

In Touch with *Hope*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOPE CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2025

Pastor James Runcorn

Lead Pastor

They Are Looking Down From Above

Our church and community have experienced quite a bit of loss recently. We do not grieve as those who have no hope, since our faith is anchored in Christ Jesus. In Him, we look forward to the resurrection. Scripture instructs us to encourage one another with these words (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). At the same time, our hearts ache with the absence of our loved ones and friends who have passed away. Many times, on social media, I will see multiple responses from others when the loss of a loved one is shared. Those responses range from condolences to happy memories to thoughts about where the deceased loved one is now. The response I'd like to focus on is this, "They are looking down from above and are so proud of you." We do know that at the moment a believer dies, they are immediately in the presence of the LORD (2 Corinthians 5:8). Once we are in the presence of God, do we see what happens on earth? Do we even care? I can't begin to imagine the amazing and breathtaking majesty of being in the presence of God. So, is there any theological framework for us to begin to consider some kind of awareness of the goings-on here on earth, when someone is in Heaven? Read the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15:3-7. Jesus compares the celebration of the shepherd finding his lost sheep to what happens in Heaven. He says, "I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent" (v. 7 NIV). While we do not know how detailed the citizens of Heaven have an awareness of our lives here on earth, we see there is something known. Heaven celebrates when sinners repent and turn to Jesus. His Kingdom rejoices when another victory is won in His Name. Do your deceased relatives look down on you every day? I would like to think so, but it is unclear. What is clear, is there is an awareness of victory over sin and death. Praise be to Jesus!

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SUPER SUNDAY

PARTY

SUN, FEB 9 | 5 PM
HOPE CHURCH
919 GRAND AVE

Click on the link <https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/supersunday2025>
 and tell us what team you are cheering for!
 The first 100 youth will get a Team Shirt to wear.
 Whichever team wins, receives a prize at the end of the night.

Cost

YOU = \$10
YOU + 1 FRIEND = \$5 + \$5
YOU + 2 OR MORE FRIENDS = ALL FREE!!!

IGNITE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SENIOR HIGH SPIRITUAL RETREAT
MARCH 14-16

Register: <https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/IGNITE2025>

At Ignite, the goal is to equip and train students with Biblical principles. Principles that will help them grow in their faith and accomplish the goal of reaching people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Harmony

Sr High HIS Work Camp
June 20-30

Harmony celebrates the beauty of unity and collaboration, much like how the four Gospels work together to tell the story of Jesus. Each Gospel offers a unique perspective, yet together they form a complete, harmonious narrative. At HIS '25 we'll reflect on how diverse voices and experiences can come together to create something powerful and meaningful in the life of the Church, just as the Gospels do in sharing the life and message of Christ.

Jay Van Gelder
 Youth Pastor

We communicate primarily via text. Please opt in by texting YES to 87447.

Flyers for youth trips are handed out at Youth Group. Contact Jay if you have questions.

Registration for the MS Retreat and the HS HIS Camp open on February 3. Registration for MS Power Connection opens in March.

JOIN US FOR YOUTH GROUP EACH WEEK!

MIDDLE SCHOOL Wednesdays 5:30 pm - 6th Grade 6:30 pm - 7th Grade 7:30 pm - 8th Grade	SENIOR HIGH Sundays at 7:00 pm
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HOLD FAST

MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT
APRIL 11-13

Hold Fast encourages us to stand firm in our faith, trusting in God's promises. In the ever-changing world we live in, Christ is the one thing we can always cling to. Hold Fast reminds us to hold on to hope, stay strong together, and support one another in love and good deeds. Even in tough times, we gather in community, knowing God is faithful.

BEST LIFE EVER

MS Power Connection
July 22-27

Teenagers are always on the lookout for the next best thing, eager to experience all that life has to offer. The theme "Best Life Ever," invites teenagers to uncover the secret to experiencing true fulfillment and joy. Students will imagine if they could live the best life ever by having a personal relationship with Jesus, being others-centered, and belonging to a supportive community of believers. It will be a transformative journey unlocking the ultimate secret to living your best life ever.

MISSIONS

Cru is a caring community passionate about connecting college students to Jesus. Karen and I have had the privilege to be a part of this organization since 2010 and 2014. We believe the hope of Jesus is the greatest message anyone can receive!

I lead a team of Cru staff setting out to launch movements at the 18 campuses in the Pioneer Valley and Western Massachusetts so that every college student, faculty, and staff know someone who truly follows Jesus. We do this in collaboration with other campus ministries and local churches. Through the school year, especially at the start of each semester, we do a ton of outreaches, bringing our involved students with us to train them and give them experience in having spiritual conversations that hopefully lead to gospel conversations. This fall we saw three students make decisions to follow Jesus. Pray for more students to follow Jesus this spring, especially the first few weeks of campus. We have large weekly meetings that help students grow in their faith. It's also a great place where non-believers come to explore Christianity for the first time. I lead our staff team as we disciple students and lead Bible studies, and we equip these same students to then lead their own Bible studies or discipleship groups.

The Great Commission, and 2 Timothy 2:2 guide most of what we do in making new disciples of Jesus who then make new disciples of Jesus who do the same, with the hopes of sending them out into the world after college equipped to keep doing that through their local church, in their community, and hopefully for some as missionaries to unreached people across the globe. We have a partnership in the Middle East that we regularly send staff and students to. Presently most of our work is done at UMass Amherst with a population of about 32,000 students, but we are always looking for openings on new campuses where there isn't already a Christian group of any kind present. Pray for God to open doors on more campuses. Pray for our Spring Break Relief Trip to Asheville, NC that students would get experience in both demonstrating and proclaiming the Good News to those impacted by Hurricane Helene. Pray for more student ownership of evangelism on campus, and for humility for student leaders and us staff as we are all led by Jesus.

Karen enjoys designing promotional materials for Cru's many summer mission trips that send staff and students all over the world to love people and share the beauty of the gospel with anyone who will hear. She also has a heavy hand in creating the promotional and on site materials needed for Cru's several winter conferences that take place all over the country between Christmas and MLK Jr. weekend. These events are often a turning point in students' lives as they're challenged to make their faith their own, fully surrender their lives, and explore ways they can make a difference in God's Kingdom.

College students have opportunities thrust upon them left and right, so it's critical that Cru's offerings compete visually and encourage students that what we do is not only fun but worthwhile. After all, we have the greatest message and Lord anyone can ever encounter. Our designs should reflect that and give glory to God!

Our work is fully dependent on the generosity of individuals and churches. We are so grateful for Hope's partnership with us in our ministry, and the individuals from Hope that support our ministry as well. Yet, we are still in need of more monthly ministry partners at \$100/month or some other amount to be able to effectively engage on mission here long-term. We would love to connect with you if you are interested in speaking with us. If you already know you want to partner with us, you can begin your giving on give.cru.org/0869561. Thank you so much for your prayers for our ministry with Cru in the Pioneer Valley!

~ John and Karen Corrigan



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Julia Andela

Director of Children & Family Ministry

Summer Fun!

It's cold outside, but warm weather will be here before you know it and that means Summer Camp is coming!! We offer \$100 scholarships per camper at each Inspiration Hills and Hidden Acres. Click on the links below to check out their awesome camps! Contact Julia for more information.



Registration opens February 1

<https://www.inspirationhills.org/summer-camp>



Registration is open.

<https://www.hacamps.org/campers-and-parents>



**Summer fun also means it's time for
Vacation Bible School!**

SAVE THE DATE ~ JUNE 9-13!

REGISTRATION OPENS

Hope Kids on April 7
Community on April 14

Parents' Night Out is BACK!

Friday, February 28 | 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Parents' Night Out comes from a desire to encourage parents to take time to prioritize each other by removing one big obstacle: childcare! We provide free, fun and safe care so you don't have to search for or pay for it. This night is not only for couples though. Single parents, this night is for you, too!! Enjoy some much deserved "me time" or connect with friends while we hang out with your kiddo(s). Care will be provided for children ages 0 through 5th Grade.

Here's a little reminder of the "why" behind this event. God tells us throughout the Bible how to prioritize our life:

1. God (Mark 12:30)
2. If married, your spouse (Ephesians 5:21-33; Genesis 2:24)
3. If a parent, your child(ren) (Deuteronomy 11:18-19; Ephesians 6:4)
4. Everything else...

However, culture seems to set a very different list of priorities for us and it's all too easy for the lines to get blurred. A blog from Genuine Christian Women shared this: "When it comes to your top priorities, they must stay where they are. Nothing should knock God out of his top place – not even your [spouse]. Additionally, children, although more needy, should not usurp your [spouse]'s position. Likewise, careers and outside responsibilities mustn't creep in ahead of our children. We must keep these important priorities in order."

Volunteers are NEEDED to make this event possible!

Parent's Register Here



<https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/PNO245871>

If you are not in the stage of life where a babysitter is needed in your home, please consider serving these young families by volunteering to help watch kids in the nursery, preschool or elementary areas.

Volunteers Register Here



<https://hopechurchspencer.breezechms.com/form/PNOVOLUNTEER2025>



ROOTED SMALL GROUPS

Terry Stevens

Director of Adult Discipleship

We are pleased to announce another Rooted launch will begin on March 16! Rooted is a 10 week, small group experience. Rooted gives you the tools to grow your faith by spending time in scripture and community with your Rooted group. If you missed the previous launch and are interested, sign up will begin February 16. Please contact me with any questions at tstevens@spencerhope.org.

Hope Church has an account with RightNow Media and offers access to Hope Church members. This website provides high-quality, Bible-based video content suitable for all ages. If you are interested in RightNow Media, but do not have a login, please contact me, and I will send you a link to set up access.

Additionally, we are planning a movie night at Hope Church on February 22 to watch "The Forge". This 2024 Christian movie about a young man who finds his purpose in life through faith and mentorship. The movie will start at 7:00 pm, but please arrive at 6:30 pm to get your snacks and find your spot. Feel free to bring a cozy blanket, pillows, and your favorite chair. Snacks, drinks and regular chairs will also be provided.



THE FORGE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22 | 6:30 PM | HOPE CHURCH HARBOR



4TH ANNUAL Chili COOK OFF

SUNDAY, MARCH 9 | 5 PM
FREE TO ENTER | FREE TO TASTE
Prizes awarded!

SIGN UP BEGINS FEBRUARY 16!



He left the 99 to find me.
Now that is LOVE.



WINTER WEATHER POLICY

We haven't had "winter" yet this year, but there is always a possibility it will still happen.

This is Hope Church's Winter Weather Policy.

If Sunday services need to be canceled due to weather, you will receive a text and an email. It will also be on KICD. For texts, please opt in. Text YES to 87447.

If first service only is canceled, Sunday School will also be canceled.

During the week, if school is canceled or let out early, ALL church activities are canceled for the day.

CONSISTORY MINUTES

Present: Pastor James Runcorn. **Elders:** Bob Campbell, Kevin Vander Stoep, Gary Zeutenhorst, Dean Mechler, Mark Lockey. **Deacons:** Ryan Hoskins, Ryan Christoffel, Jason Warren, Alex Johnson, Terry Stevens, Kelly Geerdes, Kevin Goeken, Ryan Murray, Knut Brown
December 12, 2024 • 7:00 pm

Opening prayer: Bob Campbell

Devotional: Ryan Christoffel covered questions 112-115 of the Heidelberg Catechism: the Ninth Commandment; To not bear false witness against your neighbor. Tenth Commandment; Thou shalt not covet.

REGULAR BUSINESS

- Approved November 14, 2024 meeting minutes-MMSC (Bob/Jason)
- Approved November financials-MMSC (Bob/Jason)
- November 2024 giving and attendance was reviewed by Alex

James discussed with new consistory members the purpose of “checking in” in which it is a time to share any personal concerns and positive things going on with consistory members so that we can celebrate or walk alongside one another for support if needed. Proceeded with check in.

TEAM REPORTS

- Head/Purposeful Learning (Jeff/Knut) - Knut - Children’s Christmas program Sunday
- Holy Living (Gary/Terry) Gary reported on Women’s Tea, a lot of positive feedback regarding the event and it was well attended. Terry reported on the Rooted celebration meal. 3 people were baptized that night and 99% of the people stated they were intending on continuing their involvement in their groups. Tentative plan will be to run another Rooted group around Easter.
- Fellowship (Doug/Jason) Jason no report.
- Worship (Kevin/Ryan H) Ryan stated the worship team is working on Children’s Christmas program as well as the Christmas Eve program. He indicated that the worship team is excited about the upgrades related for the worship in the Building Hope campaign.
- Service (Bruce/Ryan C) Ryan stated that they have a contract with Brian Lohman to do the snow removal for the parking lot.
- Outreach (Bob/Alex) Alex reported that Hope is helping with Meals on Wheels this month. Bob indicated that one of the things Hope does is give family members who have lost a loved one a series of grief books and will be distributed by the Care Team. John and Karen Corrigan who have been working with CRU who Hope has supported will be coming home for the holidays and so they will be given time in the service to talk about their ministry.

PASTOR’S REPORT

- James stated that 2025 will be the 75th anniversary for Hope Church. We will need to start planning for this looking to do something possibly summer or fall.
- James indicated that the community outreach program has found another site to provide meals to the community. He indicated that they would still like to have him continue to provide the spiritual component of that program. He has been asked to be a part of an advisory board to address the spiritual aspects of the outreach program in the community.
- James discussed the ongoing need to start looking at how we can continue to evaluate what we are currently doing to move the church toward accomplishing our mission and vision statement. Current activities as well as new ideas and activities to help gather, equip and grow the church were discussed.
- Discussed the congregational meeting and felt there was a good balance between information presented without having the meeting go too long.
- Discussed the issue of what to do with monies pledged and the fact that there is more money pledged than what is needed to finish the Building Hope Campaign. Some ideas were discussed such as 1: replacing carpet in the sanctuary; 2: re-carpet the Harbor; 3: gutter guards. Decision to continue discussions regarding how to address this issue.

Closing Prayer- Kevin Vander Stoep

ELDER MEETING

Opening Prayer- Gary Zeutenhorst

- James stated that they have had one Caregivers meeting . First meeting was in November and hopes to have another in January.

ELDER MINUTES CONTINUED

- Discussed meeting with residents from Hope and other residents of the Highlands for coffee. James, Doug and Gary went and felt like it went well. There was a good turnout and did hear positive feedback regarding the activity. Would like to continue this activity on a quarterly basis.
 - Discussed starting to do communion with those church members who are shut in and not able to get to church. Bob Campbell stated that he would get a list together to review.
- Closing prayer- Gary Zeutenhorst

DEACON MEETING

- Went over roles and assigned roles to new Deacons
- Discussed local needs with new Deacons
- Assigned Vice President and President of Deacons
- Assigned date to stuff giving statements into envelopes
- Approved to get salt thrower for behind truck for winter

DATES TO REMEMBER

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Communion

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Sign up opens for MS Retreat and HS HIS Camp

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Youth Super Sunday Party - 5:00 pm

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Consistory Meeting - 7:00 pm

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

No Sunday School
Rooted Sign up opens
Chili Cook Off Sign up opens

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Young Adults Ministry Meeting - 6:00 pm
Movie: The Forge - 6:30 pm

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Parent's Night Out - 5:30-8:00 pm

CONCERNS FOR

Please continue to lift up the following people and families in prayer:

- Gar & Chlea Rafdal's son, Travis who is going through cancer treatment
- Joyce Klein's daughter, Gaye who is going through a new cancer treatment
- Candy Ver Mulm for healing of her ankle after surgery
- Former member, Martha Oskvig who is going through cancer treatment
- Deanne Van Enter who had a cornea transplant
- Terry Weise who will be having shoulder surgery the end of February
- Ali DeVary who had a lung transplant
- John Kruse who had surgery
- Charlie Anderson who is going through cancer treatment
- Laura Gilman who is dealing with vertigo associated with Meniere's disease
- Paul Abrahamson who had surgery for a bleeding ulcer

CONDOLENCES TO

Dave Schmidt, Sam Brandt and Kael Schmidt on the passing of Dave's wife and Sam and Kael's mom, Sara, who passed from time to eternity on January 12.

Cheri and Mike Prange and family on the passing of Cheri's stepmom, Sandra Volkert, from time to eternity on January 22.

CELEBRATING WITH

Dave Schmidt and Easton Weber who were baptized on January 12.





919 Grand Avenue
Spencer, IA 51301
(712)262-3016
hrc@spencerhope.org

Worship Services

SUNDAYS: 8:30 am and 10:45 am

Live-streamed online:

www.youtube.com/hopechurchspencer

Sunday School

SUNDAYS: 9:45 - 10:40 am

Preschool through Adult

Hope Church Staff

James Runcorn, Lead Pastor

Jay Van Gelder, Youth Pastor

Julia Andela, Director of Children & Family Ministries

Ryan Hoskins, Worship Director

Terry Stevens, Director of Adult Discipleship

Michael Fujimoto, Facilities Director

Jill Lowe, Office Administrator

Tim Yeager, Maintenance

Levi Morris, Treasurer

Missy Lair, Nursery

Abbey Fujimoto, Social Media