal results.

"In this instance, the patient was not of the optimal size and medical/conservative management was unsuc-

cessful, so a specially modified pediatric-sized pacemaker also known as an implantable pulse generator (IPG) created by Medtronic was used,” said Soham Dasgupta, M.D., pediatric electrophysiologist, Norton Children’s Heart Institute and UofL assistant professor of pediatric cardiology.

Because of the infant’s small size, the insertion of the pacemaker was anything but routine. The open-heart surgery took just over two hours, and the device measured just 1.16 by 0.65 by 0.38 inches, while weighing 0.18 ounces.

“While the operative steps might be comparable to the usual pacemaker implantation surgery, this surgery was especially delicate due to the very small size of the baby,” said Bahaaldin Alsoufi, M.D., chief of pediatric cardiothoracic surgery, co-director of Norton Children’s Heart Institute and UofL professor of cardiothoracic surgery.

Dr. Alsoufi noted that in the future, the baby will be connected to a larger pacemaker. “This tiny pacemaker generator was positioned in the abdominal wall on the right side and was connected to the usual leads that were attached to the heart. This novel device will provide the necessary support that the baby currently needs. At the time of repair of the patient’s congenital heart defect in the future, we will be able to utilize these same leads and likely connect them then to a traditional larger pacemaker generator.”

The baby is currently doing well and continuing to recover in the hospital.

“It is remarkable how our team of pediatric specialists came together with the device company to offer a resolution for such a small patient weighing less than three pounds at the time of implant,” Dr. Dasgupta added. “This unique case is unlike any other and we are so pleased to see this patient thriving as a result of the innovative approach

## Who Are You?

If you were asked to tell someone about yourself, what would you say first? Would you begin by telling where you live? Is one of the first things that you would point out is whether you are single or married? Do you identify your vocation such as a plumber, teacher, dentist, salesman, etc.? Would you describe your family? Would you talk about your education? Would you talk about your interests and hobbies? When would you say you are a Christian who God loves so much that He has adopted you as one of His children?

Each of us would describe ourselves in different ways. We each have several different roles such as father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, grandpa, grandma, etc. We play several or a variety of different roles such as neighbors, employees or employers, volunteers, or church members.

One role that affects all of our roles is our role as a steward. A steward is one who has been entrusted with property which is to be administered according to the owner's will or direction.

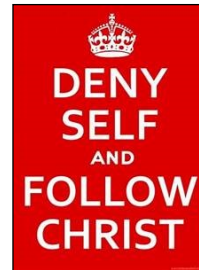
We are in charge of God's property. God has called and chosen us to be His stewards. As stewards, we automatically think of our role as stewards of our time, talents, and treasures, but we are also stewards of the environment, relationships with others, and the life-saving Gospel.

Everything we do, everything we say, and everywhere we go emanates from our sense of identity. Our identity is either in Christ or in the world. C.S. Lewis once said, "There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'All right then, have it your way.' " For some it's "God's will be done" and for others it's "my will be done." If it's "my will be done," the focus is only on ourselves. Understanding that God has called us to be His stewards determines what we do.

In Rick Warren's book *The Purpose Driven Life*, he begins by saying "It's not about you." He is exactly right. The Christian life is initiated by God and sustained by God. Our value, our identity, is not to be found in what we "do" in life. Not our performance, our position, our titles, our achievements or the power we hold. Our identity is bound up in who we are in Christ.

**STEWARDS ARE DISCIPLES WHO FOLLOW JESUS WITH THEIR HEARTS ALONG WITH THEIR TIME, TALENTS, AND MONEY.**

“Then Jesus told His disciples, ‘If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me’ (Matthew 16:24).



**OUR GIVING IS A RESPONSE TO GOD’S OUTPOURING OF LOVE AND GENEROSITY.**

“You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God” (2 Corinthians 9:11).



**ALL THAT YOU ARE, HAVE, AND HOPE TO BE ARE GIFTS FROM GOD.**

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...” (James 1:17).

**THANK YOU  
GOD  
FOR BLESSING ME  
MUCH MORE  
THAN I DESERVE**

**STEWARDSHIP IS USING THE BLESSINGS THAT GOD HAS GIVEN TO US TO CARE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS.**

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39).



## Stewardship Corner

God’s Word is clear that our good works do not save us. God saves us by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). The faith that saves us is even a gift. By the work of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, God creates in us new hearts with the desire to do good works. It is God Who enables us to do good works, and He is the one who prepares those good works for us beforehand. The Apostle Paul wrote, “*We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*” (Ephesians 2:10). God has good works already planned for us. These good works are God’s gifts to us as they give us the opportunity to share God’s love within us with others. May God continue to stir us to share His love to all people.





Bobbi Inglehart~1st  
 Paul Musselman~11th  
 Sandy Micolo~12th  
 Judy McGee~19th  
 David Lauria~26th

## **Healing Members**

### **Healing- Members**

Bill Richmond  
 Lynn Richmond  
 Judi Riske  
 Ruth Stocker

### **Friends**

Thom Becker  
 Joan Reisch  
 Scot Ferguson

## **Cancer**

### **Cancer-Members**

Dave Weissenborn  
 Paul Smith  
 Barb Mauro  
 Steve Koch

### **Friends**

Donna LaDuke  
 Jim Dugdale  
 Don Kernstock  
 Barb Vidal



## **In Military Service**

Christopher Dysinger, Kevin Krokosky,  
 Darin Nicholas,, Jeremiah Hose, Travis Kulak,  
 Andre' Miller, Keil Clough, Trevor Clough,  
 Todd McCarver, Victoria Doster,  
 Conrad Weissenborn, Rick Dillenbeck

## **Anniversaries**

Jim & Jenny Schwartz~3rd  
 Gary & Kay Vedder~6th  
 Mike & Kristie Wilkens~6th  
 Tom & Jan Smith~8th



Dollie Adolph  
 Jean Wittig

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**



Prayer request forms are available either in the Narthex on the podium by the guest book or in the office on the secretary's desk. If you need a prayer by Pastor that day, you can give your completed prayer request form to one of the elders or ushers and ask that it be given to Pastor before worship. If your prayer request isn't needed until later in the week, you can place it in the offering plate or place it on the secretary's desk in the office.

## **Assisted Living & Nursing Home List**

### **The Brook**

Geri Methot (Grayling)

### **Michigan Veterans Homes - Grand Rapids**

Kenneth Hopkins

### **The Lighthouse at Roscommon**

Elsa Knutson

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**THE CHURCH STAFF**

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Pastor's Cell Phone:

Pastor's E-mail Address:

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Nicole Alma

Office Hours: Wednesday 10am-2pm

BOOKKEEPER

Mary Heinlein (989) 348-4350

CUSTODIAN

Marty Haskin

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Ken Bendick (989) 387-8259

VICE-CHAIRMAN

VACANT

SECRETARY

Sharon Hopkins (989) 786-3795

TREASURER

Mitch Linendoll (989) 745-6413

**BOARD CHAIRMAN**

ELDERS

Jack Owens (810) 869-0944

EDUCATION

Barb Mauro (616) 260-1261

EVANGELISM

Terry Tody (989) 344-1734

STEWARDSHIP

Shirley Koch (231) 258-2808

TRUSTEES

Mike Shields (810) 348-6692

YOUTH

Selena Laskowski (231) 384-2862

Mt. Hope needs all of us to pitch in and keep our church running and serving others, especially without a full time Pastor to lead us.

There are many opportunities to serve, either small or large.

A couple ideas are:

- • Sign up one Sunday to host coffee hour.
- • Twice a year be responsible for Adopt a Highway
- • Help plant or weed flower beds
- • Sweep the side walk and porch entrance
- • Volunteer to help with VBS this summer

A bigger project is to lead a Kitchen Clean up day

Just like at your house, there is always something to do at God's house!!

Thank you!

Your Stewardship Committee



**Mt. Hope Lutheran Church**  
**(Missouri Synod)**  
**905 N I-75 Business Loop**  
**Grayling, MI 49738**