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# HOPE HEADLINES

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## A Good Word

Last month, I shared about the AMBS class I took on congregations in transition and the recommended areas of focus for the congregation

during a pastoral transition time:

1. **Heritage:** review how the congregation was formed and shaped
2. **Mission:** clarify identity & discern vision
3. **Leadership:** watch for new leaders/review organizational structure (note a correction to the order of the tasks)
4. **Connections:** relationships beyond congregation
5. **Future:** apply what is learned in developing congregational profile for search

In November, I reflected on what kinds of work I see the congregation doing and having done on the first two topics, so in December, I'll reflect on the work of leadership I see happening.

### Leadership:

Hope has a long and strong history of lay and pastoral leadership! Some of you have been leaders in the church in various ways since its inception, and some of you are new leaders in the church. I feel deep gratitude for the many past and present ministries led by gifted members and attenders of this church!

I've been impressed with how well the church's commissions and committees work together: making decisions, being transparent about how those decisions are made, and holding those decisions lightly as they turn the work over to the church to carry out. I'll share an example of a committee whose way of working I've only observed second-hand, but seems to exemplify this way of working together:

The Music Committee meets every few months to choose hymns for the upcoming worship services. They receive information about themes and scripture from the secretaries, they meet and choose hymns, and then they send their selections right back to the office to share with musicians and staff.

How great is that, right? But it gets even better! If the preacher or musicians decide to switch things around, *the music committee doesn't mind at all!* Can you believe it? I'm not exaggerating here about the wonder of this openness. In some churches and in some circles, decision-makers guard their authority without flexibility or humility, and this costs everyone. The music committee has the authority to do their task, and then they let go of what happens with it next!

It's possible this doesn't always work as smoothly as I've observed so far, or that the decision-making process within the committee is neither respectful nor enjoyable. But I suspect members of the committee wouldn't stick around on the committee if it weren't going well for them!

If you feel your committee or commission has room for improvement, I hope you'll speak up to your coworkers in Christ to seek a way forward that allows for all voices to be heard, decisions to be clear and flexible, and for members to feel respect and joy as they participate—and then see how the Spirit moves!

I can tell the congregation has worked diligently and thoughtfully in the past to create an organizational structure that empowers and supports leaders. Having so much pastoral transition over the past 2 ½ years—you've had six pastors in that amount of time (Dave, Susan, Melissa, Randy, Heidi and me)—has tested your energy and your "usual" ways of doing things.

During the month of December, I will be praying for each commission and committee throughout the month. I've already been regularly praying for the search committee, but will mark the meetings of each group in December (or pick a day during that month if you're not meeting) and pray for that group in advance of their meeting. **I invite each of you to join me in praying for a committee or commission during the month of December and letting that group know about your prayers!**

In case you don't always let the office know when your committee or commission is meeting, please make sure to do so this month so I know when to pray for you. *May God continue to bless and empower this church to bear the fruits of the Spirit in its work together!*

~~Interim Pastor Sara Dic

## Christmas worship/events

December 1	First Sunday of Advent
December 8	Second Sunday of Advent Congregational meeting (budget 2025) Fellowship meal – bring food to share
December 15	Third Sunday of Advent Children’s Christmas program
December 21	Longest Night service
December 22	Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas choir
December 24	Christmas Eve Service
December 29	First Sunday of Christmas
January 5	Epiphany



### A big thank you to...

our crew of mowers who faithfully toiled from spring to fall despite the weather: Scott Luty, Randy Pinkerton, Jerold Heide, Randy Graber, Travis Cox, Grant Bellar, Jim Blakely AND our group of Memorial Garden helpers who kept this space lovingly cared for: Marcus Loganbill, Ruthie Goering, Connie Luty, Heidi Johnson & Joanna Pinkerton.

## Craft Bazaar 2024

Over the years you’ve read plenty of Craft Bazaar reports about how many people attended, how much money came in, and whether or not we sold out of peppernuts.

So let’s get that out of the way... 😊

- It was a beautiful day!
- We had lots of people!
- We sold out of over 400 bags of peppernuts by 1:00.

A very special thank you to our committee, and to all of you selfless, tireless workers, baked goods bakers, master crafters, bierock makers, sausage grillers, peppernut cutters, kitchen helpers, bake sale sellers, craft table overseers, Sharon, Karen, and Joanna for cards, Cynthia and Kim for a hundred things in the office, Vicki and Annette for kitchen management, Donna for handling the money, and to all of you who contributed in countless ways – including praying, donating, and eating!

We ask that you especially think about and keep in prayer the ministries and the individual people and families you made a difference for this year:

- Camp Mennoscah – a sacred space where we intentionally seek the intersection of God, nature, ourselves, and others

- Mennonite Central Committee– shows love and care to people around the world by caring for their basic needs of food and shelter
- Mennonite Disaster Service - helps people start to maintain their dignity as they rebuild their lives after natural disasters
- Family Promise – addresses family homelessness here in our community who may not have any other options for a home – (we have the privilege to be partners in this ministry right here in our own church)
- The Kansas Food Bank – helps to provide hunger relief in our community and throughout our state

Let’s always remember that when all is said and done, this labor of love is telling a story – the story of Jesus’ love for His precious children – and it is our privilege to help tell that love story beyond our walls.

Laurie Regehr, for the Craft Bazaar Committee

Committee Members: Leona Adrian, Katie Chlumsky, Renetta Gooden, Emily Regehr, Tiffany Regehr, Shelby Kaufman - and Connie Luty and Laurie Regehr, Co-coordinators



## TO YOUR HEALTH

**Microplastics** Plastic production has skyrocketed from just 1 million pounds per year in 1950 to a staggering 400 million tons in 2023. Even more alarmingly, projections suggest this could reach 1.2 billion tons annually by 2060.

Growing evidence suggests microplastics are a significant public health concern. Microplastics have been found in human lungs, blood, and even in the **placenta**. Microplastics can interfere with digestive and respiratory systems, and the chemical additives they release can disrupt the endocrine and **reproductive systems**. One source estimate we may consume up to the size of a credit card in microplastics PER WEEK!

Microplastics are tough to avoid, because of all the ways we rely on plastic in our daily routines and the many potential sources of microplastics.

Major sources are plastic water bottles (and definitely keep them out of the heat), plastic cutting boards, heating food in plastic, plastic utensils, thermal printed receipts. Even some brands of dental floss, bandaids, parchment paper, clothing, and tire dust in the air are sources. Store your foods in glass when possible, avoiding plastic bags and containers and use filtered water.

An excellent site that investigates products for forever chemicals and microplastics so you can make a safer informed decision before purchasing is: [mamavation.com](http://mamavation.com)  
~~Annette Chlumsky

## **VISION COUNCIL OCTOBER MINUTES**

Present: Lowell Birkey, Renetta Gooden, Natalie Hand, Michelle Jantz-Moderator, Sara Dick-Pastor, Lori Regier, Chris Teufel, Margaret Wiebe

Absent: Jerold Heide, Tyler & Shelby Kaufman

### **GATHERING**

**Welcome – Pastor Sarah** Voices Together #78

**Next Meeting – Michelle Jantz**

- November 19, 7pm at Hope Mennonite Church
- December 8 – Congregational Meeting
- January 26 – Annual Meeting

### **RECEIVING**

**Minutes** - September minutes approved as presented.

### **September 2024 Financial Highlights**

#### **Offering**

- YTD offering of approximately \$155,000 – down \$11,000 vs prior yr
- Hope Home rental income was received totaling \$350 – this amount was subsequently transferred to the Hope Home SF from the Stewardship portion of the spending plan

#### **Vision Council**

- Paid out monthly expenses of \$10,473 during the month – includes quarterly distributions to Sabbatical and Convention Special Funds

#### **Care and Nurture**

- Paid out \$198 related to fellowship meals and deacon expenses

#### **Discipleship**

- Paid out \$447 for VBS and Children's SS curriculum
- Library line item decreased by \$120 due to receipt of funds over expenses related to Bibles – will move \$198 of income from this account to the Library SF in October as directed in the prior VC meetings

#### **Stewardship**

- Paid out \$8,363 during the month
- Paid out recurring monthly expenses related to custodial, copier, website hosting,

telephone/internet, QuickBooks and building utilities

- Paid out ~\$1,500 for technology related expenses
- Distributed \$350 from Hope Home Spending Plan to Hope Home SF (Hope Home rental income)
- Distributed \$2,000 to LT Maintenance & Technology SF and \$750 to Scholarship SF

#### **Witness and Outreach**

- Paid out \$318 Sandwich Saturday and Family Promise

#### **Worship Commission**

- Paid out \$150 for guest speakers and \$200 for choir director

#### **Special Funds (SF)**

- Caring Fund increased \$150
- Paid out \$628 for Fall Festival (Craft Bazaar) expenses
- Hope Home and Vision Council Discretionary SF received monthly distributions from Spending Plan
- Scholarship, LT Maintenance & Technology, Convention and Sabbatical SF received quarterly distributions from Spending Plan

### **COMMISSION REPORTS –**

#### **Care & Nurture – Lori Regier**

- Church Retreat – Expecting 70 participants this Sunday
- November 17 – Bethel College Sunday with two singing groups and brunch
- November 26 – decorating for Christmas
- December 8 – Holiday Potluck

#### **Discipleship – Margaret Wiebe**

- One more Sunday cutting peppernuts.
- Kaitlyn Keough, MCC
- Watch the Givens YouTube Video
- Laurie's looking for advent material
- Children using Fall curriculum; winter curriculum will start in December.

#### **Stewardship – Jerold Heide**

- Nothing new

#### **Witness & Outreach – Lowell Birkey**

- Crop Walk had a great turn-out

#### **Worship – Chris Teufel**

- Met twice since the last VC meeting.
- Recommended increasing stipend to \$175; the budget is currently staying the same.

- Fall children's curriculum aligns with sermon series which is nice.
- VT #553 is the advent hymn
- Dec 15 – Kids program
- Dec 22 – Music
- Dec 21 - Longest Night Service
- Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Service
- Children's Story consistently – it's been good!
- Next year is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Anabaptism

## Pastor's Report – Sara Dick

Selected activities 9/23/24-10/22/24:

- Met monthly with WDC Transitional/Interim pastor group
- Concluded six-session AMBS class on Congregations in Transition on 10/16/24
- Met with spiritual director for monthly direction
- Met twice with worship commission to plan for Sundays in November and Advent
- Met with Pastor Congregation Relations Committee (PCRC)
- Attended Bethel convocation with speaker Sarah Augustine
- Worked with family of Marlo Goering to plan memorial service
- Pastoral care visits in person and via Zoom
- Preached final 3 Sundays in Season of Creation, including celebration of World Communion Sunday
- Met with Hope's liaison from Justice Together to connect and learn
- Weekly staff meetings with both secretaries

Upcoming activities:

- Hope Sunday retreat at Camp Mennoscah
- Worship services will include All Saints/Remembrance, Celebration of Hope, and Christ the King
- Meeting with two Wichita Mennonite pastors and one COB pastor later this week - hoping to include pastor of Aposento Alto next time
- Healthy Boundaries training required by WDC credentialing process on 10/29/24
- Lead Marlo's interment and memorial service on 10/30/24
- Attend Hope's Craft Bazaar for the first time!
- Dedication for baby Charlotte

Reflections:

I hit a wall right at the two months mark, realizing I was working six-day work weeks for a three-quarter time job. Praise God! So now I take Fridays off when I'm preaching rather than trying to finish on Friday and failing every week. I consider the fact that it only took me two months to make this change quite a success!

Next Monday is the 17th anniversary of my ordination to Christian ministry, which is a wonder to me. I'm grateful for the wide and wonderful variety of ministries I've been involved with over these past nineteen years (two years licensed and 17 since ordination): junior and senior high youth ministry, preaching, event prayers, wedding preparation and officiation, funerals, community organizing, pastoral care, racial justice work, mentoring new pastors, thrift shop management, public health advocacy, leading retreats, administrative work, and probably a dozen other things I'm not thinking of now. What a blessing!

Hope has many gifted ministers in its midst, a few of whom have seminary training and most of whom don't. What a blessing! How will the church continue to call and nurture those gifts? Who else will the church call into ministry? How might Hope support someone's interest in attending seminary? What kind of pastor will help you to thrive and grow (not necessarily in size) over the next five or ten years? How will you help your next pastor to thrive and grow (not necessarily in size 😊) over the next five or ten years?

These are questions that the Holy Spirit can guide you in answering (and many other questions I haven't asked, too!). I hope my presence here can help prepare you for what's next, trusting the wisdom of Christ, the movement of the Holy Spirit and the love of our Mother/Father God.

- Figuring out ¾ time; we are open to what this looks like

## Moderator's Report – Michelle Jantz

Moderator Activities since September meeting

1. Prepared for October Vision Council Agenda
2. Met with Pastor Sara for a touch point
3. Led Tech in Sanctuary Discussion
4. Engaged for digital marketing support on pastor job description
5. Caring fund – updated to current template
6. Child protection update
7. Created tech cardboard cutouts

8. Radical hospitality
9. Nomination for positions
10. Memorial garden policy update
11. Created Social events resolution
12. Creation care committee commission
13. Usher description – in sanctuary greeter
14. Confidential file storage and sharing draft
15. Updated volunteer results spreadsheet (new surveys)
16. Barb and Natalie survey to spreadsheet
17. Small group survey creation
18. Wrote up steps for creating Worship & SS YouTube Videos
19. Finalized Worship Content Presentation Template

### **Outstanding activities/questions to prepare for Vision Council**

1. Job Descriptions - clear decision-making authority, roles and boundaries, benefits
  - a. Pastor
  - b. Secretary
  - c. Moderator
  - d. VC? – or in bylaws
2. Tech Policy (this likely has multiple directions)
  - a. who has accounts, what access
  - b. What do we publish?
  - c. Photo releases?
  - d. “Safe” place where camera does not show
3. Bylaws mark up for December meeting

Pastor Search – continues to meet

Corinthian Plan – convenient transition for pastors; agreed we should plan for it.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Consider paying at least \$250/pulpit vs \$150 as we pay now
- Admin staff benefits discussion
- Lack of ushers – new Job description – discuss at Dec. meeting
- Radical Hospitality – future response

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Discernment – Natalie

- Vision Council discerned nominations for open positions
- Considered a call for nominations for positions in the future

Audio Visual

- Looked at pictures of other congregations

- Reviewed pencil drawings
- Projectors and Screens are twice the cost
- Plan to circulate drawings and ask for a vote before Nov VC meeting

Creation Care

- Announce next steps at December meeting

Goals for Interim Pastor

- Draft of goals to consider and how to help Sara know she has been successful
- Will continue conversation with Sara and revisit in November

Caring Fund

- Moved the policy into our new format
- Modified language relating to interaction between Care & Nurture and Deacons
- Deacons will review again and revisit in November

Secure Storage

- No place to physically or digitally secure content
- There is a locked desk drawer in the Pastor’s office
- The offering goes in a safe
- There are silos of content as well as shared file space
- Broaden to include building security
- Continue conversation next month

VC Highlights

- Produce both the actual minutes as well as a highlighted version for broader distribution.

Memorial Garden Policy

- Updated statement about refund and fee structure.
- Distribute to congregation

Social Events

- Resolution
- Will be distributed in the next Newsletter

Child Protection Policy

- Updated to require biannual training.
- Will be distributed

SENDING

- Meeting adjourned.
- Sara prayed us out.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Renetta Gooden, Secretary*

## NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Below are some highlights from the November 19, 2024, Vision Council meeting. The full minutes will be published in the newsletter once approved at the next meeting.

- October Minutes were reviewed and approved - see the December newsletter for details.
- Budget: YTD offering down \$18,000 from previous year. Weekly updates on spending plan will be distributed
- Vision Council spent the remainder of the meeting preparing for the December 8 Congregation Meeting. Preparation included
  - 2025 draft spending plan
  - Discernment of open Commission positions
  - Meeting agenda and presentation
- Agenda for the December meeting
  - 2025 Budget Review
  - Discernment update
  - Strategic Priority Update
  - Sanctuary Greeters
  - Bylaws update
  - Reminders and Next Steps



### Justice Together

Justice Together has been busy launching the 2024-2025 justice ministry cycle with listening sessions and choosing priorities to study and research.

Affordable housing is the new priority Justice Together plans to address at the 2025 Nehemiah Assembly on May 8th at the Eugene M. Hughes Metroplex. Homelessness will remain a priority in the 2024-2025 Justice Ministry Cycle as *officials have yet to deliver on their commitment to fully fund the operating budget for the Multi Agency Center and to implement a low barrier, I-9 eligible photo ID program.*

This fall 70 listening sessions occurred that engaged more than 514 people to tell their stories. Over 350 people (17 from Hope) came out to launch the 2024-2025 justice ministry cycle at the Community Problems Assembly on November 7, plus more than 570 people (including 30 people from Hope) have already said “yes” to be justice ministry network members.

*Justice Together Network members: if you are interested in being on one the Research Committees, the Research Kickoff is Tuesday, December 10 at 6 pm at Chapel Hill United Methodist Church ([1550 N. Chapel Hill St](http://1550 N. Chapel Hill St)).*



## Update...

I'm still gathering information, and pictures, so the picture directory probably won't come out until after the first of the year. Thanks to all so far who have updated info, and had photos taken.

## December Reminders

### Worship

December 1  
Worship-Connie  
Scripture-Lowell  
Pianist-Cynthia  
Song-Galen  
Worship prep-Joanna  
Tech-Scott  
Host-Barb



December 8  
Worship-Connie  
Scripture-Ruthie  
Pianist-Vicki  
Song-Lowell  
Worship prep-Russ G.  
Tech-Mike V.  
Host-Lee

December 15  
Worship-Renetta  
Scripture-Barb  
Pianist-Ruthie  
Song-Steve P.  
Worship prep-Ruthie  
Tech-Michelle  
Host-Kendal/Marjie

December 22  
Worship-Renetta  
Scripture-Lori M.  
Pianist-Amy  
Song-Trae  
Worship prep-Lori  
Tech-Michelle  
Host-Brenda

December 29  
Worship-Mike V.  
Scripture-Chris T.  
Pianist-Laurie  
Song-TBA  
Worship prep-Connie  
Tech-Galen  
Host-Renetta

December 21-Longest Night Service  
December 24-Christmas Eve Service

**Sunday School Super December-Margaret**

**Nursery**

December 1-Justin & Tiffany  
December 8-Jordon & Emily  
December 15-Greg & Leah  
December 22-Kevin & Taylor  
December 29-Eldon & Annette

**Coffee**

December 1-Tiffany  
December 8-Marcus & Cynthia  
December 15-Cindy  
December 22-any volunteers?  
December 29-Joanna

