
HOPE HEADLINES



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Imagine being in your 20s in 1985, starting your career as a visual artist, while also banding with others to start a church in Wichita, newly named Hope Mennonite Church. This is part of Grant Unrau's story (pictured here with first Hope Pastor Marv Zehr and his wife Jeannie Zehr).



Grant now lives with his wife Janelle in Saskatoon. And thanks to Marv and Jeanne, I had the good fortune of meeting Grant recently in Newton. Thankfully our reminiscing inspired Grant to drive to Wichita and take a walk around the church grounds and building. After all, Grant was part of the Hope Mennonite Church Building Committee—as in, he helped envision what the church would look like in size, shape, features, etc. During his recent walk-about, he seemed pleased by all the evidence that this space continues to be well loved.

Not only was Grant part of the original Building Committee, but he also designed our dove logo and church name lettering that we still use today. This was right before the time of computer graphics, so there are no original files. Still, he has memories of sitting down with a blank sheet of paper and writing down various associations with Hope. Words, phrases, maybe a few rough sketches. He landed on a dove; or maybe a dove landed on him! As far as the lower-case lettering goes, he isn't entirely sure how he landed on that. We all agreed that it signals energy, maybe even youthful energy. It feels down to earth, casual, non-pretentious, maybe even open.

What do you see in our logo? What does it communicate all these 40 years later?



From Grant Unrau:
"It looks like the precious time and care of ever so many people have evolved the young

church, all paint smells and unfamiliar corners, into this solid refuge endowed with a sense of itself and the souls it harbors. In a rented basement decades ago, it was beyond me to imagine what this place would become. With all the art and creativity, the vibrant plant life, it seems as if your love and energy are emanating from the foundation. You all have molded it into something extra special and that feels like a tremendous gift. Thank you."



Radical Hospitality

By Sharon Morford

As a former Human Resources manager and Industrial Psychologist I've learned a lot about engaging people, creating a culture of inclusion and utilizing individual gifts. While we didn't call it "hospitality" in the work environment, we did try to make the work environment as hospitable as possible. Can we create a similar environment within the church?

In a world that often draws lines between "us" and "them," the idea of radical hospitality invites us to do something truly different – to erase those lines altogether. Radical hospitality goes beyond simple kindness or polite welcome; it is a deep, intentional commitment to making every person feel seen, valued and fully included.

For many of us, church is our safe place; a sacred place where we can be who we are and feel like we belong. But what if you are new to a congregation? How do you know if you fit in? Do you feel welcome and at ease? Has the congregation made a real effort in bringing you inside? Once inside, does the space feel safe?

I have been tasked to help all of us think about what it's like to feel welcomed through radical hospitality and how to create a safe space for all. Notice I said "welcomed" not "greeted". We do a great job of greeting people every Sunday. We shake hands, introduce

guests, say their name, and note attendance on a piece of paper. In reality, that's a start in exhibiting radical hospitality but only a beginning.

So what is **radical hospitality**? How does it differ from other forms of hospitality? If we want to show radical hospitality what do we need to do? Who is responsible for radical hospitality? These are some of the questions we are going to explore and hope to answer for Hope Mennonite.

The concept of radical living and faith is woven throughout Scripture. Jesus called His followers to a completely counter-cultural way of life that demands uncompromising devotion. This includes radical generosity, loving enemies, and self-sacrifice. Biblical faith often requires stepping out into the unknown purely based on trust in God. The Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 highlights figures like Abraham, who left his home without knowing where he was going, as examples of radical, uncompromising trust in God. Meghan Good, an Anabaptist teacher, pastor, and scholar describes radical hospitality as a position of openness or open-heartedness toward the other person that enables us to receive the gifts they have to give. *"I think humility goes with hospitality. Hospitality and humility in Bible reading means approaching the text with the assumption that the otherness has something to teach us that we might need. When it comes to approaching a stranger, particularly a stranger that is from a place, a time, a culture, an experience that is other than ours, what if we learn to start not with suspicion, but rather, from a position of this person in their very otherness has something to offer."*

Over the next year (or two) we are going to explore radical hospitality, define what it means for Hope and find ways to bring it to life. If you are interested in being a part of the exploration and creation processes, please send me an email at sparker199@gmail.com. You can also catch me at church.



Justice Together Celebration

Calvary United Methodist

June 18, 2026

by Barb and Jim Voth

Barb and I attended the Justice Together celebration on June 18, 2026, at Calvary United Methodist Church. The evening was opened by Rabbi Andrew Pepperstone. His words: Every single one of us is responsible for one another. Treating one another with dignity is our holy

work. We are in the work of repairing the creation as God call us in Genesis 1.

We celebrated the Mental Health care now provided by Comcare Mobile crisis center in Sedgwick County. Many home crisis issues are the result of mental health matters. Instead of being handled by a police officer, being taken to ER and possibly be booked into the county jail, thirteen mobile units, each with a Mental health worker and law enforcement officer, make these calls. Last year there were 1900 calls. 70% were stabilized in the home.

We celebrated the progress with Affordable Housing and the efforts being made for the homeless. The city council of Wichita is now committed to \$10 million dollars for affordable housing. Councilpersons Joseph Shepherd and Michael Hohiesel both were present and spoke in support of this effort.

Justice Together is working on Gun Violence. There were forty-five homicides last year, each one costing the city \$680,000. An effort is underway to enter a community violence problem analysis.

Finally, we were encouraged to take ownership in JT by helping to raise \$100,000 for JT expenses over 3 years. To date \$67,800 has been pledged and \$42,500 has been received. If you would like to make a pledge, pledge cards are on the table between the mailboxes.

Award stickers were given out for the **GNATs** in each church, **Greatest Network Members of All Time**. Congratulations to Wendy Wiens and Marcus Loganbill who are our Gnats! GNATs attended four major assemblies and brought three or more neighbors to the Nehemiah action. And thanks to our church's current team leader, Grace Parker Sutter. Thanks also to Brenda Glanzer Lilliston and Wendy Wiens who have served as members of our JT team.

Music was provided by Beggarman Ministries of Andover. Eric Hauck, with guitar, cello and voice ministered to us powerfully. The celebration concluded with a great dinner.

May we each more fully enter this ministry of Justice Together. Thank you.



From our mission partner in Calais-Joseph Givens

I've been interested in theology for a long time. I grew up with a harsh, controlling theology that practiced shame and guilt. It definitely took its toll on me. But over the years, I've been learning how

to separate some of the bad teachings from my youth, while retaining and carrying forth the beautiful things I've inherited.

"Some of the things I inherited are a community-centered way of life, a commitment to what they believe Jesus taught — even if I often disagree with their interpretations — and a sense of congregational independence, in which every member has a say in church governance. That's part of why I've come to identify as an Anabaptist, and a Mennonite more specifically.

"These are a people who have known persecution. They have known violence. They have migrated numerous times throughout their history. But they have maintained their focus on community and on trying their best to live out the teachings of Jesus in real, meaningful ways.

"They are by no means perfect, and I'll be the first to criticize some of the things I've discovered since I've joined. However, they have a very real commitment to peace and justice, to the Kingdom of God, that they're trying to figure out in a very real way.

"So what does all this have to do with me now? As I said, I've had an interest in theology for many years. And now, I feel that I have the space in my life to pursue it further, more intentionally. So I am going to be attending seminary.

"I want to build the theological and leadership skills that will inform my work. I want to be better equipped to serve the migrant population in Calais and in France. I want to be able to better serve alongside the French Mennonite Church in following our shared calling to love our neighbor as ourselves.

"Whether this will ever result in a Mennonite congregation in Calais, I don't know. But what I do know is that I want to be equipped to provide pastoral care to all who need it, to reach out in love and faith to those on the margins, and to proclaim the good news that Jesus has set us free to love God and to love our neighbor.

"Pray for me as I follow God's direction in my life. I need your prayers and your love more than ever. And pray that God's Kingdom will be evident through me and through my family in the beautiful, broken place known as Calais, France."

JOSEPH & RACHEL JUNE NEWSLETTER

It's already been four years. I find it hard to believe, but my family has now spent four years in Calais. Four years of culture shock, smiles, tears, and intercultural meals shared around crowded tables. Sometimes the heartache has been almost too much to bear, but alongside every difficult moment have been moments of

joy and laughter shared with people whose only crime is seeking shelter from oppressive governments.

Over these four years, we have learned so much. I can't quite put my finger on exactly how, but I know I am not the same person who left the United States in the summer of 2022. Rachel feels the same way. We have learned about empathy and brokenness. We have met people whose struggles put our own into sharp perspective, reminding us daily of the immense privileges we enjoy that many immigrants simply do not.

And now we find ourselves asking a natural question: What's next?

Over the past four years, we have helped build a network of people and resources on both sides of the Atlantic, people who care deeply about justice, hospitality, and the well-being of the foreigner. We have helped connect French and Swiss Mennonites with the work in Calais, creating tangible opportunities for support. Those relationships have contributed to a new vehicle for the Maria Skobtsova House (MSH), a new kitchen installation, visits from groups of young adults seeking to learn about Calais, and countless financial contributions that have strengthened the ministry.

We have also become part of a broader international community committed to supporting migrants and refugees in Calais. Through these relationships, we have seen how much impact ordinary people can have when they come together to offer hope, hospitality, and practical assistance. Calais is a beautiful place. It is our home.

Because of that, we have spent a great deal of time discerning how we can continue to grow in our faith, our work, and our service to this community. We have spent four years learning. Now it is time to build on what we have learned. After much prayer and discernment, we have decided to move on from our roles at MSH.

Following our visit to supporting churches in the United States this summer, we will no longer be serving in our current positions there. Instead, we will be focusing on new ways to serve both the migrant and volunteer communities in Calais, putting into practice what we have learned over the past four years while continuing to grow in our faith and ministry.

While we are not ready to share every detail just yet, we are excited about what lies ahead. One significant step is that I will begin seminary studies online, seeking to deepen my theological understanding and better equip myself for future ministry. Rachel is also exploring several new projects that we look forward to sharing with you in the coming months.

Though our roles are changing, our commitment to Calais is not. We love this place and the people who call it home. We remain committed to seeking ways to serve, build relationships, and participate in the work that God is already doing here.

We have spent four years building, hoping, and dreaming. We are excited to share what comes next. Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and support throughout this journey. We ask that you continue praying for wisdom and discernment as we enter this new season Blessings, friends. We will update you again soon.



Garden Therapy

Spending time planting, watering, digging, and pruning is linked with improved cognitive

skills and mental health well-being. Growing your own vegetables is rewarding and fun (even more so if the weather cooperates and critters stay away!) I refuse to wear gloves more often than not because I love the feel of the soil in my hands. Working with soil and plants supports your brain at a biological level- increasing blood flow, boosting neurotransmitters that strengthen memory and learning, and lowering stress hormones. Spending time in nature also shifts your food preferences so you naturally choose healthier whole foods. A study showed people who spent more time in nature activities like gardening consistently ate better by choosing whole, live foods over processed foods. When you feel genuinely connected to nature, processed food loses its appeal. Getting involved in where your food comes from also changes your choices to higher quality options. So try taking a walk, visiting a park, working or playing in the yard, or at least sitting outside for 20 minutes each day, even better in early morning sunlight.



You're invited for lunch.

On Sunday, July 19th, join others from Hope for lunch at Barn'rds, 3860 N. Maize Rd. Please sign

up on the bulletin board so that Care & Nurture can reserve the right number of tables.



MCC Immigration Learning

Tour, Nov. 1-6 – Sign up today for this immigration focused learning tour in South Texas and Mexico. This tour will focus

on education related to a range of matters surrounding immigration, detention and death at the U.S./Mexico border by giving you the opportunity to engage directly with MCC partners who are leading immigration work in the region. Questions? Contact abrahamdiazalonso@mcc.org and sign up online today at mcc.org/tx-immigration-learning-tour!



Is your child interested in playing a brass instrument and joining the school band this coming school year or in the near future? Marcus & Cynthia Loganbill have a trombone, trumpet and alto sax they are

happy to loan out at no charge.

