

We are a community empowered by the Holy Spirit, called to bring God's comfort, to work for God's justice, and to share the hope and love of Jesus with all.

FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

Help Us Grow Our
Pollinator Garden
~ Details on page 4

Clothing Shed at HLC Clothes
Thousands!
~ Read more on page 8

Hearts for the Hungry
~ Calendar on page 10

Our Core Values



faith
acceptance
compassion
gratitude
love

*From the
Pastor's
Desk*



Happy Valentine's Day!

While I'm not usually one for this particular holiday, I have to admit that after all the gray days we've had following the beautiful lights and the magical wonder of Christmas, it'll be nice to see all the bright red hearts, the sentimental cards of love and even the newest trend of cards; cards for recognizing the importance of friendships. There'll be red roses, and chocolate hearts—♡ ♡—it's all a nice break from the dreariness of these gray days. Still, at the same time, I wonder if we do ourselves a disservice by such token sentimentality. Don't get me wrong, hearts and roses are lovely. And chocolate—oh what a delicious delight! But I wonder that we might sometimes do too good of a job of covering up the brokenness that seems so prevalent in our society now. That instead of being with the pain and the suffering of these days, trusting that Christ will be there with us in the suffering, we try and push all such unpleasantness away. So, while I lift up the fact that February 14th is Valentine's Day, following close on its heels is Ash Wednesday—February 22nd. Seems we really can't get away from the truth of our own vulnerability, our own fragility. Flowers, candy, and kissy cards are lovely. But we also need to recognize that not all persons will be filled with such love on this day—many are broken. Failed relationships, family estrangements, and the loss of loved ones, fill the lives of many. Before they can get to the redemptive grace of love, they have to go through the sorrow, the grief, and suffering. Lent provides us with the opportunity to do just that. A time to reflect and see that God meets us in our suffering, bringing the grace of healing. Only then can we be truly open to the promise of resurrection and new life. Only then can many truly enjoy the beauty of love symbolized by Valentine's Day. So, celebrate Valentine's day, but open your heart as well to those who are unable to celebrate this holiday now. Walk with them as they journey through this Lenten season in preparation for the joy of Easter.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Pamela

This New Year Make Stewardship Resolutions

New Year's Resolutions offer a great opportunity to set a new goal, to start a new project or to renew a commitment to achieve an objective that might have slipped away from you last year. Most resolutions deal with the most important aspects of our lives, and they usually go to the heart of our cares and concerns.



So this year definitely make some resolutions, but for (2023) try something different. This year rebrand them as Stewardship Resolutions. After all, Christian stewardship starts with the premise that we actually own nothing because God owns it all. Therefore our time, our talent and our treasures – and our very lives – are merely entrusted to us by a God who loves us and wants us to use all these things wisely and for Godly purposes.

As Stewardship Resolutions, your goals will not be merely tests of your willpower, but also noble exercises of faith. They will take on a deeper meaning because you are making resolutions as an act of discipleship. You can pray that God will help you keep your resolutions.

Here are some suggestions:

Time: This is a biggie for 21st century folks. We never have enough time, but somehow every moment seems to be consumed either by the nonstop urgencies of the moment on the one hand, or by mindless entertainment and activities on the other. Resolve to steward your time by planning, setting and maintaining priorities for enriching activities, such as meaningful hobbies, leisure, reading, prayer or rest.

Spirituality: We are saved by grace through faith, it's true, but we grow spiritually the more we invest ourselves in the disciplines of faith. In *Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church*, Lutheran pastor Michael W. Foss suggests growth through the spiritual practices of daily prayer, weekly worship, daily bible reading, nurturing spiritual relationships, serving others and giving beyond a tithe. Resolve to be a better steward of your spirit!

Physical Health: God gave us wonderfully complex bodies. Good stewardship means doing what we can to keep our bodies not only free from disease but also operating in top condition. Your Stewardship Resolutions might call for such things as getting adequate sleep, exercising more, eating better, quitting smoking, cutting down on alcohol.

Mental Health: We all carry stress, but too many of us have way too much! For stewardship of our mental health, we might resolve to play more, to meditate, to pray, to take walks, listen to relaxing music – whatever works for you.

Intelligence: We know that to keep our bodies healthy we have to feed it nutritious food. Our minds need to be fed, too. Your Stewardship Resolutions might call for taking (or teaching) a class, reading four challenging non-fiction books this year, subscribing to an educational podcast.

Family and Friends: God has given us family and community in order that we will be happiest and most fulfilled in relationship. How are you stewarding relationships? This year resolve to strengthen ties with family and friends, and if necessary to end unhealthy relationships.

What Stewardship Resolutions would enrich your life in(2023)? Pray about it. Then write them down.

--Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2017, Rev. Robert Blezard. Reprinted by permission. Pastor Blezard serves as an assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and works as content editor for www.stewards.

HOPE'S HEALING MINISTRY REACHS OUT DOING GOD'S WORK—OUR HANDS



Update on Hope's Healing Team Ministry

Hope's Hands begins 2023 continuing to craft prayer shawls, quilts, and other items. The group meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. Prayer Shawls are available in the Nurse's Office. The shawls are an outreach of our Prayer Team as a reminder that those in need are surrounded by the prayers of the HOPE community. Please note when you take one to give to someone in need by signing the paper located with the shawls. Quilts are given to St. Paul's Center residents for their comfort. Soup and Casserole warmers are made for purchase to support supplies for Hope's Hands.

Hope Cares is an internal ministry to the Hope community during times of ill health or crisis. Transportation is offered for doctor's appointments and medical tests. Meals are offered in times of need. Both transport and meals need additional drivers and cooks. Contact **Donna Littlejohn** (518.321.5917 or balsamchick@icloud.com) with questions or to volunteer for driving or cooking. If you need this ministry, you may contact Pastor Pamela Hoh, the church office (518.283.1372) or Healing Team Coordinator, Pastor Elaine Berg (meb312@aol.com and 315.882.3732).

Prayers of Hope continues to receive prayer requests for the Hope Prayer Team. To contact **Jim Macris**, prayer leader, via land line: 518.479.3432 or email: jimthegreek40@gmail.com.

Hope Parish Nurse: Sue Anthony is in her office at the church on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. She coordinates the regular Red Cross blood drives. If you would like input from her on personal issues or more information about the Red Cross Blood Drives, please contact her via email (santhony@nycap.rr.com).

Hope Outreach. Tai Chi and Qigong classes are taught each week by **Pam Dodson** (pamd@fastmail.com) Tuesdays: Beginner Tai Chi @ 7:15 PM in the sanctuary. Wednesdays: Qigong @ 1:30 PM in the sanctuary. AND Advanced Tai Chi @ 3 PM in the sanctuary.

HELP US GROW

Our Pollinator Garden

Even if you can't get down on your hands and knees to plant, you can help us this winter by starting pollinator flower seeds at home. All the supplies necessary will be available at church by the beginning of February: peat moss cups, seed starter soil, a choice of perennial, annual, and wildflower seeds especially for bees and butterflies! You will make our pollinator friends SO happy and give us a good head start on expanding the garden!

Contact Marilyn Dyer with any questions.





HEART HEALTH MATTERS



10 small steps for better heart health

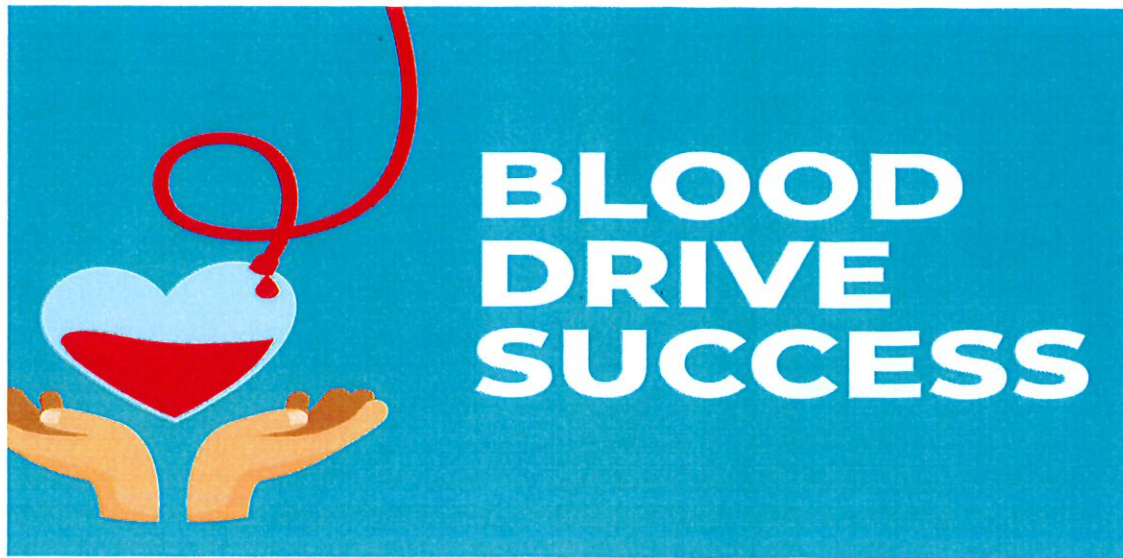
Change is an important part of living with heart disease or trying to prevent it. A bump in blood pressure or cholesterol earns you a lecture on healthy lifestyle changes. Heart attack and stroke survivors are often told to alter a lifetime of habits.

Some people manage to overhaul their exercise pattern, diet, and unhealthy habits with ease. The rest of us try to make changes, but don't always succeed. Instead of undertaking a huge makeover, you might be able to improve your heart's health with a series of small changes. Once you get going, you may find that change isn't so hard. This approach may take longer, but it could also motivate you to make some big changes.

Here are 10 small steps to improve your heart health.

1. **Take a 10-minute walk.** If you don't exercise at all, a brief walk is a great way to start. If you do, it's a good way to add more exercise to your day.
2. **Give yourself a lift.** Lifting a hardcover book or a two-pound weight a few times a day can help tone your arm muscles. When that becomes a breeze, move on to heavier items or join a gym.
3. **Eat one extra fruit or vegetable a day.** Fruits and vegetables are inexpensive, taste good, and are good for everything from your brain to your bowels.
4. **Make breakfast count.** Start the day with some fruit and a serving of whole grains, like oatmeal, bran flakes, or whole-wheat toast.
5. **Stop drinking your calories.** Cutting out just one sugar-sweetened soda or calorie-laden latte can easily save you 100 or more calories a day. Over a year, that can translate into a 10-pound weight loss.
6. **Have a handful of nuts.** Walnuts, almonds, peanuts, and other nuts are good for your heart. Try grabbing some instead of chips or cookies when you need a snack, adding them to salads for a healthful and tasty crunch, or using them in place of meat in pasta and other dishes.
7. **Sample the fruits of the sea.** Eat fish or other types of seafood instead of red meat once a week. It's good for the heart, the brain, and the waistline.
8. **Breathe deeply.** Try breathing slowly and deeply for a few minutes a day. It can help you relax. Slow, deep breathing may also help lower blood pressure.
9. **Wash your hands often.** Scrubbing up with soap and water often during the day is a great way to protect your heart and health. The flu, pneumonia, and other infections can be very hard on the heart.
10. **Count your blessings.** Taking a moment each day to acknowledge the blessings in your life is one way to start tapping into other positive emotions. These have been linked with better health, longer life, and greater well-being, just as their opposites – chronic anger, worry, and hostility – contribute to high blood pressure and heart disease.

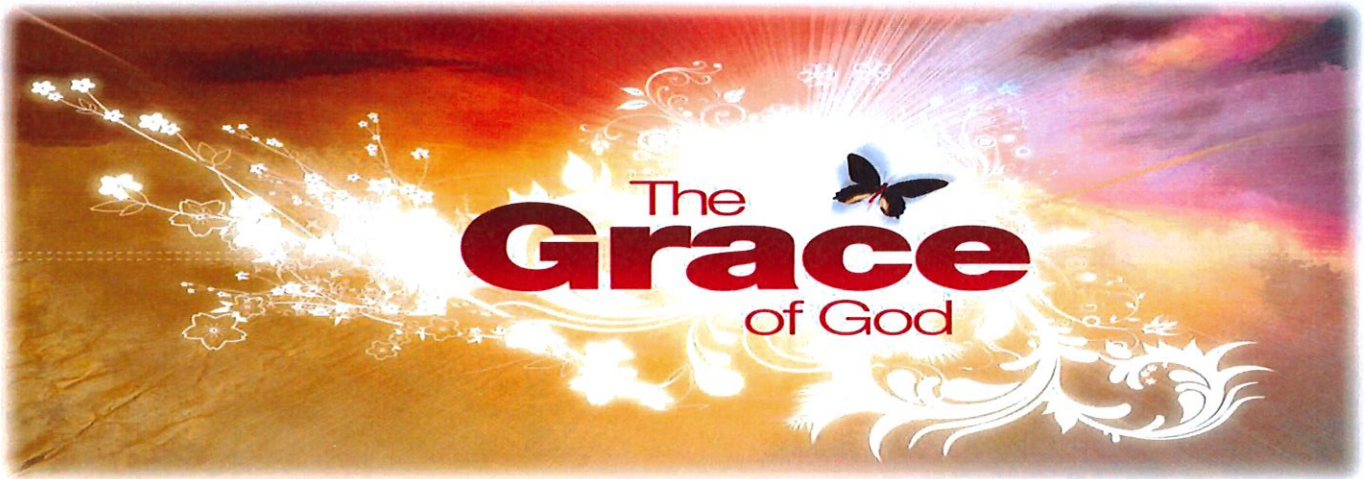
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/10-small-steps-for-better-heart-health#app>



**A Big Thank You to
All the Donors & Volunteers
for being at Hope Lutheran Church
on Saturday, January 28th
for the blood drive!**

**The American Red Cross
collected 25-units of blood!**





Emotional Intelligence (EI)

It is generally accepted that success in life is better predicted by EI than IQ.

It is generally accepted that emotionally-aware congregations are usually better able to process the stresses that confront them than those congregations that are not. It could be useful for us, individually, to think our own thoughts about each of these emotions, and if any is so inclined, to share one's thoughts with another. In the last newsletter, I offered the emotion 'worried' under the core emotion of 'Fear' and asked you to ponder your own thoughts.

These are my thoughts:

worried (afflicted with or marked by anxious uneasiness or trouble) – Life is imperfect, unfair, unpredictable, and uncomfortable. As the saying goes: “The only guarantees in life are death and taxes”. Though much of life is beyond control, I try not to surrender my inner state to something so unpredictable.

Do we worry because we fail to trust our Creator? Do we believe He is able to hold us, unwaveringly, in the palm of His Hand? Scripture reminds us:

He cares for the birds of the air and has crafted the beauty of the flowers in the field. If He takes such care for these, which are here one day and gone the next, how much more will He care for us.

Regarding life's hardships, I conclude: The life given us, in Christ, is richer, fuller, and far surpasses any hardship thrown our way. No matter what, life, in Christ, is abundant. (And I pray that life will never challenge this conviction, but if this challenge shall come my way, I pray that I can hold fast, or at the very least, that someone in my life will remind me of such).

Next month, please consider your thoughts on 'jealous' under the core emotion of 'Anger'.

In His Grace, WDM



Hope Lutheran Church

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! We're excited to share with you the impact your clothing shed made over the last year...

- 218,323 pounds of clothing were donated to your shed in 2022
- This was enough to clothe an estimated 40,218 people all over the world
- Based on this volume of clothing, your organization received \$8,732.92

Thank you so much for everything you, your volunteers, and your communities do to support the clothing shed program!

Sincerely,
The Team at
St. Pauly Textile, Inc.

1067 Gateway Drive • Farmington, NY 14425 • 585-924-7941 •
questions@stpaulytextile.com

Hearts for the Hungry

The Christmas season is over, and food pantries are experiencing a sharp drop-off in donations. We can't forget that people are hungry year-round! Rising costs have greatly impacted the most vulnerable of our neighbors.

FEBRUARY 2023

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1 Canned Tuna	2 Soap or Body Wash	3 Canned Spaghetti or Ravioli	4 Jam or Jelly	5 Dish Soap
6 Instant Potatoes	7 Boxed Cereal	8 Tooth-paste	9 Peanut Butter	10 Toilet Paper	11 Pasta	12 Canned Fruit
13 Canned Soup	14 Crackers	15 Canned Chicken	16 Hot Chocolate	17 Tea	18 Hot Cereal	19 Coffee
20 Canned Beef Stew	21 Cake Mix or Boxed Dessert	22 Canned Veggies	23 Condiments (ketchup, mustard, etc.)	24 Rice	25 Pasta Sauce	26 Mac & Cheese
27 Pancake Mix	28 Baby Food					

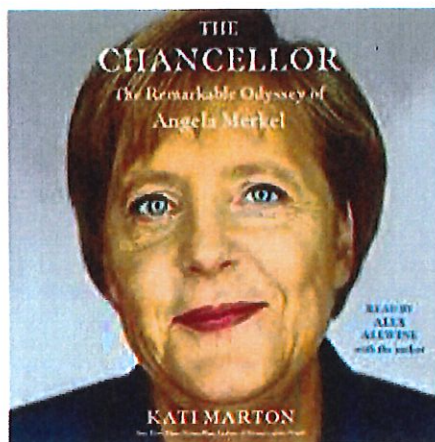
FREE CALENDAR BY HOMEPRINTABLES.COM

Please check the items on this calendar and consider donating some or all of them this month. You can buy the items, or you may even have extras in your pantry. If we all get involved, imagine how much food we could collect, and what a difference it would make!

Women's Book Club

FEBRUARY WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Our next read is going to be "The Chancellor: The Remarkable Odyssey of Angela Merkel" by Kati Marton.



The "captivating" (*The New York Times*), definitive biography of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, detailing the extraordinary rise and political brilliance of the most powerful—and elusive—woman in the world.

Angela Merkel has always been an outsider. A Lutheran pastor's daughter raised in Soviet-controlled East Germany, she spent her twenties working as a research chemist, entering politics only after the fall of the Berlin Wall. And yet within fifteen years, she had become chancellor of Germany and, before long, the unofficial leader of the West.

In this "masterpiece of discernment and insight" (*The New York Times Book Review*), acclaimed biographer Kati Marton sets out to pierce the mystery of Merkel's unlikely ascent. With unparalleled access to the chancellor's inner circle and a trove of records only recently come to light, she teases out the unique political genius that had been the secret to Merkel's success. No modern leader so ably confronted Russian aggression, enacted daring social policies, and calmly unified an entire continent in an era when countries are becoming more divided. Again and again, she cleverly outmaneuvered strongmen like Putin and Trump, and weathered surprisingly complicated relationships with allies like Obama and Macron.

Famously private, the woman who emerges from this "impressively researched" (*The Wall Street Journal*) account is a role model for anyone interested in gaining and keeping power while staying true to one's moral convictions. At once a "riveting" (*Los Angeles Review of Books*) political biography, an intimate human portrait, and a revelatory look at successful leadership in action, *The Chancellor* brings forth one of the most extraordinary women of our time.

The Book Club will meet on February 15th at 7 PM at the home of Marilyn Dyer and Elaine Berg. Please RSVP to dyermm48@gmail.com or 518-505-6434. We think you will really enjoy this book about this fascinating and acclaimed woman leader. Thanks and see you then!

Worship Volunteer Duties for February 2023

Please find your own replacement if you cannot be available on date of assignment.

	5-Feb	12-Feb	19-Feb	22-Feb	22-Feb	26-Feb
	Worship 10:00am	Worship 10:00am	Worship 10:00am	Ash Wed. Noon	Ash Wed. 7pm	Worship 10:00am
Altar Guild/ Comm. Asst. 2	Debbie F	Charlie H	Maureen H			Debbie F
Greeter	Lois B	Bonny M	Donna L	Dickie D	Pam D	Marlies P
Usher	Lois B	Marion D	Donna L			Dickie D
Assisting Minister	Marilyn D	Mike D	Sandra G	Sandra G	Marilyn D	Pam D
Communion Assistant	Lois B	Mike D	Chris N (+ candles)	Candles – Chris N		Pam D
Snack Set-Up / Clean-Up	Marilyn D	Charlie H	Donna L			Marlies P
Offering Counters	Donna L & Marilyn D	Marion D & Charlie H	Donna L & Maureen H			Pam D & Bonny M



News & Upcoming Events for February of 2023

We will have 'In-Person' Sunday Worship Services at 10:00 AM. We will also continue to live-stream our services on our Facebook page and through Zoom. The Zoom link for Worship Services will continue to be posted in the bulletins.

Sharing the hope and love of Jesus with all

<p><u>2nd</u></p> <p>Worship & Music Committee Meeting @ 6:30 PM in the large classroom</p>	<p><u>2nd</u></p> <p>Hope's Kitchen Free Community Dinner at Cornerstone Church in Lansingburgh * Serving from 3 - 6 PM * (for those who RSVP'd)</p>	<p><u>4th</u></p> <p>Regional Food Bank Packing 10:30 AM – Noon Meet at RFB</p>
<p><u>5th</u></p> <p>Hope's Prayer Team in small classroom ~15-minutes after worship service</p>	<p><u>8th</u></p> <p>Council Meeting @ 6:30 PM via Zoom</p>	<p><u>10th</u></p> <p>Dine-Out Dinner Group @ 6 PM (Verdile's)</p>
<p><u>14th</u></p> <p>Valentine's Day</p> 	<p><u>15th</u></p> <p>Women's Book Club @ 7 PM</p>	<p><u>21st</u></p> <p>Hope's Hands Meeting @ 10 AM in the small classroom</p>

