



Doorway to Hope

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

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

December 2019 · Vol. 22, No. 4

E-mail: info@hopechurch.us Website: www.hopechurch.us

Christmas Longing

Another Advent Season is fast upon us. It is that time. Again. I can already feel the busyness of the commercial Christmas season creeping in. There was no waiting. The bombardment of ads began immediately after Halloween this year. I'm with King Saul, who according to the ever snarky and satirical Babylon Bee website, attempted to pin David against the wall with his spear for playing Christmas music before Thanksgiving. "If you play Little Drummer Boy ONE MORE TIME..."¹

So how do you avoid the 'humbug' attitude this Christmas as well as the sheer exhaustion that is forced upon us? We joyfully celebrate the timing of Advent. Listen to the repeated refrain of Advent, the Coming of Jesus: "It is time." Or as Paul put it, "When the fullness of time had come God sent forth His Son..." (Galatians 4:7)

It's hard for us to imagine what it was like to live before the first coming of Christ. But as C.S. Lewis put it, life was "always winter and never Christmas." It was sadness without a Savior. It was living in suffocating darkness, with the coming dawn nowhere in sight (Isaiah 8:22). It was anguish and gloom, without a burning away of the clouds.

Then God said again, only this

time about Jesus, "It's time. Let there be light." *"For the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone."* (Isaiah 9:1-2; Matthew 4:15-16)

See, Jesus coming that first Christmas night was God's shouting to us, "It is time! It's time for my beloved Son to come to earth to taste your sadness. It's time to repeat the sounding joy." The rocks, hills and trees were ready. The earth, saturated with tears and blood of victims from Abel to Zechariah, was ready. They were ready to join the chorus (Psalm 148). They've been longing to clap their hands and rejoice (Psalm 96). Then, famously, the angels, unable to contain their joy and wonder at God's coming to us, erupted in thunderous song when they saw that "It was time."

Every song of Christmas in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1-2) cele-

brates the Eternal Lord of Time, sucking in his first breath here in time, with us. As Mary sang, "It is time. God remembered His mercy to us." Zechariah praised, "It's time. God is here. The sunrise from on high has visited us." The angels preached good news to the shepherds: *Don't be afraid!* For Jesus, God of God, Light of Light, who was waiting in the Virgin's womb, has now opened His eyes in Bethlehem. *For unto you a Savior has been born in the city of David.* It's time to sing! Simeon, the faithful servant burst out these words, "The time is now. My eyes have seen your salvation."

Advent is a time to celebrate God's timing. We remember the comings of Jesus to cultivate longing and great expectation for Jesus' final Advent, when that Bright Morning Star brings the dawning of the endless day of rest, rights all wrongs and obliterates all occasions for fear (Zephaniah 3:13). But until that day

(Continued on page 2)

Inside This Issue

<i>Learn God's Word</i> in Advent Sermons and Discipleship Training for All Ages	pp. 1,2,5,6
<i>Interact in Worship</i> in Hymns and Poetry	pp. 2,3,4,6
<i>Foster Loving Relationships</i> as we Serve One Another	pp. 6,8
<i>Extend God's Hope</i> through Spa Christian School's Ministry	p. 4

(Continued from page 1)

we wait and remember that Jesus has already come once, for us. How do we do that?

Consider this. Jesus has three comings to us. Christmas is the first coming. Jesus came to make the wonders of God's love known among the nations, to rule the world with truth and grace, and to make His blessings flow as far as the curse is found (Joy to the World). He came to abide with us.

And we know of Jesus' second coming at the end of all things, when He brings with Him the new heaven and new earth, and the holy city, Jerusalem, dressed as a bride (Revelation 21:1-4). What gets us to that great day? It's what Bernard of Clairveaux, who was known by the people of his day as a honey-tongued pastor, called Jesus' third coming to us right now.

Jesus is Emmanuel, God-with-us. Listen to Jesus' words in John 14:23: *"If anyone loves me, he will keep my word and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."* Let that sink in. The sunrise from on high dwells with you, **now**.

At some point in time in your life, God the Father said of you and me, "It's time." And Jesus sent His Spirit to move you to put faith in our crucified and resurrected Savior, to love and believe in Him and to keep His words. And God, who is Trinity, made their home with you. Jesus came to you. He with you **now**

in time, to chase away the clouds of sadness and gloom. He has not left you as an orphan (John 14:18).

So this Advent season, remember that just as Jesus came in the fullness of time in Bethlehem, one day God the Father will again say to Jesus, "It's time. Let's make all things new." And on that day, the repetition and bombardment will be that of joy and peace, not cynicism and exhaustion. I pray that Jesus will use the Christmas celebration to break through the clouds of busyness and sorrow, and cause you to believe with patience that God will finish the work He started in Bethlehem and will come into time again. Permanently.

Our Advent sermons series, looking at the Songs of Christmas in Luke 1-2, will be working to get your eyes on what another has called Christmas: the "Dawning of Indestructible Joy."

May this Advent meditation help you repent, believe the gospel and follow Jesus, our Eternal King!



¹<https://babylonbee.com/news/evidence-suggests-saul-threw-spear-at-david-after-he-played-christmas-music-before-thanksgiving>.

An Advent Poem

This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed by war and hate
And a comet slashing the sky to warn
That time runs out and the sun burns late.

That was no time for a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honour and truth were trampled by scorn—
Yet here did the Saviour make his home.

When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn—
Yet love still takes the risk of birth.



By Madeleine L'Engle



Ed. Note: In our fall issue, Fred gave us an introduction to the background of the familiar hymn "Onward Christian Soldiers," by Sabine Baring-Gould. In his article, Fred described the influence of the hymn throughout history and the world as well as in movies and TV. We now include the conclusion. Thank you, Fred, for your very thorough and informative series of articles!

Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould was born in the parish of St. Sidwell, Exeter, England on January 28, 1834 and he went to be with his Lord on January 2, 1924.

He was the eldest son and heir of Edward Baring-Gould (1804–1872). His father was lord of the manor of Lew Trenchard, a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant of Devon, formerly a lieutenant in the Madras Light Cavalry (resigned 1830), and an officer with the East India Company until he suffered a disabling carriage accident. Edward, being of sufficient means, decided he would spend his days traveling and took Sabine with him.

Year after year young Sabine journeyed back and forth across Europe. Most of his education was by private tutors. He only spent about two years in formal schooling, first at King's College School in London and then for a few months at Warwick Grammar School. At this last location his time was ended by a bronchial disease of the kind that was to plague him throughout his long life.

In 1852 he was admitted to Cambridge University, and reportedly scraped through obtaining the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1857, then a Master of Arts degree in 1860 from Clare College, Cambridge.

In September 1853 he informed Nathaniel Woodard of his desire to be ordained. He taught for only ten days at one of Woodard's boys' boarding schools in Sussex, Lancing College, but then moved to Hurstpierpoint College, where he stayed from 1857 to 1864. While there he was responsible for several subjects, especially languages and science, and he also designed the ironwork of the bookcases in the boys' library, as well as painting the window jambs with scenes from the "Canterbury Tales" and the "Faery Queen."

Despite all the turmoil in his young life Sabine was remembered as a brilliant, self-taught scholar. Some claim unsettled years during his youth caused his well-known eccentric habits. One noted example was that when he taught school he kept a pet bat on his shoulder.

He took Holy Orders in 1864 and became the pastor at Horbury Bridge, West Riding of Yorkshire.

It was while acting as a curate that he met Grace Taylor, the daughter of a mill hand, then aged fourteen. In the next few years they fell in love. His vicar, John Sharp, arranged for Grace to live for two years with relatives in York to learn middle-class manners. Baring-Gould, meanwhile, relocated to become perpetual curate at Dalton, near Thirsk. He and Grace were married in 1868 at Wakefield. Their marriage lasted until her death 48 years later, and the couple had 15 children, all but one of whom lived to adulthood. When he buried his wife in 1916 he had carved on her tombstone the Latin motto *Dimidium Animae Meae* ("Half my Soul").

Baring-Gould became the rector of East Mersea in Essex in 1871 and

spent ten years there. In 1872 his father died and he inherited the 3,000-acre (12 km²) family estates of Lew Trenchard in Devon, which included the gift of the living of Lew Trenchard parish. When the living became vacant in 1881, he was able to appoint himself to it, becoming parson as well as squire. He did a great deal of work restoring St. Peter's Church, Lew Trenchard, and (from 1883 to 1914) thoroughly remodeled his home, Lew Trenchard Manor.

Despite Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould being mostly remembered for that children's hymn written in haste, or possibly the things manifested by his eccentric nature, we have learned what Christ can do in the lives of those who love and trust Him. So we have learned that Sabine was an Anglican priest, hagiographer, antiquarian, novelist, folk song collector and eclectic scholar. His bibliography consists of more than 1240 publications, though this list continues to grow. His family home, the manor house of Lew Trenchard, near Oakhampton, Devon, has been preserved as he had it rebuilt. However, he is remembered particularly as a writer of hymns, the best-known being "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and "Now the Day is over." He translated the carol "Gabriel's Message" from the Basque language to English. He was considered one of the most gifted men-of-letters during the Victorian Era and during his lifetime wrote eighty-five books on religion, travel, folklore, mythology, history, fiction, biography and theology. One of his prominent publications is the fifteen-volume *Lives of the Saints*. In the British Museum's literary catalogue there are more titles by Baring-Gould than by any other writer of his time.

(Continued on page 4)

Interact in Worship

(Continued from page 3)

Although the citizens of every country demonstrate some aspect of nationalism, it is each of us as Christian who are called to look beyond earth's social and political boundaries: to openly exhibit our love for God the Father, our love for his Son Jesus our Savior, and a Christ-like love for our neighbors as ourselves. Yet, to effectively do so, we need, as His word indicates, to put on the full armor of GOD. (Ephesians 6:11-17)

As those saints who have gone on before us, we can be eternally thankful for the presence of the Holy Spirit and those verses in God's Holy Word that provide us support and understanding when the social, economic and political events we daily face burden us with frustration and concern. When personal trials and needs overwhelm us we have an advocate who is a source of strength in our weakness and always faithful. Yes, this land is not our final home. Yet we can remain confident and joyful while sharing our God-given gifts with the world around us.

Because we, like many in our Origin articles, serve Christ as Soldiers of the Cross, can find the assurance we need in such verses as 1 Timothy 2:1-3 which states, *I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. And in 2 Tim. 2:3 states, Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.* (NIV) Other scriptures supportive of home, resident country and patriotic involvement include: 2 Chronicles 7:14 & 20:17; Psalm 20:7, 33:12, 44:1-4 and 107:23; Proverbs 14:34; Isaiah 32:16-17; Mark 5:39-41; Acts 27:22-26; 1 Corinthians 15:24-27; 2



Spa Christian School Update

Mandy Kergel <><

Dear Hope Church Families and Friends,

Our "Love in Deed" activity in October was to gather toys for Operation Christmas Child. Our children spent the month bringing in items and blew me away with their generosity. Then our students partnered to fill up boxes and really thought deeply about what items their child may appreciate in their gift. The most precious moment is what followed. The students put their hands on the box they packed and we prayed for these children. The prayer began with me (Mrs. Kergel) but then it was opened up to whomever wanted to pray. About ten students from around the room lifted up prayers for their child to enjoy their gifts, that their child would come to know the love of Christ, that their child would be safe and healthy...It was a beautiful moment where these students showed a mature faith beyond their years. They showed "Love in Deed" and it will impact lives all around the world.

We also just recently had our annual Ice Cream Social. Our families came together to enjoy fellowship and ice cream, as well as peruse the book fair that we had going on at the same time. We even had several alumni families in attendance, which is always fun to see. The book fair sales were such that the school received about \$600 of free books for our classrooms. What a blessing!

The rest of the calendar year will be filled with Thanksgiving celebrations, preparations for the Ballston Spa Christmas Parade (which we are sponsors of and will be marching in), Christmas parties, gift wrapping booth (let us know if you'd like to sign up for a shift), and a whole number of other things I am forgetting about. We covet your prayers as we move forward in our dedication to Christ through the pursuit of academic excellence, godly character, and a love of learning, while making disciples through God's abundant grace.

Rejoicing in God's Overflowing Goodness,



Foster Loving Relationships

A Smorgasbord

By Rae Whitehead

The theme of Hope Church ministries for this fall is **discipleship**. Jesus said: “Go and make disciples....” But we need to **be** disciples before we can make them! We come to Him for the forgiveness and freedom that new birth in Him brings. And then—what? We long to get to know Him better, to serve Him well. We come to Him, the Trinity: our Father God, our Elder Brother Jesus, our Comforter Holy Spirit, to do battle with our sin. And we go out, to share our amazing new life with others! We become disciples.

We cannot “go out” alone. God said to Adam in the Garden: “It is not good for man to be alone.” Though there He was speaking about Adam’s need for a wife, the principle is clear: we cannot live our lives as Christians, alone. We need one another! And we need the resources of the Church to “spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” (Hebrews 10:24)

This fall, Hope Church is offering us a smorgasbord of resources to help us to be disciples! In each worship service our small children learn from *Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing* by Sally Lloyd Jones with the help of Pastor Nate’s real-life examples. Discipleship training begins with the three and four-year-olds’ Sunday School class, taught by Pat VanVoorhis. Our first graders are taught by Melanie Combs, and Jill Galarneau teaches grades two through five. We are using Great Commission Publications for children’s Sunday School and Lifeway Christian Resources for Children’s Church.

The adult Sunday School class this quarter is fortunate to include our

middle schoolers and teens! They offer glimpses into our culture as Pastor Nate teaches about “Following Jesus in a Fractured World.” The course takes us all over the Bible. Each class begins with a Bible verse or Christian thought juxtaposed with a current quote. “I am created. I live in an enchanted world” is our song; the culture in which we live seems to chant: “There is no system. The universe is indifferent.” (Donald Draper, *Mad Men*) Fortunately, there is room for discussion as we grapple with living in a fallen world!

Our worship services continue to prepare us to “go out” as disciples. Pastor Nate’s sermons have centered on Psalm 110, which has led us into the New Testament as well as the Old, bringing us to the basics of our faith. (Pastor Nate tells us that the truths of the Apostle’s Creed can be found in Psalm 110.) Pastor Jim’s sermons fit right into the discipleship mode. They center on I John, with its underlying theme: Love one another.

The small groups also deal with discipleship, where the book *What is Discipleship?* by Stephen Smallman is the center of discussion. The ladies bible study is looking at the Old Testament book of Daniel. What an example Daniel is, of living in an alien culture while standing firm for the Lord!

Another encouragement to “spur one another on” is the newly-formed Wednesday morning Mom’s Group, in which *Risen Motherhood: Gospel Hope for Everyday Moments* by Emily Jensen and Laura Wifler leads to sharing

and prayer for one another as moms of all ages.

What a feast! We have before us a veritable smorgasbord of resources and opportunities to learn, grow....and go! May we all have wisdom as we pick and choose, or stuff ourselves, continuing to deepen our knowledge of Jesus and how to follow Him!



On September 23, we lost our beloved brother, Bob Hornlein. Our loss, however, is heaven’s gain, and we delight in the thought of his joy in meeting his Savior and in being reunited with his dear wife of over fifty years, Myrtle. Bob served us faithfully, despite personal suffering and loss, as Elder and Elder Emeritus for over forty years. His ministry of prayer was an inspiration to us all. He is deeply missed.

Foster Loving Relationships

Thank You for Your Service!

It's so easy to take for granted the "normal" and sometimes humdrum service of the many who keep things going at church! It's good to stop and remind ourselves of the work of our brothers and sisters who quietly go about the business of the church.
So—THANK YOU:

- * Musicians, who come to church early every Sunday and lead us in worship
- * Sound Crew, who help us to hear, and who tape the sermons
- * Coffee-Makers, who also come early, and keep us happy (!)
- * Deaconesses, who care for our the practical needs of the community and congregation
- * Fix-It Crew (Deacon Jim, and the guys who take care of the buildings and grounds)
- * Teachers of children and adults
- * Children's Education Coordinator, who oversees children's ministries AND teaches
- * Church Secretary, who seems to oversee EVERYTHING
- * Pastors and elders, whose jobs are un-ending and hearts are huge
- * Small Group hosts and leaders
- * Financial care-takers who count and distribute the offerings weekly
- * And to the many others who scurry around behind the scenes.

If you're not sure who these folks are, FIND OUT, and give them a hug, card, pat on the back or just a big THANK YOU! If you would like to join the work and serve the church in any of these ways, please let us know!

INTO THIS SILENT NIGHT

Into this silent night
as we make our weary way
we know not where,
just when the night becomes its darkest
and we cannot see our path,
just then
is when the angels rush in,
their hands full of stars.

By Ann Weems



Snapshot on Children's Ministry
By Melanie Combs



Thankfulness

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 the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord. We use only the best curriculum we can find, with Great Commission Publications and The Gospel Project. Please know that if you ever have any questions about what your child is learning you can talk to any of the teachers or look over the papers that come home from each lesson.

Choices

Each of the Sunday School lessons starts with a segment called "Growing as a Teacher." In the Younger Elementary class we have been learning about Abraham and the promises God made to Him. One of the "Growing as a Teacher" portions of the lesson talks about choices. Abraham made some good choices and some bad choices. His nephew Lot made some good choices and some bad choices. Each one got to see what consequences came from the choices they made. Your children are constantly coming into contact with situations where they need to make choices. Our choices have consequences we must live with. What a joy it is to work to equip each child with the ability to make good choices. Each good choice made leads to a good consequence, enabling children to make more good choices. Learning how men and women from the Bible made choices can help children make good choices. Lot made a bad choice in where he chose to live. He and his family had to suffer the consequence of that by losing their home, and one family member even lost her life. Abraham remembered to look to God for help while Lot looked to the world he lived in. That world failed him. We want our children to learn from this so they can turn to God first to help make good choices. Please pray with me that they will look to God and their lessons for help to live in a way that is pleasing to Him.

(Bonus question: How many times do you see the word "choices" appear in the above article? :)
_____)

Free Printable Word Search Puzzles

Thankful For...

Find and circle all of the people and things to be thankful for.
The remaining letters spell a secret message.

S E O M R A I N B O W S M E P E M U S I C O
P Y A M D N A R G L V O L U N T E E R S S R
S E S S A L G E Y E D E H E A R I N G C E A
R S E R A L C W D E S I S T E R S N H T S A
Y I P E S G R A E O U M B M O B U O A E S L
I G A W G N E R R L O E A M G F O W B N E E
C H R O R C F R O E A F E R A L N U R I N S
E T E L A O R V U C G M S B T A O S O H D E
S H N F N M E T H T Y I L R E P H A M S N V
S E T E D P H E E P A E V L E W H S U N I T
M L S L P U S O P N S N C E A H R O H U K H
I E R N A T S A L S R H L R R E T O N S F R
L C I O N E H I I I I E M U H S R O S E O I
E T A I A R H N N L D S T C F E S H R M S T
S R H S H S G D D G H A A N T I T E A B T N
T I S I D S B R O O I E Y H I I T K S F C U
E C E V P N E O W O T N G S A L T U H R A A
P I R E E N E E O T G U G F Y L I M A F U T
H T F L A O R I R K A G N I H T O L C E N N
S Y H E C S A V R L S A M T S I R H C E B R
O S E T E F I L S F A P L A C E T O L I V E

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| ACTS OF KINDNESS | ELECTRICITY | GRANDPA | PETS |
| A PLACE TO LIVE | EYEGLASSES | HAPPY MEMORIES | RAINBOWS |
| BEACHES | EYESIGHT | HEARING | SCHOOL |
| BEAUTIFUL NATURE | FAITH | HOLIDAYS | SINGING |
| BLESSINGS | FAMILY | HUMOR | SISTERS |
| BOOKS | FLOWERS | INTERNET | SMART PHONES |
| BROTHERS | FOOD | LAUGHTER | SMILES |
| CARE GIVERS | FREEDOM | LIFE | SUNSHINE |
| CHILDREN | FRESH AIR | LOVE | TEACHERS |
| CHRISTMAS | FRIENDS | MUSIC | TELEVISION |
| CLEAN WATER | FUN | NURSES | VOLUNTEERS |
| CLOTHING | GOOD HEALTH | PARENTS | WARM SHOWERS |
| COMPUTERS | GRANDMA | PEACE | |

Did you enjoy this puzzle? Visit: <https://www.puzzles.ca/word-search>

Copyright © 2018 [Puzzles.ca](https://www.puzzles.ca)

Extend God's Hope

Cranberry Couscous Salad

Submitted by Deb Swinton
As Requested

1-1/2 cups dry couscous, cooked in 2 cups water and 1 Tbsp. vegetable or chicken bullion
1 cup dried cranberries
1 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup sliced green onions
1 Tbsp. dried parsley
1 cup toasted slivered almonds

Toast slivered almonds on a cookie sheet in oven at 375 for 8 minutes or so, till golden. You don't have to do this, but it really brings out the flavor! Set almonds aside.

Cook and cool the couscous (drain it well)

Combine couscous, cranberries, parsley, celery and green onions.

Then dress with:

1/4 cup sesame oil
3 tsp. soy sauce
1 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 cup orange juice

Refrigerate at least 4 hours, or overnight.

The salad may seem quite wet at first, but the dressing will be absorbed as it sits in the fridge. Toss with slivered almonds before serving.



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

DOORWAY TO HOPE STAFF

Sally Jenkins, Nate Thompson,
and Rae Whitehead

Cheesy Chicken Chowder

Submitted by Pat Turner
As Requested

1 c. onion, chopped
1 c. carrots chopped
1 c. diced potatoes
1 c. diced celery
4 c. water
4 Tbsp. olive oil
5 c. diced cooked chicken
6 Tbsp. flour
2 c. milk
2 diced "Velveeta" cheese
4 chicken bouillon cubes
1/2 tsp. pepper

*Sometimes I'll add 1 or 2 c. chopped cauliflower and a diced red pepper.

Combine vegetables and bouillon cubes in water in large stockpot. Simmer until soft. Add chicken.

Mix flour and oil into 1 c. milk until smooth. Stir into hot vegetables until thickened. Add rest of milk and cheese and pepper. Stir until melted...don't boil.

Recipe from:
The Amish Cook at Home
by Jovina Eisener



4 Rosemary Hathaway
11 Ben Bowman
15 Stan Trestick
16 Natalie Jones
16 Ray Gibbins
22 Mary Peroha
23 Niya McKeon
23 Laura Childs
24 Jamin Emerson
28 Amanda Farinacci
31 Donna Tessitore



11 Ben & Amanda Bowman
14 Jim & Terry Cornick
17 Bob & Betse Smith

BIRTHS

Congratulations to the Cutler family at the birth of Nora Elizabeth to Jonathan and Kara Cutler. This long-awaited adoption has taken place and Daryl and Debbie as well as Jonathan and Kara are ecstatic. Nora was born on October 19th.

Congratulations go out as well to the Childs family at the birth of their new daughter, Callie Ann born on October 16th. Callie joins her twelve siblings and has brought great joy and rejoicing to their family.



Bob and Phyllis Piester at their Ballston Spa High School 70th Class Reunion

December Calendar

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



December 2019



Decorate the Church

Monday, December 2

6:00 p.m.



Christmas Dinner

Christmas Dinner for All

Sunday, December 15th

12:00 Noon



Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 24th

6:00 p.m.