



# Doorway to Hope

The Newsletter of Hope Church, P.C.A.

Our Vision: Training People for L.I.F.E

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E-mail: [info@hopechurch.us](mailto:info@hopechurch.us) Website: [www.hopechurch.us](http://www.hopechurch.us)

## Escaping Your Idols

*The light. It shines brightly, summoning me in my gloom.  
Afraid. Alone. Anxious. I am pursued by this light.  
So from my shadows, I flee.*

*A fog of fear rolls in. Thick. Suffocating. I need that light.  
Heart thumping. Fingers trembling in the dark.  
A voice promises, "Come to me, I will give you rest."  
I flee into the night.*

*Short of breath now. Face flushing red, aglow.  
Again the voice cries into my murky silence:  
"Look, do not be afraid! I will give you peace."  
Disoriented, I flee its might.*

*Hungry. Sweating. Crazy by my craving.  
The booming voice speaks to my weak knees:  
"Come to me, I will give you strength."  
Doubtful, I flee what's right.*

*Crawling. Exhausted. Now unable to fight. I cave in the dark. I submit to that light.  
Speaking, I hear my voice, "Come to me, my immanuel, my god-with-me,  
give me rest, peace and strength.  
Deliver me from my gloom, for I walk in deep darkness this night."*

*Doomed in the dark, my hands finally embrace that light.  
"At last," I sigh. With anticipatory delight I command,  
"Siri, show me what I think is right."  
Ashamed, I know idolatry won this fight.*

For those who are not Iphone owners, Siri is the automated voice that allows Iphone users to boss around our phone. We can speak and it obeys our commands.

Siri, "Open Facebook."  
Siri, "Play Bob Dylan's 'You Gotta Serve Somebody' on Youtube."  
Siri, "Entertain me." Siri, "Be with me. Connect me with somebody. I am lonely."

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For those who are not following my poetic confession above, I am saying I look at my iPhone too much. I run from it, I hide it, I hate it and love it.

We purchase this good thing to serve us. Yet in our homes, at restaurants, at school, and yes, even with friends and family, many of us cannot resist the allure and temptations that electronic glowing box gives. The average person now looks at their phone 80 times a day. Many look up to 300 times a day.<sup>1</sup> This seemingly harmless expensive light box lives in our pocket. And we take it with us everywhere we go. We sleep next to it. It wakes us up in the morning. We scream when someone threatens its safety. We get angry when it fails us (“Curse you Google Maps for failing me when I needed you most!”). It is precious to us. Who is serving who?

The Bible’s word to describe our unhealthy addictions is idolatry. An idol is anything in all of creation that we use and worship in the place of God. This is what our kids are learning from the Ten Commandments, “Don’t bow down to man-made things.”

Idols are things we treat like our private ‘immanuels’. They are our gods that we believe we can take with us. They are things we use to treat our boredom, our anxiety, our shame and our frustrations. They promise rest. They promise to take care of us. Idols mimic the blessings that our Creator promises if we would trust Him. Only they always enslave and leave us less human, ghostly shells of ourselves. Even more sinister, according to the Bible, we can be stuck in a controlling relationship with an idol and never know it. Meaning, we can be blind to the damage we do to ourselves and the grief we cause our good God.

Idolatry, according to Biblical counselor, David Powlison, is the most frequently discussed problem with people in the Bible.<sup>2</sup> And to be clear, idolatry is more than an Old Testament-angry-God-thing. Listen to the last words of 1 John,

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” What?! This is the first time in the letter idolatry is mentioned (Go back and read it). Where did that come from? We love it when John says, “God is love. It is not that you loved God, but that He first loved you in sending His Son Jesus to be the propitiation for your sins.” Beautiful words. But the fuller context is in the war against idolatry. Combine these words and we see that idolatry is a love problem. We love created things more than our Creator. We would never see how crazy idolatry is if God did not graciously pour out His wrath on His beloved Son.

How do we fight idolatry? How do we figure out what are good loves and wrong loves? How does God free me from my various slaveries to sin and selfishness?

The Gospel according to the Old Testament book of Judges. This is where we are headed next year after we finish the Gospel of Matthew. Judges is a shocking book. If it were made into a movie, it would definitely be rated MA, for mature audiences only. It includes assassination, thumb-less and big toe-less kings, enslavement, cruelty, torture, scores of men killed by a donkey skull, possible child sacrifice, prostitutes, corrupt worship and civil war; things that would make Sodom and Gomorrah blush. The creators of Veggie Tales sure did. We never get to see Bob the Tomato be pierced by a double-edged sword, teaching our children the story of Eglon and Ehud.

Yet, here it is included in the Holy Scriptures. Why study it? Martin Luther once described 1 Peter as pure gospel. You simply cannot miss that salvation is a gift of grace. We could say the same of the book of Judges. Over and over again we are shown that “salvation belongs to the Lord.” For the sake of His covenant promises and of compassion for His idolatrous people, God rescues again and again through His Spirit-filled deliverers. Here we get unmistakable pictures of what Jesus would do on the cross and why He had to do it. I am not making this up. This is the teaching of Hebrews 11:

*And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—<sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,<sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.*

*And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised,<sup>40</sup> since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...look to Jesus.*

We are commanded to use these historic Old Testament witnesses, even Samson, to see what it takes to set us free from our harmful loves and idolatry. We require a sinless Rescuer, Jesus, to die the death we should have died and to live a life without any idolatry, the life we should have lived. And like Samson, Jesus died for a people who never asked to be rescued.

Judges is going to help us love Jesus more and, God-willing, our idols less. For we now live in an age where everyone does whatever is right in their own eyes because they have no king but themselves (Judges 21:25). Christian friends, that is not true of us. We now follow our crucified King, Christ. So let us ask Him to graciously pierce the depths of our souls, to slay our idols, to discern the thoughts and intentions of our hearts, with His double edged sword (Judges 3:16,21; Hebrews 4:12); the Gospel according to Judges. “*Little children, keep yourself from idols.*”

<sup>1</sup> <https://nypost.com/2017/11/08/americans-check-their-phones-80-times-a-day-study/>

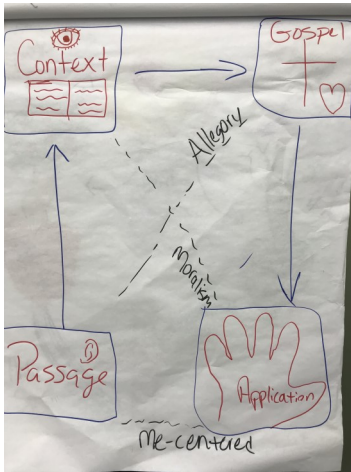
<sup>2</sup> David Powlison, *Idols of the Heart and Vanity Fair*



EXODUS 20:3

# Learn God's Word

## Enjoying Your Bible Reading



Reading the Bible according to the Psalmist results in great spoil, like those who loot a city after winning a battle (Psalm 119:162). We go home with treasures untold when we read the Bible rightly. Of course Jesus famously said that the whole Bible is about Him, from Genesis to Revelation (Luke 24:44-47). The Law, the Prophets and the Writings are all about Jesus.

The actual work of reading the Bible can be like digging for buried treasure. It requires sweat and blisters at times to get the reward.

We have been using the chart (seen here), to guide our Bible reading.

The proper path is to read the passage, study the context to see what God is saying to the original audience, then to see how the passage is connected to Jesus crucified for sinners like you, and then with your heart aflame with affection for our Savior, apply the passage to yourself.

We often take shortcuts. The modern way is to not believe that God has an intended meaning in the Bible that is true for all people at all times, connected to Jesus. So we simply read the passage as being something we should do or look for our inspiration for the day. That results in a kind of relativistic, me-centered religion where I am the hero, rather than Jesus.

Another shortcut is to move immediately from the Old Testament to application. We skip Jesus. That leads to a moralistic, do better, try harder religion. Again, we leave the Scriptures as the hero, rather than the rescued in Christ.

Still another shortcut is to move from the passage straight to Jesus however we want. If the word red is in the passage, it must be about Jesus' blood. This is an allegorical reading, adding extra meanings to God's word that God didn't intend.

The story of the Bible is unified, from Genesis to Revelation. God, redeeming and rescuing for Himself a people through the blood of the Lamb (Jesus), leading them through the wilderness of suffering into the promised Land, to dwell forever in the New Jerusalem with our crucified King (Rev. 21-22). God's full and final word, Jesus, is our food for the journey.

Join us Sunday mornings at 9am to learn to love Jesus and the Scriptures more!

## Notes from the Session

### New Sunday School Option Dates to Be Announced

You are invited to learn the art of Psalm Singing during the Sunday School hour, led by John Van Voorhis. So if you are not learning how to read the Bible with Pastor Nate, please come sing the Bible! Join in the singing, listen to the reasons why God's people have always prayed and sung the Psalms to be counseled and comforted, challenged and changed by God's Word. *"Be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup>giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ."* (Ephesians 5:18-21)

### Hope Church Coffee Hour Needs You

One of the joys every Sunday is seeing everyone building relationships and caring for one another before and after the service. Included in that is the coffee and food table. As a Session we are currently in the process of reorganizing the coffee ministry. The recognized need is simple: we need an organized effort to not only set up the coffee, but also to stay and clean up after the service, especially the floors. There is no janitorial service that cleans up after us before Spa Christian meets here on Monday morning, so we want to both care for the building and respect our tenants.

This ought to be a shared responsibility and service to our church family and our visitors, so that it is not the same people cleaning every week. This is a plea for **your** help. Ideally, there will be an organized schedule for set up and clean up, so multiple people are sharing the burden.

There will be no coffee while we are in the process of reorganizing. So we are asking for your help. Enlist the help of our children too. They love to vacuum and participate. It is part of training them to value, love and serve others through food and service. So please, come talk to Pastor Nate or Pastor Jim or one of the elders. This is a simple way of serving Christ and Hope Church. Thank you!

# Learn God's Word

## A Season of Thanks

I was able to get thank-you cards to some people but I realized that there were many that I didn't know about who gave money and I know so many were in prayer for our mission trip to Kenya. This is the blurb I put on my thank-you notes and I wanted to extend a thank you to all of my Hope Church family for helping me have the courage and finances to go on this trip. THANK YOU.

*The team I was on had a wonderful opportunity to work with three churches in Kenya. We worshipped with the Kibera Reformed Presbyterian church in Kibera and got to know the Makukus that run Kenya Mercy Ministries. We worked with the school they run in Kibera. We traveled to Kisumu and worked with the Perazim Gospel Mission church. We were able to work and live with the people of the church. We helped them reach out into their community and pray and worship and teach together. I was part of a worship team so I got to sing and help lead worship. It was such a joy to worship together with so many believers in a different country. We worshiped with ladies at a women's prison. In between Kisumu and work back in Nairobi we were blessed to be able to do an overnight safari at Maasai Mara. Then we were able to work with a lady who runs a ministry for children and young adults with different disabilities. To wrap up our trip I was able to sing with the New City Nairobi worship team along with some ladies from our US team as we lead a worship concert service at their church. All the churches and ministries we worked with also want to extend a thank you for helping us be able to go and work with them.*

—Melanie Combs



Snapshot on Children's Ministry  
By Melanie Combs



In this season of thankfulness, I know I speak for all those at Hope Church that work with your children -we are so thankful to be working with your children AND with you. We take the teaching of your children seriously. We want to partner with you to raise each child up in wisdom and knowledge of the Lord. We could always use volunteers, especially with the teaching of children's church right now. If you'd like to help out with children's church,



please know you don't have to teach each week. There is a list of people who take turns teaching each Sunday. If you are interested you can see or call Rae Whitehead to be put on the rotation. I, or any of the volunteers, can walk you through what a typical children's church program would look like and what you do. All the materials are provided for you.

I want to remind you of the materials we use. We offer Sunday School classes and a Children's Church program with material that we have carefully tailored to help your child on his/her journey to understanding and learn more about God. We have a Children's Catechism section of our worship service to help your children learn the "core doctrines of our faith," as stated in The New City Catechism book. We offer sermon notes for your children to help them focus and interact with the teachings our pastor brings each week. Yet we only meet at church once a week.

That is not enough time to fully impact the things your child learns. We encourage you to bring the resources from each program home for your child to use throughout the week to keep the learning in their minds. For if they aren't working to "memorize" the things they are learning at church, they will be busy memorizing other things that may or may not be fruitful. We want to be a support to you, so please feel free to talk to any of the Sunday School leaders, or children's church volunteers, or even myself if you have any questions.

Here are some links to information about the programs we use here at church.

The Gospel Project:

<http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject/training-viewer/-/training/the-gospel-project-for-kids-leadership-training/the-gospel-project-for-kids-parent-resources>

The New City Catechism

[www.newcitycatechism.com](http://www.newcitycatechism.com)

And have a look at the website for Great Commissions Publications where we get the children's Sunday School material from.

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

**Christmas Eve Service Note:** I am working on getting something together for the children to do at this service. If you have any great ideas, please talk with me. Please be looking in the Sunday bulletin for more information.

# Interact in Worship

## **Stars in Apple Cores**

Matthew 1:9-10  
II Corinthians 4:6  
II Peter 1:19  
By Luci Shaw



You  
are the One who put  
stars  
in apple cores

God  
of all stars and symbols  
and all grace,  
You have reshaped  
the empty space

deep in my apple heart  
into a core of light  
a star to shine  
like Bethlehem's far-  
to-near Night Sign:  
bright  
birth announcement  
of Your  
Day Star

## **The Nativity**

By C. S. Lewis

Among the oxen (like an ox I'm slow)  
I see a glory in the stable grow  
Which, with the ox's dullness might at length  
Give me an ox's strength.

Among the asses (stubborn I as they)  
I see my Saviour where I looked for hay;  
So may my beastlike folly learn at least  
The patience of a beast.

Among the sheep (I like a sheep have strayed)  
I watch the manger where my Lord is laid;  
Oh that my baa-ing nature would win thence  
Some woolly innocence!





# Foster Loving Relationships

Dear Hope Church Families and Friends,

Winter sure seemed to come on quickly! The students already started bringing in their snow pants and gloves, ready for some fun in the white flurries outside on the playground. The school days are filled with Thanksgiving feast preparation, field trips, report cards, and ramping up for the Christmas parade and other holiday festivities. We are also excited to welcome Pastor Nate back to speak in chapel once a month. Any of you are always welcome to come for our chapel time, from 8:15-8:30. It really is a delightful way to start your day.

Many of you may have heard that we were looking into a possible move up to the Wilton area. After much prayer and discussion over the course of many months we decided that it would not be in the best interest of the school to move to that location in the immediate future. Thank you for your prayers in that decision, as well as your prayers as we continue to seek the Lord's guidance on our next step. One thing that God showed all of us in this process is how grateful we are for the place we are currently in. This building really is a fantastic space and I think we take that for granted sometimes.

Our spiritual focus this year is "Love In Deed", spending time looking for ways to love others. It's been delightful watching this happen in small ways around the school. We hope to do some sort of school-wide service project each month, in order to get in the habit of looking for ways to help others.

October was our Read-A-Thon month, raising money to go towards some STEM education within our school. We raised enough to invite the MiSci Museum into our building for a day of hands-on learning. This is something we did a couple of years ago and the students enjoyed it a great deal! We hope to use any left-over money to purchase some robots for the school, in order to enforce coding skills among our students. In conjunction with this, our students recently took a trip to the Apple Store to program robots. It was so neat to watch them think through how to get a robot from point A to point B.

Every day is exciting here at Spa, especially at this time of year. Stop by anytime and see what is going on. We'd love to see you!

**Mandy (Klint) Kergel <><**  
*Administrator*  
**Spa Christian School**



## **Christmas Parade In the Village of Ballston Spa**

This year's parade is Friday, December 7th and starts at 6:30 p.m. Hope Church is planning again on participating in the parade. Last year we had a great time. The H.O.P.E. for Seniors had a large banner held by Pastor Nate and Dan Anderson. Christmas Music was broadcast from the decorated car following the banner. Trailing behind the car was the Boy's Brigade's group led by Nick Cutler, with their banner that the boys carried.

After the parade many gathered for the lighting of the village Christmas tree in Wiswall Park. Next, Santa heads to the bank to greet all the anxious children. Shops and restaurants are open after the parade and the village's Holiday Weekend Celebration continues with many activities being open to everyone.

**Friday, December 7 through Sunday, December 9.**

If anyone would like to join us, please contact Marybeth Gibbins. We are still looking for two energetic marchers to HAND OUT candy for us.

## Foster Loving Relationships



This photo from an RTS Publication shows Nick Cutler as he prepares for a volleyball tournament between the future pastors and the future counselors.. It serves as a good reminder for us to uphold him in prayer as he continues his studies at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS.



**LADIES:** Are you ready for a retreat come May? See Terry Cornick or Sally Jenkins as we will form a Retreat Committee if there is enough interest and help in planning such a retreat.

## **The Men's Retreat: Adventurous Learning**

By David Whitehead

Five men from Hope started out, with Daryl Cutler at the wheel, on what proved to be a great adventure! Snow was falling on that Friday evening, Nov. 8, and it felt like we were in a sleigh, going “over the river and through the woods” to Camp of the Woods we go! As we moved along very slowly, with other cars in front and behind, we suddenly saw the drivers’-side windshield wiper blade go sailing up over the van. With difficulty, we pulled over, and put our heads together. The snow was coming down hard! We switched wipers, and Mike suggested that we put a sock on the arm of the damaged one to keep it from scratching the windshield.

We finally arrived, late, but safe and sound, at Camp of the Wood, in Speculator. A great meal awaited us: roast beef, baked potatoes, salad and dessert. (The food is great at Camp of the Woods!)

Our speaker was Milton Vincent, pastor-teacher and author of **A Gospel Primer for Christians: Learning to See the Glories of God’s Love**. The topic was “The man who is fully known, fully loved and fully surrendered.” There were four sessions, and our speaker talked about Psalm 139. At the beginning of the Psalm, David writes, “O Lord, you have searched me and you know me...,” emphasizing God’s sovereignty over us all. At the end, David ASKS God to examine his heart: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me...” To get to this place, David had to be willing to surrender to God! God knows everything about David, and each one of us! Even as God knows us completely, He still loves us! We all, at one time or another, try to flee from God—but there is no place that we can go that God isn’t. We belong to God. Our response to what God has done for us, is to worship! In our last session, our speaker talked about the Hound of Heaven. He spoke about how David prays a prayer of surrender to God: “See if there is any hurtful way in me.” It was a blessed time together with our brothers in Christ from many areas: New Jersey, New York, and even Canada.

May we have more men from Hope attend next year’s retreat, which will be held November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, for a few days of learning, bonding, and adventure!

# Foster Loving Relationships

## Cherry Crepe Recipe

From Lena Nakhabenko

History: I grew up on a cherry orchard in Kazakhstan. On American terms we were very poor and didn't have candy, cereals or other staples, but from the viewpoint of a little kid in Kazakhstan we were VERY happy and lacked nothing. We ate eggs from our chickens, veggies from our garden, and drank milk from our goat. During the summers, we climbed the cherry trees and made everything from those cherries- from pies, to pierogis, to juice, to jam, to these crepes!

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 egg
- 1 cup milk
- 1 T butter, melted
- 3 T sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### Filling:

- 8 oz. cottage cheese, small curd
- 1 block cream cheese at room temperature
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 can cherry pie filling

### Crepes:

1. Using a mixer, beat egg and milk together for about 1 minute. Add in butter, sugar, and salt.
2. Beat in flour, 1/4 cup at a time, until you make a smooth batter- no chunks! It usually takes me about 5 minutes.
3. Heat up a flat pan to a medium heat and smear with butter. Once the butter sizzles, the pan is mostly ready to make crepes!
4. Pour about 1/2 cup of batter onto pan, and swirl pan quickly to spread batter evenly onto pan. Give it about a minute, and, using a fork, pick the edge of the crepe up, and using your hands, flip the crepe over quickly to cook on the other side. This will take practice- your first few crepes might end up in a heap and that's okay! Keep practicing. The goal is to get both sides lightly cooked.

### Filling:

1. Beat 1/3 cup sugar with cream cheese with sugar for 3-4 minutes or until soft and smooth. Beat in cottage cheese.
2. With mixing spoon, stir in cherry pie filling.

Assembling the crepes: Make sure to wait for the crepes to cool off! Smear the entire surface of a crepe with your filling (not too thick), and roll it up into a tube.

Lay the crepes parallel to one another, so you can make one big cut down the middle and double the amount of crepes to serve :)

**Ed. Note:** The recipe above is included as a result of our November 11 Fellowship Potluck. Deb Cutler, our intrepid organizer, had asked us to bring a dish that was meaningful to our family. Lena's crepes were a big hit, and when we heard their (and her) history, we asked her to share them with us all.



## Extend God's Hope



Natalie and I spent about six months in 2018 reading through a book by Stephen Smallman called, Beginnings: Understanding How We Experience The New Birth. Steve has been a pastor in the PCA for over forty years and is currently on the staff of New Life Presbyterian Church in Glenside, PA. We had the privilege of meeting him there in 2017. The back cover of Steve's book explains that in Beginnings, "We discover a new way of relating evangelistically to the people around us—not as spiritual salespeople but as spiritual midwives called to assist in the birth." In the book Steve asks the reader to write a "spiritual autobiography" in which you trace the experiences and influences in your life which led to faith in Christ; something that can be used as a springboard to talking with people about Christ. Beginnings includes the spiritual autobiographies of Steve's four adult children. Mine is written below. If you have an interest in reading through Beginnings in order to better understand how we experience the new birth, or to explore the concept of evangelism as being a spiritual midwife, Natalie and I would love to do that with you.

I grew up with a significant Christian influence in my life. I was baptized as an infant in the Roman Catholic Church and participated in the life of the church with my mother and sisters. My father was a Baptist, though he rarely attended church while I was growing up. When he married my mother he agreed that his children would be brought up in the Catholic Church. My grandparents were all church members and attended church regularly. My father's parents had the twenty third Psalm displayed in their home. My mother's mother prayed every day in her bedroom. My great great grandfather was a Protestant minister and his picture hung on the wall in our home. I remember "saying grace" which was a prayer before meals. By the age of fifteen my parents no longer required that I participate in church so I stopped. I believed in God, meaning that I believed that God existed and I saw Him as someone to pray to in time of need.

After graduating from high school I attended college but dropped out during my first year and joined the Navy. Around the time I turned twenty one, something began to happen inside of me. I began having thoughts that something was missing in my life. I became dissatisfied with the way I was living. I began having an inner sense that there was more to life than what I was experiencing; something greater. A friend on my ship was into Scien-

## **Spiritual Salesperson or Spiritual Midwife?**

By Norm Jones

tology so I examined that with him but found it to be unappealing. Another friend began talking with me about Bible prophecy and his belief that certain world events in the twentieth century were a fulfillment of particular Bible prophecies. I was interested. We attended a movie together called The Late Great Planet Earth which presented an explanation of Bible passages pointing to the return of Jesus Christ from heaven to earth. At his return, or "second coming," Jesus is coming back to destroy heaven, earth, and all those who have not followed him in order to establish a new heaven and earth where his followers will live and reign with him forever.

The movie had an intense and powerful impact on me. So powerful that I sat through the second showing of the movie that same night. Looking back on it, I would compare what I experienced to the biblical account of what two disciples experienced as recorded in the Gospel of Luke when Jesus met them walking on the road after his resurrection: "Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him...he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself... then their eyes were opened and they recognized him...they asked each other, 'were not our hearts burning within us when he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'"



I had grown up in a Christian tradition and had learned about Jesus in the church, but when I saw this movie Jesus became real to me. Excited and joyful, I returned to my ship and shared this story with a group of Christians. One of the men gave me literature which explained how Christ's death on the cross opened the way for me to become his follower, by his taking upon himself the penalty for my self-oriented ways. I took that step and became a follower of Jesus Christ in April of 1979.

Since that time, like everyone, my life has had its ups and downs. I have moved around and have been involved with several different churches. I have been divorced and have remarried. For a period of ten years I turned away from Christ and the church and explored New Age teachings. I have been a member of the church community I am currently involved with since 2015. Through everything in my life Jesus has walked with me and that has truly made all the difference. It has given me a genuine desire to walk more closely with him.

# Extend God's Hope

## Within Our Fellowship

### *Prayers for Those Going Out*

Remember to pray for the Cheng Family. George and Tiffanie are now serving at a church plant, Electric City Baptist Church, in their neighborhood in Schenectady.



Have you heard! We have a pianist now! We thank God for His provision, and we thank you, Lena, for sharing your gifts with us!



Thank you for participating in the Operation Christmas Child shoebox program. Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse which is under the leadership of Franklin Graham. The program has helped proclaim the Gospel in more than 100 countries around the world. Each shoebox gift helps bring Good News and great joy to a child and their family.

Those boxes and the love you put into them will give children around the world an opportunity to hear about Jesus Christ. Now that you have filled and returned your shoebox, please be in prayer as your shoebox travels to a child and that child's life may be blessed with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

## Throughout Our Community



Christ Episcopal Church in Ballston:

Sunday, Dec 9th at 4 p.m.

Monday, Dec 10th at 7:30 p.m.



**The Community Choir of Ballston Spa presents**  
Hark the Herald:  
Songs and Carols to Celebrate Christmas

Sunday, December 9th  
6:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa,  
202 Milton Avenue



- 4 Rosemary Hathaway
- 11 Ben Bowman
- 15 Stan Trestick
- 16 Natalie Jones
- 16 Ray Gibbins
- 23 Niya McKeon
- 23 Laura Childs
- 24 Jamin Emerson



- 14 Jim & Terry Cornick
- 17 Bob & Betse Smith
- 28 Steve & Liz Brumagin

## ENGAGEMENT

Brandon Cutler is engaged to Melanie Couch of Michigan. They met during Brandon's freshman year at Lipscomb University, in Nashville, TN, where Brandon is now a senior. They plan to marry after Brandon's graduation in the summer of 2019. The wedding will be in Melanie's hometown near Flint, Michigan.

## BAPTISMS

We had the privilege of celebrating the baptisms of Nathan Alexander Childs and Samson Reeve Thompson on Sunday, November 4th.



**Next Doorway to Hope  
Deadline is January 15th.**

### **DOORWAY TO HOPE STAFF**

Sally Jenkins, Nate Thompson, and  
Rae Whitehead

## December Calendar

**Hope Church  
Presbyterian Church in America  
206 Greenfield Avenue  
Ballston Spa, NY 12020**



**Sunday, December 16th**

**12:00 Noon**

**Church Family Christmas  
Ham Dinner**

**Cookie Swap to Follow for those  
Who would like to participate**



**Candlelight Service**

**Monday, December 24th**

**6:00 at Hope Church**

**Come with your Family and  
Celebrate the Birth of Our Savior**