

# Hope LUTHERAN CHURCH

MARCH, 2025

## PASTOR'S MESSAGE—WHY ASHES?



Dear Sisters and Brothers in the Crucified One:

Ash Wednesday is upon us soon and many of us Christians will line up in churches around the world to have ashes smeared on our foreheads with the reminder, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return."

A smudge of ashes on our face is, frankly, kind of ugly, and that's all right - it's not intended to be a fashion statement - it's a sign of our mortality, of repentance and regret over our sins - a public witness, not that we're really holy, but that we're really unholy. Definitely a counter-cultural phenomenon!

The world is always busy making excuses, justifying bad behavior, or giving sociological explanations for being miscreants. Witness politicians never being able to admit to poor decisions, or criminals not willing to acknowledge guilt, or the many people who never confess wrong-doing or apologize for their actions until they're caught. I'm frequently amazed at some public figures' tortuous efforts to explain themselves.

Christians know that sin is sin, they know right from wrong, and they know when they've done wrong. They know that sin is an affront to their heavenly Father and that it deserves nothing but punishment - that's the clear teaching of the Bible. But they also know this, from the Bible: *"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1: 8, 9) By the way, it also says there in the next verse, *"If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."* (So much for making excuses.)

The applying of ashes is a practice almost as old as life itself that has commonly symbolized sorrow (many people would cover themselves in ashes when their spouses died) and contrition over sin with a sincere intention of changing one's course in life.

*Continued on page 2.*

### Sunday Services

9 AM Adult Bible Study

10 AM Worship Service

1st & 3rd Sundays—  
communion



Connect with us!  
hlcaurora.org

456 S. Chillicothe Road  
Aurora, OH 44202  
Ph: 330.562.9660

## MARCH SERVER'S LIST

If you cannot serve on your assigned date, please find a replacement and let Dawn know. Thank you for serving.



Date	Music	Worship Assistant	Acolyte	Greeters	Reader	Communion	Sermon/ PP
Mar 02	Lori	Chris	Beckett		Chris	Becky	Dan
Mar 05 Ash Wed.	SOS	Chris		Ruth & Ruth	Chris	Becky	Dawn
Mar 09	Lori	N/A	Deacon	Karol	Karol	Bev	Dawn
Mar 16	Lori	Greg	CJ	Larry & Chris	Greg	None	Dawn
Mar 23	Lori	N/A	Hank	Fred & Sheila	Herb	Becky	Dan



Looking for an easy and important way to help the members and friends of Hope? Consider being a part of our expanding Prayer Chain. Members of the prayer chain are contacted with specific confidential prayer requests as needs arise and asked to pray for those requests. Members send the request to the next member of the chain. To join the group, see Debi S. or email her at [debischuster@yahoo.com](mailto:debischuster@yahoo.com).

## PASTOR'S MESSAGE—CONTINUED

The good news about it is that it's a witness and it's a fact that we're not squabbling with God about our guilt, but that we're simply opening ourselves up to the grace and forgiveness He so generously and freely offers in His Son, Jesus Christ.

As we prepare for Good Friday and Easter the ashes on the forehead is a great place to start as a reminder of just how blessed we really are to have God as our God.

*Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God. For gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment.- Joel 2:12-13*

Be blessed and be a blessing!

*Dan Esala*

Dan Esala, Pastor

*"These things I warmly wish for you: Someone to love, some work to do, A bit o' sun, a bit o' cheer, And a guardian angel always near. Irish Blessing*



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Linda C.	8
Mary O.	14
Jill B.	19
Deacon B.	25
Alison S.	27
Dan C.	31

### MARCH 23 BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION



AFTER WORSHIP

Join us after worship on March 23 for cake to honor our friends and members who have a March birthday.



Do you have an event you are planning at Hope?

Please be sure to let Dawn know details of your event.

She will add it onto the new master calendar.

The welcome tablecloth and sign are located on top of the filing cabinets in the office and are available for all church events.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE



In February the combined Sunday school classes shared God's love by distributing treats to the congregation following worship.

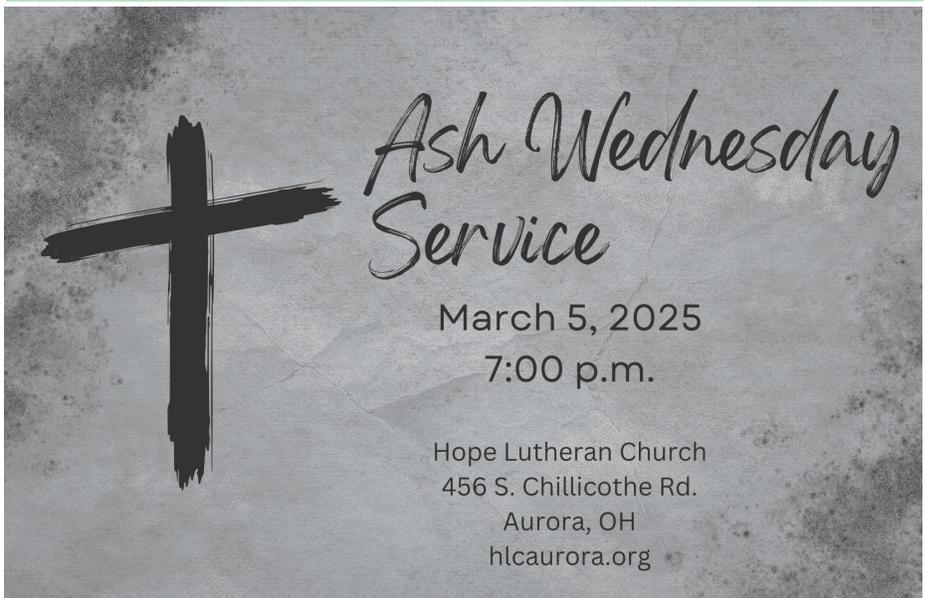
The classes continue to learn about God's love for us and how we can show that love to others.

Sunday School will meet during worship on March 9<sup>th</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup> this month.

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The next church council meeting will be on Thursday April 10<sup>th</sup> at 3 PM. If you have any agenda items for the council to discuss, please see our church president, Greg B., or email him at [Greg\\_belt@att.net](mailto:Greg_belt@att.net)

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



March 5, 2025  
7:00 p.m.

Hope Lutheran Church  
456 S. Chillicothe Rd.  
Aurora, OH  
hlcaurora.org

Mark Your Calendar: The season of Lent will begin with an Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. The service will include the imposition of ashes.

## PASTOR ESALA INSTALLATION



Rev. Dan Esala was officially installed as Pastor of Hope on Sunday, February 9, 2025. The day was attended by members and friends of Hope as well as numerous area pastors. We look forward to continuing a shared ministry between Pastor Esala and our church.

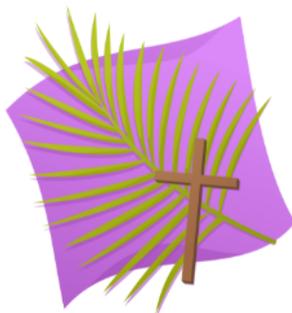
Pictured L to R: NE 4 Circuit Visitor Rev. Steven Hackmann (Shore Haven-Euclid), Rev. Powell Woods (EM), NE VP Rev. Michael Wallace (Gethsemane-Lakewood), Rev. Don Beaumont (Bethel -Willowick), Rev. Dan Esala (Hope-Aurora) Rev. Dr. Kevin Wilson (Ohio District President), Rev. Jonathan Torreson (Our Redeemer-Solon), Rev. Mark Matzke (St. Mark-Chesterland).

## Lenten Services & Supper

March 9 through April 6

Service 5 PM

Light Supper after service



Lenten services and suppers will be held on Sunday evenings during the season of Lent beginning March 9th through April 6th. A brief service marking the season of prayer and reflection begins at 5:00 p.m. followed by a light supper.

Sign up sheets to attend each week are available on the welcome table. See Dawn G. with any questions.

*If God sends you down a stony path, may He give you strong shoes.*

# EASTER ILLUSTRATION

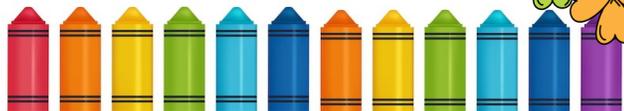


If you can color, we need you!

For the second year in a row during the season of Lent, Hope's members are invited to be a part of a congregation wide illustration that will be on display for Easter.

Thirty six (36) individual parts of a larger picture need to be colored so they can be assembled for Easter. The simple directions and coloring supplies will be available in a basket on the welcome table starting March 9th.

All colored pictures need to be returned to the basket by April 6th.



Join the **In the Word** bi-weekly Saturday study and an examination of the Book of James. The study takes place at church and new members are welcome at any time.

March meeting dates are March 8 and March 22.

9:15 coffee and fellowship; 9:30 small group study; 10:30 Q&A with the pastor.

For more information, please email Cheryl T. at [505Tomaselli@gmail.com](mailto:505Tomaselli@gmail.com)

The **Sunday morning adult Bible Study** meets at 9:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Pastor Esala leads the study on "Discipleship" by Ray Vander Laan. The study examines what it means to be a follower of Christ through cultural, historical, and contextual lenses of Scripture.

# CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation classes meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month for 45 minutes following worship. Meeting dates for February are March 9<sup>th</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup>.



## Prayer Requests

Do you have a prayer request on your mind and heart? Prayer requests can be emailed to Hope's church secretary, Dawn, at [dghlc456@gmail.com](mailto:dghlc456@gmail.com).

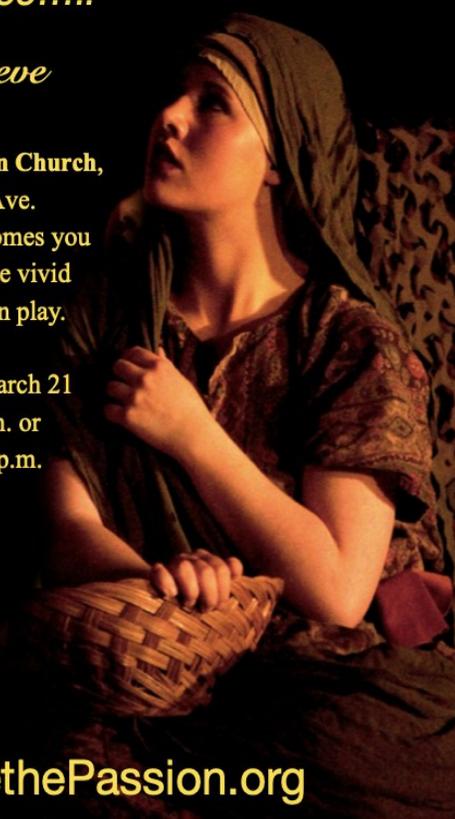
A prayer list is distributed to the congregation each Sunday after worship and prayers remain on the list for one month.

*Come, See.....  
and Believe*

**Faith Lutheran Church,**  
8125 Mentor Ave.  
Mentor, welcomes you  
to *Tetélestai* the vivid  
musical passion play.

*Tetélestai* - March 21  
and 22 at 8 p.m. or  
March 23 at 2 p.m.

**LivethePassion.org**



## SOAP



Thank you to the many members and friends who generously shared God's gifts by donating 159 bars of soap, 30 bottles of shower wash, and 47 bottles of hand soap for the Center of Hope in Ravenna and Redeemer Crisis Center in Cleveland.

The combined donations from Hope's preschool as well as through a Thrivent Financial grant will be delivered to both food banks that provide necessary toiletries for those in need in our communities.

## SPRING CLEANING

**Empty Your Closets and Shelves:** Spring is right around the corner and is a great time to clean out unused items in your home. Donate gently used adult and children's books, puzzles, and music cds to help the first-ever Used Book Sale for the Women's League of our neighbors at St. Mark Lutheran Church.

Funds raised will be used for global and local missions. Please place donations in the marked bin by the welcome table by April 15th.



*"Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."*

## JUNGLE TERRY

Jungle Terry's visit to Hope in February for the 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3 social event was fun for everyone! The large group included Hope's preschool families as well as members and friends.

Everyone met lots of animals including a Chinese chicken, a chinchilla, a scorpion, and even a python. It was a fantastic way to spend a snowy afternoon.



# THIRD @ 3—THE FINAL TWO OF THE YEAR!

## RABBI ABBA SILVER'S BATTLE AGAINST CLEVELAND NAZIS

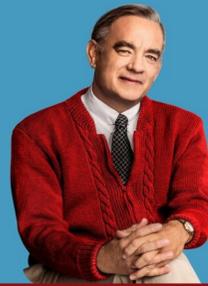


SUNDAY, APRIL 27  
3 PM

SPEAKER: DENNIS SUTCLIFF  
FROM LOST CLEVELAND MEMORIES

In the 1930's stormtroopers were marching in Parma and local auto-workers were being recruited for jobs in German factories.

Learn how Rabbi Silver's League for Human Rights led the fight against the fascists in our town.



A BEAUTIFUL DAY  
IN THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD

THIRD @ 3

SUNDAY, MAY 18  
3 PM

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
456 S. CHILLICOTHE ROAD

MOVIE AND SNACKS

We have rescheduled our January movie!  
Popcorn included!

## NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

**2113**  
YOUTH WORSHIP  
NIGHTS

Be exalted, LORD, in your strength,  
we will sing and praise your might.

**FREE** SECOND SUNDAY EVERY MONTH @ 6-8 PM  
**EXPERIENCE FAITH. BUILD COMMUNITY.  
TRANSFORM LIVES.**  
6TH-12 GRADE

GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH | 2113 RAVENNA ST., HUDSON | [GLORIADEIHUDSON.ORG](http://GLORIADEIHUDSON.ORG)

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
YOUTH GROUP PRESENTS

**PANCAKE  
BREAKFAST**

SAT. MARCH 22, 2025 8AM TO 1PM  
SHALERSVILLE TOWN HALL  
CORNER OF RT 303 & RT 44  
9090 OH-44, RAVENNA, OH 44266

PROCEEDS SUPPORTING  
CLC YOUTH GROUP NATIONAL TRIP TO  
NEW ORLEANS 2025!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

**GOODELL** Family Farm  
The Middlefield  
**mb** Banking Company

**thrivent**

only **\$12** Kids 4-12 **\$5**  
5 & under free

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Get a pile of pancakes some sausage links and your choice of coffee, milk, or juice. All you can eat! Take out available!

**New Date: March 15**

"Kindness is like a boomerang. It always comes back to you."

# LWML



Want to know more about LWML?  
National website [LWML.org](http://LWML.org)  
or the  
Ohio District website at [lwmloh.org](http://lwmloh.org)



**Marg Godale, Mary Osicky, Celia and Pastor Esala** attended the Prayer Service held at St. Mark's Lutheran in Chesterland. As you can see there were many others (65) who braved the weather to "Pray the Beatitudes". It was a faith and fellowship building experience as we sang, prayed, and praised God as women joined together with one Mission...to joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others. In Feb. 2026, it will be our honor to host the prayer service so be watching for ways you can help.

**SPRING RALLY "Faith, Not Sight": April 26, 2025, at Our Savior Lutheran Church, Mayfield Heights. Begins at 9:30 am** with continental breakfast fellowship, meeting at 10 am followed by a light lunch. Our keynote speaker will be from the **Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW)**.

There will be two in-gatherings.

A monetary offering for the work of LBW.

Food items to be given to Our Savior for their food pantry. There is a complete list of items they need on the bulletin board. A few are peanut butter, canned beans (black pinto, garbanzo beans), canned pasta (like ravioli or spaghetti o's), canned chicken, tomato sauce. There is a basket by the welcome table on Sundays and in Pastor's office during the week to place your donation in.

Registration can be made by contacting Carol Oswald at (440) 915-6678 or emailing her at [nkrrreal@aol.com](mailto:nkrrreal@aol.com). (or you can let Celia Esala know at [czesala@aol.com](mailto:czesala@aol.com)) Cost is \$6.00. If you would like a ride, contact Celia.

*"May your kindness shine brighter than a thousand stars."*

# LWML

**PRAYER SQUARES MINISTRY:** Hope's Lutheran Women in Mission are knitting, crocheting and quilting small prayer squares to share with someone who might need a prayer and a hug as a reminder that Jesus walks with them no matter where they are. The idea is like a prayer shawl, but they are small enough (3"x3" or 4"x4") to carry in a pocket or purse. We will be placing them on the welcome table for you to take as you like and in Pastor's office during the week. If you knit, crochet or quilt and are interested in helping with this ministry of our LWML, please contact Celia Esala at [czesala@aol.com](mailto:czesala@aol.com)

*"Serve the Lord with Gladness"*

**BLESSED TO BLESS APRIL COLLECTION** The entire congregation is encouraged to bring in items for the food pantry located at a LCMS sister congregation, Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Mayfield Heights. They opened in 2001 and became a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank in 2006. Their goal is to provide a three-to-five-day supply of food once each month for those with food insecurities. Peanut butter, canned vegetables, canned pasta (like ravioli or spaghetti o's), canned chicken, tomato sauce are some of the items. They will be taken to the LWML Spring Rally on April 26. We have been blessed to be a blessing to others, please consider this an opportunity to share your blessings.



**EASTER LILIES** Be on the lookout for more information to purchase Easter lilies to decorate the sanctuary for Easter Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.

## TO THOSE WHO SHINE BRIGHTLY:

Thank you to those who having been shining the light of Jesus!

- ⊗ Deb S. for changing seasonal worship banners.
- ⊗ Mary O. for stepping forward to help clean up communion ware.
- ⊗ Marge G. for Welcome table flowers and/or greenery.
- ⊗ Andy R. & Bob M. for preschool set up after Bible Study on Sundays.
- ⊗ Donna P. for taking on Christian Concern.
- ⊗ Cheryl T. for ordering communion supplies and shopping for paper plates, cups coffee, creamer, sugar and other supplies.
- ⊗ Chris S. for taking on treasurer's duties (quite a learning experience) especially at the beginning of the year.
- ⊗ Dan C. for setting up Welcome table etc. every week.
- ⊗ Dan C. & Dave B. for arranging speakers in narthex so families with small children can hear service when out of worship area.
- ⊗ Jason M. going above and beyond plowing the parking lot to be sure worshipers and preschool students can enter the building safely.
- ⊗ Dawn G. for arranging Jungle Terry. What a turn out!
- ⊗ Lori F. and Dawn G. for flexibility with worship formats.

## BOARD OF PROPERTY

**DID YOU KNOW . . .** The city of Aurora offers a Residential Lock Box Program.

Are you concerned that you or a relative might suffer a medical emergency while home alone and unable to get to the door?

A residential lock box is a small secured key box attached to your door that securely stores a house key for emergency situations. The lock box is only accessible by the Aurora Fire and Police Departments and will allow emergency personnel to access a residence in an emergency without damaging a door or window. This program began on April 1, 2017.

The program is offered by the city through the Aurora Fire Department where the lock boxes can be purchased for \$35. Once a box is purchased, a representative of the Fire Department will contact the resident to schedule installation.

[Residential Lock Box Application](#)



### NARTHEX AREA AUDIO SPEAKER

A new speaker has been installed in the narthex area at church so any parent using the narthex to entertain their child during the service can now listen to the liturgy and the sermon. A volume control for the speaker is located on the clock wall by the thermostat.

**Are you following Hope?** Church news, updates, and reminders are posted several times a week on Hope's website as well as on Hope's Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter) accounts. Be sure to check these resources often to stay up to date.

**Website:** [hlcaurora.org](http://hlcaurora.org)

**Facebook:** Hope Lutheran Church in Aurora, Ohio

**Instagram:** [hopelutheranchurchauroraohio](https://www.instagram.com/hopelutheranchurchauroraohio)

**Twitter:** [@HLCAurora](https://twitter.com/HLCAurora)