

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH



DECEMBER, 2024

PASTOR'S MESSAGE



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As I sit here writing these words to you, I still have 24 shopping days left until Christmas if, of course, you include Christmas Eve day. If I'm true to myself, I'll fritter every one of those days away and end up staring at all the half-empty shelves of leftovers in the stores. At least, that's the way it used to be. Out of necessity, our family has actually adopted the practice of celebrating the gift-giving and family meal-eating a week or two prior to December 25.

The reason for this was my normally dizzying work schedule in the past around Advent, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. It's not so much anymore as a part-timer, but we've stuck to our pattern of celebrating. One of the unexpected outcomes it seems, is that we're able to focus a bit more on Christ's first coming, the "advent," as it were, of a new era in the history of mankind.

My point in this bit of personal rambling is that Christ is coming again! There will be a second Advent! And just as His first arrival was a jolt to the shepherds who were tending their flocks by night, His Second Coming will be a jolt to the whole world! It's true! He's real! He really has come to claim His Kingdom! The sad thing about it is that there will be so many who thought they still had an infinite number of shopping days left until it became too late.

The Good News is that Christ's Church is still alive and is still proclaiming the glorious news of His birth, life, death and resurrection to hearts that will but receive Him by faith. This makes them ready no matter when He returns.

Are you ready for Christmas? Maybe or maybe not. Are you ready for the Savior's Second Coming? You are if you trust in Him for salvation. I guess that makes us ready for Christmas too, in all the things that count.

A very blessed Christmas to you and yours!

Dan

Dan Esala



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

VOA MEALS



Many thanks to all who generously stepped up donations for the growing need of the Thanksgiving Meal Bag packing event this year.

Hope's members, friends and preschool provided enough food to feed 143 people here in Aurora for the holiday.

Thirty-five bags of non-perishable food items were assembled by the children of the church and received a special blessing at the end of worship.

Each bag was also supplied with a frozen turkey and pumpkin pie before being taken to the Volunteers of America

to be distributed to local families.

Thanks to Dave B. and Becky B. for their many efforts to organize and coordinate this outreach event each year.



Christmas Services

Christmas Eve 4 PM
Christmas Day 10 AM

“Never worry about the size of your Christmas tree. In the eyes of children, they are all thirty feet tall.” — Harry Wilde

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE



Fred K.	03
Nathan W.	05
Dawn G.	07
Elliott F.	11
Chuck S.	17
Decker B.	19
Aaron S.	25
Sue D.	30



The Sunday School classes in November continued studying the book of Daniel. Students discussed that just like Daniel, we can do what God tells us what we should do even when we're pressured to do otherwise.

Classes helped pack the Thanksgiving meal bags to help those in our community and made lists of their blessings.

Sunday school classes meet during worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month and class will be held

on December 8th and December 22nd this month.

Come experience the children's Christmas program during worship on December 22nd! The children of the church will present an interactive Christmas message that day.



THIRD @ 3



AURORA HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA UNDER THE DIRECTION OF JASON BURDETT CHRISTMAS CONCERT

DECEMBER 15, 3PM
CONCERT AND PIZZA DINNER



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 located in the hallway between the sanctuary and the fellowship hall.

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

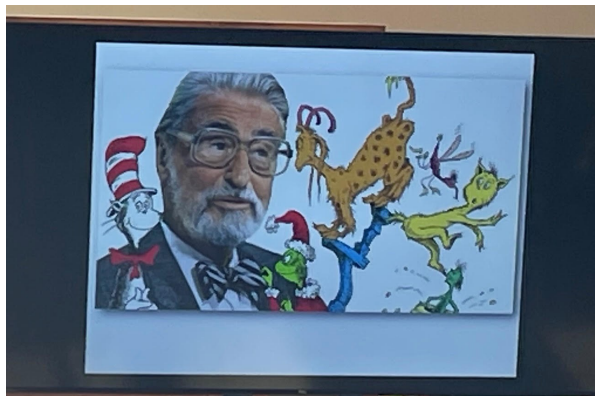




DECEMBER SERVER'S LIST

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

Date	Music	Worship Assistant	Greeters	Reader	Communion	Acolyte	Sermon/PP
Dec. 1	Lori	Greg	Becky	Greg	Becky	Drew	Dawn
Dec. 8	Lori	none	Marge & Glenda	Karol	none	Deacon	Dan
Dec. 15	Lori	Paul	Ruth & Ruth	Paul	Bev	Beckett	Dawn
Dec. 22	Beth	none	Karol	Bob	none	Hank	Dawn
Dec. 24 Eve—4 PM	Lori	Cheryl	Larry & Chris	Becky	Becky/Bev	Deacon	Dan
Dec. 25 Day—10 AM	Beth	Chris	none	Chris	Becky/Bev	none	none
Dec. 29	Lori	none	Fred & Sheila	Andy	none	Beckett	Dawn



THE THIRD @ 3

Hope's "3rd at 3" social group loved gathering to learn about Dr. Seuss in November.


We learned that not only did Dr. Seuss spark reading interest for children with his colorful illustrations, he invented the word "nerd", and his book *Oh! The Places You'll Go* has sold hundreds of millions of copies.

Thanks to the fantastic group who joined gathered for this presentation by our favorite local art historian, Felicia Zavarella Stadleman.

Mark your calendar for the next "3rd at 3" event on December 15th when the Aurora High School Orchestra will present their popular Christmas concert followed by pizza in the fellowship hall.



"For it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself." — Charles Dickens



DECEMBER 22

Birthday Coffee Hour

Hope will honor the birthdays of members and friends having December birthdays with a celebration coffee hour after church on December 22nd.

Join us after worship that day for cake and to celebrate the blessings we have in one another!



BIBLE STUDIES


The **In the Word** bi-weekly Saturday study is on a break for the month of December.

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.



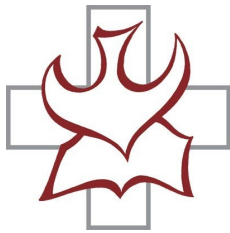
Prayer Requests



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.

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

CONFIRMATION CLASS



Confirmation classes meet the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month for 45 minutes following worship.

Meeting dates for December are December 8 and December 22.



"We celebrate the first Christmas because we know there's a second coming." — **Matt Chandler**



Poinsettias for Christmas

Each year Hope’s Advent season is enhanced by poinsettias that decorate the sanctuary. This year a grant from Thrivent Financial will help provide the poinsettias that will beautify the church’s worship space.

HCNS



As an outreach to Hope Christian Nursery School, the church is providing advent calendars for every student in the 3’s, 4’s, and Pre-K classes. Pastor Esala will hand out calendars to the students during the school’s weekly chapel time the first week of December.

We hope these calendars will bring the children and families a joyous reminder of this season of hope and renewal as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Advent Services

Sundays - December 8, 15, and 22

5 PM



Services include a brief service followed by a potluck supper.

Sign up sheets to attend and provide a food item (if possible) are available on the welcome table outside the sanctuary.

“Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone.” — Charles Schulz

NEW BATHROOM DOOR EMERGENCY LOCKS



You may have noticed new locks on all of Hope’s bathroom doors. These were installed after the State agency that certifies Hope Nursery School recommended that a safe lockdown area be made available for the nursery school students and staff in case of an intruder emergency.

We discussed this with the Aurora Police Department and it was determined that all four bathrooms could serve well as secure areas.

The locks are not intended to be used during everyday visits to the bathrooms but just for any emergency as they require a key to open them from the outside.



COUNCIL MEETING

FYI: The next church council meeting will be held on Thursday December 12th at 3:30 p.m. If you have any agenda items for church council, please see Dan C. or email him at dcole-mansr@windstream.net

VOTER’S MEETING

Please plan to briefly stay after worship on Sunday, December 15th for an annual voter’s meeting for church members. The church’s budget will be discussed and voted on at the meeting.



THANK YOU TO HOPE’S DECORATING ANGELS

The church is decorated and ready for the Christmas season. We are thankful to those who volunteered their time to make the church so festive looking.



LWML AT HOPE



**Lutheran
Women
in Mission**
OHIO DISTRICT

The Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) of Hope met on Nov. 10, 2024 after church. We decided our regular fellowship date will be the second Sunday of every month after the worship service. All women of the congregation are welcome. Our elected officers are; Celia Esala, president, Janet Marz, vice president, Marge Godale, treasurer, and Mary Osicky, secretary.

The mites donated through the mite boxes totaled **\$178.75!** We thank all the ladies (and men) who used their boxes to collect change for the OHIO District LWML and National LWML mission grants. We praise God for the generosity He has placed in His people's hearts. If you would like to know what mission grants this money applies to, **there are lists on the bulletin board, both Ohio and National, and how much has been paid out.** Please pick up a new box anytime you need it from the welcome table on Sunday mornings.

Our mission project for December will be to write little notes of thanks to go with a gift bag for our preschool teachers, thanking them for their ministry to the little ones.

Dates to remember:

- Our next meeting date - Dec. 8, 2024 after church
- Northeast Zone Prayer Service – February 15, 2025
- Northeast Zone Spring Rally - April 26, 2025

It was the Sunday after Christmas. Pastor John was looking at the nativity scene prior to packing away the figures when he noticed the baby Jesus was missing from the scene. Immediately, he thought about calling the police. But as he was about to do so, he saw little Harry with a red wagon, and in the wagon was the figure of the little infant, Jesus.

Father John walked up to Harry and said, 'Well, Harry, where did you get the little infant?'

Harry replied honestly, 'I took him from the church, Father John.'

'And why did you take him?'

With a sheepish smile, Harry said, 'Well, about a week before Christmas I prayed to little Lord Jesus. I told him if he would bring me a red wagon for Christmas, I would give him a ride around the block in it.'

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

Facebook: Hope Lutheran Church in Aurora, Ohio

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

Twitter: @HLCAurora