



discover... connections
faith
purpose
belonging
family
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NOVEMBER 2019



Hope Presbyterian Church
1189 Hope Rd. Tinton Falls, NJ 07724
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Worship Service 9:00AM, Sunday

Message from the Pastor

Sin and Mercy

Possibly the oldest Christian prayer is simply, "Lord, have mercy." It is based on the appeal of a blind man in Jericho named Bartimaeus in Mark 10:47. It has been an integral and essential part of Christian liturgy ever since.

Unfortunately, this prayer, appears to be a problem for some folks. I am told the words are too negative. The criticism is that begging for mercy and calling oneself a sinner only reinforce the kind of oppressive, self-flagellating religious expressions that Christianity is infamous for. It is especially disempowering for those victimized by religious imperialism, like women. Not only do practices like this keep people under the thumb of the authorities, but such self-hatred tends to get expressed in acts of misanthropic violence. Finally, there seems to be an assumption that God is always ready to punish and afflict, but can be dissuaded by our pathetic pleas for mercy. Surely we can do better than morose and depressing, chest-beating, guilt obsessed begging for God to forgive us. So the argument goes.

First of all, modern people don't like to talk about "sin" at all. We see it as a guilt-trip. Surely it is better to awaken to our original blessing, than to wallow in misery about our sins.

The fact that sin has become a rejected category for sophisticated, modern people indicates not so much a healthy self-esteem as a deliberate reticence to face the wall-to-wall mess we have made of the planet and its people, including ourselves, over the last 500 years. We have reduced the word "sin" to refer to somebody else's sexuality, when actually it denotes a comprehensive breakdown of relationships.

Our Mission Statement

We believe that God has gathered this congregation and staff at this time and place in order to:

Introduce people to the enduring love of Jesus found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Invite them to become part of the family of God

Instruct them in the scriptures, God's word to us

Involve them in the ministry of the church, according to their gifts

Inspire them to go into the world, making disciples of others

"Mercy is the recognition of our original blessing and goodness."



Talk about “sin” simply recognizes that we humans, in our egocentric condition, are functioning as *if* separated from God, creation, others, and even our true selves. Calling ourselves sinners does *not* mean we are essentially bad people who do not deserve to live. It means, as in the first of the 12 steps of recovery, realizing that our life is unmanageable, and that we are indeed complicit in all kinds of evil.

This is what it means to be “woke.” When we do awaken to our original blessing and goodness, one of the first things that happens is we understand how far our words, thoughts, and actions had drifted away from that. Awakening means realizing that we had been, in effect, asleep, and taking responsibility for what we did when we were not as fully conscious.

Awakening causes us at the same time to see the wreckage we have left behind us in the world, in our relationships, in our own bodies and souls, with clarity and honesty. It is not that we are bad, but we have done bad things, usually inadvertently, unknowingly, or rationalizing that they are actually good.

Secondly, the prayer is about mercy. Mercy is the recognition of our original blessing and goodness. Awareness of mercy — that is, of forgiveness, compassion, peace, acceptance, wholeness, and welcome — *is* awakening.

Mercy is not just something we receive and then keep for ourselves, like a commodity. Mercy, like so many of the qualities Jesus talks about and embodies, is something in which we participate by *sharing* it. To receive mercy is to *give* it. If we do not become merciful, we will not receive mercy. Mercy is a *flow*. It goes through us. We only have it only to the extent that we give it away.

Therefore, “have mercy on me, a sinner” emphatically does *not* mean, “don’t punish me for being such a terrible person.” It means rather, “Let the flow of your mercy, goodness, and blessing overwhelm and transform me and my world through me.” It means “Let me *be* your mercy, your compassion, and your forgiveness in the world.”

And yes, it includes the implication that we have a way to go in realizing this, but at least we are hopefully making progress. The sign of this progress is that we have the sense to pray for mercy.

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Daily Meditation from Rev. Rack

Rev. Rack distributes a Daily Meditation e-mail to those who want to receive it. It includes a spiritual quote, a note about a holy person for the day, a calendar, and guides for reading through the Bible. Anyone interested in receiving it should send an e-mail to paulrack@optonline.net.



Starting Again

By Nancy Massa

Rally Day for Sunday School was eventful at Hope. Not only did both classes meet together and have a combined lesson on God's creation, but we also participated in our Backpack Blessing, which occurred at the end of the service. The children brought their backpacks in and placed them on the chancel and Rev. Rack said a prayer for all, blessing their new school year, anointing each child with blessed water from the baptismal font. Each child also received a written blessing to carry with them for their new school year. Not to be forgotten, the adults who touch the children's lives (parents, teachers, bus drivers) were also part of the blessing.



At Hope, we prepare for the return to school all year long. One of our mission projects, Back to School, benefits the families with school-aged children who attend the Eatontown Food Pantry as well as our own Giving Tree families with children. All year long, \$25 Target cards are purchased with some of the proceeds from our monthly SCRIP orders. A list of qualifying and attending families at the pantry is prepared, monitored and kept current by our congregant, Nancy Massa, who also volunteers at the pantry. 10 families from the pantry and 4 Giving Tree families received 35 Target cards this year – that's a value of \$875. 8 cards were purchased with our share of the Pentecost Offering, so 27 Target cards were purchased with our SCRIP proceeds. What a big help to families who might not have the funds for school supplies to start another school year. So during the year, when you hear that it's SCRIP Sunday, please consider buying a gift card(s) for your own needs. The more you buy, the more that can be recycled into the benefiting projects.



Coffee Hour & Fellowship





Among the Animals

By Kathy Heller

On Sunday, October 6 at 2:30 in the afternoon, an array of animals and their owners gathered for our annual Blessing of the Animals here at Hope. With eight dogs, a brave cat, and their families present, Rev. Rack recognized the place of animals in creation and in the lives of their owners. Each animal was blessed and anointed with frankincense. The pets of Hope present were Maisie Heller, Kratos and Xena Massa, and Bear Miller. Rebecca and Kerri Strong were there to add support for both owners and animals.

The blessing was well attended this year with guests from local communities, including a couple from Eatontown who brought their two hounds after learning about the event at Eatontown Day. Other visitors had attended several times in the past, and the remaining folks learned of the blessing from our sign out front. A friendly gathering of animal lovers, with some expected hijinks from their pets! The lovely aroma of frankincense lingered on the animals as all reflected on this truly special time of fellowship and blessing for both four-legged and two-legged creatures.



Eatontown Day – October 5, 2019





Ladies' Book/Bible Study

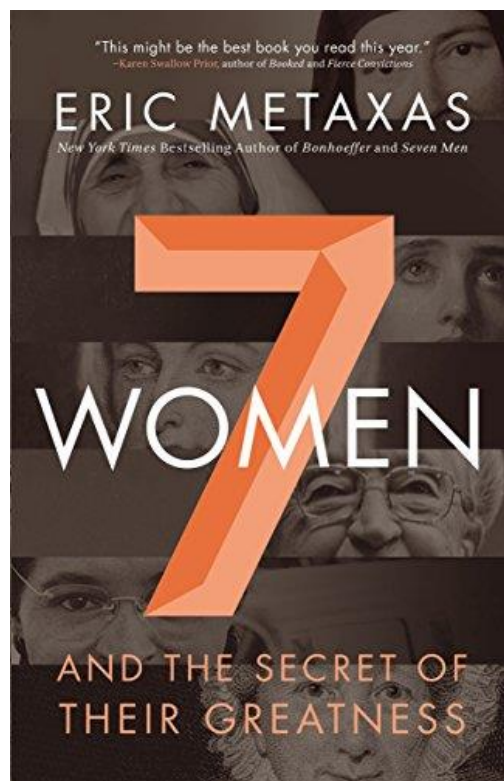
by Kelly Colao

On November 17th we will begin a new book study on Eric Metaxas' book, *7 Women and the Secret of Their Greatness* – seven women who changed the course of history – Joan of Arc, Susanna Wesley, Hannah More, Maria Skobtsova, Corrie ten Boom, Rosa Parks and Mother Teresa.

"Each of these world-changing figures followed the call placed on her life, doing so with remarkable feminine dignity. Teenaged Joan of Arc heard God's command and led the French army to a mighty victory over the British. Hannah More played a crucial role in the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. Corrie ten Boom risked her life to hide Dutch Jews from the Nazis in World War II and somehow survived the horrors of a concentration camp, but her greatest feat was forgiving her tormentors years later. And Rosa Parks's God-given sense of justice and unshakable dignity; helped launch the twentieth century's greatest social movement." (from the back cover of the book)

This study will be a bit different from those in the past. There is no DVD, no study guide...and no homework! So this time we will do basically a book discussion group: read the chapter, and come and discuss.

We meet every other week downstairs in the Calvin Room after worship, from about 10:30-11:30. We are very informal, no one is ever put on the spot to contribute to our discussion! Grab a cup of coffee and a snack and grab a seat! We'd love to have you join us!





Stewardship 2020

by Kathy Heller

“His Work Through Our Hands”

Hope Presbyterian Church has been here in Tinton Falls for twenty-five years. Our ministry has developed and changed in many ways over that time. Recently, while preparing for Eatontown Day, I was reflecting on the journey of this congregation from its historical roots in the Shrewsbury Presbyterian Church, its Broad Street home in Eatontown built with parts from a NYC church shipped here on barges, to the years when the congregation was “on the move.” I was not a part of the congregation at that time, but you couldn’t live in the area and not notice those ubiquitous “On the Move” bumper stickers. When the present building was ready, the congregation actually walked together with signs and banners from Eatontown to this brand new church in such a beautiful location. The culmination of years of planning, waiting in HOPE. I think we can all imagine the joy and thankfulness of that day. We came to Hope several months after that, and the enthusiasm and pride in what had been accomplished was still palpable as it was for many years. The opportunities for ministry as God calls us to do infused the congregation.

Just as the world has changed in that time, so have we, so has our congregation. What has not changed is our devotion to God, how welcoming we are to all who enter our doors, and our openness to mission in its many forms. We care for each other and we extend that care to local organizations as well as mission work around the world.

Since 1994 our building and grounds have changed, as well as the way we use our building. We now provide places for “nesting” congregations and a school to meet extending our support to others in the name of the Lord. We are thankful for their support of our ministry here at Hope. As time takes its toll on our own homes and property, so it has on Hope Presbyterian Church and its campus. We need to move forward and ensure and provide for the needs of our church building which is now a quarter of a century old. Maintaining HVAC systems, roofing, gutters, cement work, electrical features and cleaning up snowfalls seems like mundane work...until it doesn’t happen and emergency decisions have to be made quickly.

As Session prepares Hope’s budget for the next year, we would like to plan wisely, knowing what we have to work with, making good choices. Commitment Cards that have been provided to the congregation help us to be thoughtful stewards in using our resources. Please consider prayerfully how an increase in financial support for the year ahead would positively impact this ministry. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot. Thanks to the faithful people of Hope decades ago, we have been provided with a house of worship that is special to all of us. Let us be good stewards of this gift, honoring those who came before us and who lovingly donated what we have today.

Hope also needs our time and talents to help us carry our ministry forward. We are not a church with office and cleaning help, nor grounds maintenance beyond mowing and snow removal. All of us have physical and mental talents, various areas of knowledge that would contribute to Hope’s maintenance, and growth. Let’s greet the next quarter century with an active outlook, preserving and expanding what is happening at Hope as we reach out in the name of the Lord.



Deacon News

Thanksgiving Gratitude Jars

We all have so much to be thankful for. The Deacon's Gratitude calendar will help us realize just how much we have. Each day we can count our blessings (e.g. television sets) and put an amount of money in a jar for each one we own. At the end of the month we donate the collection to the Deacons toward all the good work they do.



Giving Tree

The giving tree is up in the narthex for the Deacons' Thanksgiving Outreach. Please reach into your heart to help the Deacons with this program by being THANKFUL for God's blessings and GIVING to spread God's blessings to others.

All you need to do is pick an ornament from the tree. You may purchase the gift card through script on **Nov 3rd**. (Inez Brown will handle the details.) or if you get the gift card later you may give it to Fred Bauch. Thanks for your support, The Deacons from Hope.



Christmas Cookie Sale December 8

No time to bake fancy holiday cookies? No problem! Get all you want at the Deacon Christmas Cookie Sale.



One Starry Night

By Carol-Jeanne Shaw

Our children's Christmas program is coming up quickly. For those of you who don't know what that is, we take the children on an adventure through Bethlehem on the night that Jesus was born. They visit 7-8 stations where they learn the various parts of the Christmas story. Our costumed characters tell the events of the night through crafts and storytelling.

This evening is possible only through the help of volunteers like you and the teenagers of the church. We provide everything needed. Please consider your heart and your willingness to help. The stories are already written for you. The crafts are ready for you to help the children assemble or color and paint. Your costumes are ready for you. All you need to provide is a willingness to share the knowledge of Christ's birth with children who are ready and excited to learn.

This event is held on December 6 at 6PM. There are usually 2 meetings prior to the event. We set up at 4PM on the Friday of the event.

Please see Carol-Jeanne Shaw with questions about the event. Surely there is a spot you can fill to be of assistance.



One Starry Night Family Advent Event

Walk through Bethlehem on the night that Jesus was born

December 6, 2019****6PM

Hope Presbyterian Church

1189 Hope Road

Tinton Falls

732-542-0706

Call to reserve a spot for each child

No charge





It's time to pack shoeboxes!

By Kelly Colao

Help yourself to a preprinted OCC box (or more than one if you know of little people who would like to help...it's a great way to teach our children "giving"...). Fill your box(es) with school supplies, non-liquid hygiene items, accessories, toys, a "wow" item - check your "How to Pack a Shoebox" trifold for ideas. If you choose to pay your \$9 per box online, you can track your box and know where it is sent. You can also include a photo of your family with a personal note. Most importantly, pray for the child who will receive your box. Boxes are due back to church **by Sunday, November 17th.** Thanks in advance for your help.



Prayer Ministry

By Kelly Colao

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:6,7

Here at Hope Church, we have a Prayer Ministry that is multi-faceted:

A Prayer Chain that maintains confidentiality while enlisting the prayer support of many, many prayer warriors who have volunteered to participate in this ministry. In addition to using the "bluies" to submit a prayer request, you may email Bill Heller at wheller@gmail.com.

Pastor Paul offers prayer during Communion. He is always standing off to the side as the servers distribute the elements, waiting for whomever needs to pray with him.

Every Sunday during worship we have an informal time of sharing during which we can verbalize prayer requests, and those requests are then included in our corporate prayer time. Every other Sunday after worship, at 10:30, we meet at the foot of the cross to share prayer requests and pray together, with and for each other, lifting our requests to Jesus. There is no formal script for this; we simply follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, usually meeting for 30-45 minutes. All are welcome! Bring your coffee upstairs and join us!

We consider it a precious privilege to pray for each other, giving all praise and glory to Jesus. If you have need of prayer for any reason, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.



The Story of Little Blueie and the Prayer Chain

By Kelly Colao

Perhaps you don't really know me. I mean, I know you see me every week when you come to church. I live in that little rack in the pew. You know, with the Hymnals and Bibles. And Pastor Paul introduces me every week. He reminds everyone to "fill out the blues". But do you know me...really know me...more than just my name? Do you know that I have an important job to do?

The first important thing is that people can put their name on me. That's one of the ways that Mr. Heller knows when someone is missing. Then he lets the Deacons (and some other people) know, and they can see if there is any way we can help. But I think my most important job is to carry prayer requests to Mr. Heller. Let me tell you how that works.

On Sunday mornings, during the worship service, I just sit there waiting until someone picks me out of the rack. Then that person can write on me whatever they want people to pray about. The prayer request can be detailed, or not; it can include someone's name, or not. God knows the details whether you write them or not.

After I am written on, the person puts me into the offering plate. I just lie there very quietly, guarding my special message. After the worship service, an usher takes me and puts me with a bunch of other blues, and gives us all to Mr. Heller. He takes us all home with him.

When Mr. Heller gets home, he looks at all of us very carefully, and he types a list on his computer of all the prayer messages we have carried from that day. Then the list gets sent to about three dozen people who have signed up to pray for whatever requests come in. Those people get that list in their email, and then they can pray. It's really very easy. So actually, my job is done when Mr. Heller is finished transferring my special message to his list. But I want to tell you a couple of other important things.

I wasn't sure you knew how important I am, and what a big job I have, and what happens to those things people write each week. So I wanted to tell you about that. But also, Mr. Heller told me to tell you that if anyone feels like they want to be a part of the Prayer Chain and have that special list emailed to them, all they need to do is tell Mr. Heller. He even gave me his email address to make it easy: wheller@gmail.com. In case someone doesn't have email, but wants to pray, he gave me his phone number too: 732-693-7346. He sends lists out "snail mail" too! Also, we blues all want to get involved in this praying thing. Mr. Heller says it would be good if more people wrote things for people to be praying about. So I want to encourage you to write requests.....I know from overhearing some conversations that a lot of you have things that could use some prayer!

Thanks for listening to my story....I'll see you next week when you come to worship!

MEMBER REGISTRATION	(Visitors please use other side)
Date _____	
Name _____	
Family Members Present _____	
NOTES	
Please note any messages to staff, special needs, prayer requests, Hospitalizations, address or phone changes, etc.	

Visitor Attendance Registration	(Members please use other side)
Date _____	
Name _____	
Family Members Present _____	
Home Phone _____	
Address _____	
City _____	ZIP Code _____
email address _____	
First Time Visitor _____	Send copy of Newsletter _____
Returning Visitor _____	Would appreciate a call _____
New to Community _____	Special Note (see back) _____
Interested in membership _____	Interested in Education Opportunities _____



Boscov's Day – October 16



Nancy Massa also volunteered to sell coupons at Boscov's.

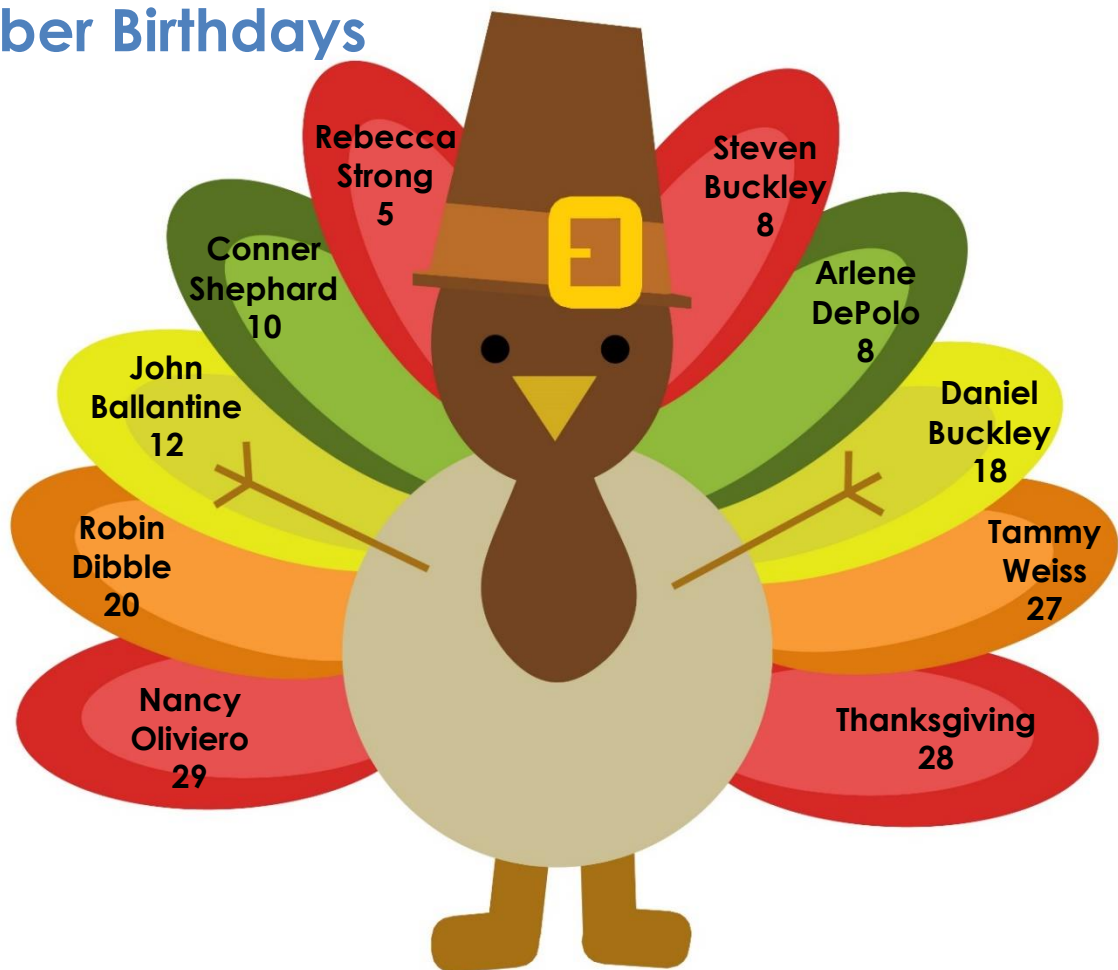


Youth Pizza Night





November Birthdays



December Birthdays





World Communion Sunday – October 6





Hope Presbyterian Church

Looking Ahead	
Christmas Shoeboxes due	November 17
New Ladies Bible Study	November 17
Thanksgiving	November 28
First Sunday in Advent	December 1
One Starry Night	December 6, 6:00PM
Deacon's Christmas Cookie Sale	December 8
Christmas Eve Service	December 24

There's a lot going on at 1189 Hope Rd., Tinton Falls, NJ

Hope Presbyterian Church
Worship
Sunday
9:00AM – 10:00AM

Korean Presbyterian Church
Worship/Fellowship
Sunday
12:00PM – 4:00PM

Pentecostal Church
Worship
Sunday
5:30PM – 7:00PM



Loud Cry Congregation
Worship
Saturday
9:00AM – 4:00PM

God is Faithful Ministries
Bible Study
Wednesday
9:30PM – 11:30PM

**ACCE Academic
Christian Center
For Excellence
School**
Monday - Thursday
9:00AM – 4:00PM