



New Hope News

February 2011

New Hope Methodist Presbyterian Church 2371 Bradway Road North Pole, Alaska 99705 (907)488-9191

Pastor's Ponderings...

Picking up a favorite paraphrase of the Psalms, my eyes fell upon these words from the end of the 33rd Psalm:

"Behold, the love of the Beloved is stronger than ten thousand bombs, more to be desired than the wealth of all nations.

Do we not know that to dwell in the heart of the Beloved is the promise to every nation, the birthright of all people, the journey to life eternal?

Our soul yearns for the Beloved, for peace, joy and assurance.

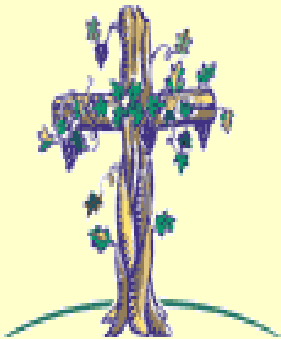
Yes, our hearts are glad and sing songs of gratitude, praising the name of the Holy One!

May every nation come to live in the steadfast love of the Spirit of Truth!

May every people hope in Love Divine!" *Psalms for Praying* by Nan Merrill

*Prayer Vigil for
New Hope*

*Saturday,
February 12th
8am – 8pm*



*Join us each
Sunday Morning
at 9:30am for
Sunday School for
all ages!*

As the Middle East continues to deepen in unrest and the injustice of years of rule is made more public, these words touch deeply in one's soul. For the hands of governments to reach beyond their bounds and climb up on the back of injustice is wrong, and it turns ones' back upon the Beloved, upon God. It is to live in fear and thus rule in fear and with fear. These are not the ways of God, of Christ.

It is only when we turn ourselves into the heart of the Beloved, of Christ and are grateful, that we begin to realize how precious this life is. We begin to see how big the heart can be, how generous we can be when we share the love of Christ with others and seek the well being of all.

In this world, it can be an ongoing challenge to remember that to live in Christ is where our power is. In him is where the salvation of the world is for 'the love of the Beloved is stronger than ten thousand bombs'. But to remember him means we need to nurture our relationship with Christ by spending time with him in prayer, in fellowship, in worship, in silence. This needs to be our gift to him.

As you journey through this month, a month remembering love and presidents, honesty and cherry pie, remember Love. Remember to turn to the Beloved always and everywhere for your peace, your joy, your assurance in these and all times.

For Christ is your certainty. He is your sure and certain hope. He was there when you were created. He will be there to welcome you home, while having been your companion every step of your journey in between.

'May every nation come 'to live in the steadfast love of the Spirit of Truth, and may every people hope in Love Divine.'

God bless and keep each one of you,
Pastor Karen



LET US PRAY:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 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. Philippians 4:4-7

Surely, you are aware.

Not only aware, but I expect also that you share in the growing concerns among our congregation about our beloved New Hope Church. Even though we are told not to, we are beginning to worry about:

- * the drop in our attendance and the number of people leaving New Hope Church
- * our current budget and whether we will be able to meet our financial obligations
- * the health and welfare of both our church and its members

The word of God calls us to pray, to pray without ceasing. So pray we will.

On **Saturday, February 12th**, New Hope Church will hold a 12 hour prayer vigil. From 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. we will fervently, courageously, and expectantly bring our concerns before our Lord.

Please come. Come at anytime during the morning, afternoon, or evening. Stay as long or as little as you can. But come. Come pray and see what God will do for you, for us.

Let Us Pray with New Hope,
Darcey Sharp



CHURCH COUNCIL RETREAT

February 19, 2011 all of our Church Council members are called to come together for spiritual renewal and planning for the year ahead at our annual retreat. It is a time when through prayer we will discern the focus of our ministry and mission this year and make plans to put it into practice. We will consider how each area of ministry intertwines with the other to strengthen and empower each aspect of ministry for the good of the whole. It is a time for us to lift each other and our lives in prayer so that we can more personally support one another in this ministry of New Hope.

So if you are on our Church Council, please make sure your calendar is marked to come together February 19 from 9a.m. to 2p.m. for a blessed gathering of our leadership.



Sunday School at New Hope

The Impact of Sunday School

When you think about life's challenges and the need to learn faith strategies to cope, think about the important role of Sunday School in teaching these skills to our children.

Who can still our storms? In the 2's & 3's Class this past week, little children were happily stringing beads after weathering a terrible 'storm' in their 'boat'. They had learned that when we are afraid Jesus is the One who comes to us in the middle of the storm and brings his peace. They learned he could fix it. Things would get better.

When do learn that church is a safe place to be? It starts in the nursery, where loving adults soothe us, help us when we cry, teach us gentle songs, show us lovely pictures in books, and help us find toys to occupy.

Can God truly help us to overcome big obstacles? In the 1st-3rd grade class, our children used their 'ram's horns' to topple the walls of Jericho and were rejoicing by making pennants of praise! Each wrote in their own words their response to God's great victory.

Is it possible to be forgiven for the mistakes we make? Through a reading by the teacher in which mistakes were purposely made, 4th - 6th grade students were noticing how with each mistake their perfect round balls of clay were marked up. What could be done? Their clay, like our lives, could be again molded into something useful by the Master Potter. What a great visual for the grace of God.

Great things are going on in our children's Sunday School. Bring the youngest ones along every Sunday morning. There's a lot of faith development taking place that only happens week by week, step by step.

Thank you to our children's teachers; Dennis & Darcey, Terri, Marji, Francie, Lori, and our newest substitute, Jenna. Thanks too, to substitutes Gerri and Arlene.

The ministry you make happen each and every week is building the future of New Hope.

Here a little, there a little, line upon line...

Yours for Christian Education;

Linda File
C.E. Chair

**Join us each Sunday Morning at 9:30am
for Sunday School Classes for All Ages!**

New Hope Church School

New Hope Church School is a non-profit preschool and before school ministry for young children and their families. It is our goal to support and assist parents in the North Pole community in the all-important task of raising children. We offer a religious education program to help children learn and thrive in a safe, healthy and Christ-centered environment.

Classroom News:

Last Friday we said goodbye to our toddler teacher, Pam. She had the wonderful opportunity to take a full time job. We were sad to see her leave but wish her well in her new position. Several applicants are being reviewed and a new teacher should start soon. In the interim, either Terri or Marji will fill in to help make a smooth transition.

The children had great fun traveling to Australia last month. They rode on an airplane, ate stew in the outback, swam in the Great Barrier Reef and wrote postcards at Miss Terri's Tea House. Please take a look at our pictures and student work on your way to the fellowship hall.

Since it is a new month, there is a new theme, attribute and Bible verse. The theme is *Let's Build*. Expect to hear about pounding, sanding, gluing, etc. The attribute is *FAITHFUL*. Students will be hearing stories of friends being steadfast and faithful to each other. Finally, the Bible verse is Proverbs 17:17 – *"A friend loves at all times."*

Thank you for your support of our church school and its ministry.



NHCS Friendship Lunch Sunday, February 27th following worship



On the menu: soup, bread, relish tray and cherry dessert!
As always, the board of the school provides the lunch.

We only ask for your support of our school with a generous contribution.
Perhaps you could donate what you might normally spend on eating out to keep our school strong and healthy.

**COMING Saturday, April 23rd, 11 am
Annual Easter Egg Hunt to benefit New Hope Church School!**

Let all the children and families in your life know about this fun family event!



Remember the on-going mission projects of the Outreach Committee:

4th Sunday of the month - donations collected for the **North Pole food pantry**

Contact persons -
Betty Page (488-4627) or
Kay Sanders (488-3360)

Athletic pants (children's sizes medium and large) - routed to the school nurse's offices at local elementary schools

Contact person -
Karla Moore (488-2368)

School supplies and travel size hygiene products - for local school children in need

Contact person -
Karla Moore (488-2368)

Book Discussion Group

The Club will meet
Monday February 7th
at Irma Gallagher's
house

3708 Arapaho Drive
to discuss the book
"The Blue Sweater"
by Jacqueline Novograts



WILL YOU JOIN ME IN PRAYER?

Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Some versions say 'with Christ' who strengthens me. Either way it is a powerful reminder that we are called to live our lives in union with him and when we do nothing is impossible. Yet many of us, even whole churches, forget to lean on this wonderful life partner and thus stumble along the way. Some even giving up. No good. This is not Christ's way. Paul had it right that we need to work with Christ and in him and then nothing will be impossible.

So, that said, I want to invite you to join me in a commitment of lifting our church, it's life, faith, well being, ministry, hope, witness, joy, generosity, in daily prayer. That's right. A commitment to lift our church consciously in prayer each and every day. I know some are already doing so and I thank you! And, I know others are not. They may be worrying about changes that are happening at church but are not lifting the whole of our church and it's ministry to Christ in prayer each and every day.

I believe that when our whole church is praying for each other and the ministry of New Hope we will become an amazing beacon of Christ's light and hope in North Pole. We will find ourselves, our lives transformed as much as that of the church. The beauty of this practice is that you can do your praying anywhere, at any time. It is a great way to teach our children to not only pray but be a part of the answer to those prayers in God. And it will bring us together as a stronger more faithful community of faith simply because we share a love for Christ and his church here at New Hope.

So please join me, beginning today when you finish reading this article and let us begin a sincere campaign of prayer for the body of Christ at New Hope.

Youth Group Scoop!

If you know any teenagers in grades 7-12 who are interested in a night of fellowship and fun, invite them to spend a Friday with New Hope's Youth Group! We meet every Friday from 6:00 to 8:30pm. Activities include food, games, conversation and fellowship as fellow Christians!

Contact Troy and Danita Orr, Youth Leaders at 372-3065 for more information.



Coming
April
29-30

On an empty stomach...

The 30 Hour Famine is an international youth movement to fight hunger. It will bring our group closer together, feed hungry children and change our world.

Online Giving is a simple, easy, safe and secure means to make financial pledges or offerings to our church. Whether you want to submit a single donation or would like to set up scheduled giving, you can do it all online by using *Easy Tithe*. Click the link located on New Hope's website at www.newhopempc.com to set up or access your account.





Understanding Church Finances

In the last few months it has become apparent that many people do not really understand church finances. There are many reasons why that is the case. So in the next few months I will be writing a series of articles to help us all better understand the church finances that are given and spent to empower a meaningful and vibrant ministry here at New Hope.

Part 1: APPORTIONMENTS

It is a word that many people do not understand. It has been seen as a taxation system, an arbitrary fee, etc. that independent churches don't have to pay. Some feel those churches are financially doing much better because of it. But if you compare the length of reach out into the world to the good of God's kingdom, our denominational apportionment system is by far a greater step to fulfilling Christ's charge to go and make disciples for Jesus Christ than those without apportionment systems.

So, what is an apportionment?

An apportionment is an amount of money that does the following:

It supports mission efforts around the world and here at home providing such things as medical care at home and abroad, feeding and housing children in need; supports our missionaries; helps provide for clergy and lay pastors whose churches/communities cannot afford them; makes ministry possible in the Bush and remote villages/towns; helps in developing resources; helps pay the salary of our Executive Presbyter and Superintendent plus the office staff at the Presbytery and Conference offices; helps pay for the Bishop's salary plus office staff; pays the administrative costs for our denominational disaster responses so 100% of our special offerings go to relief efforts; makes it possible to hold our meetings and times of fellowship and visioning throughout the year denominationally. And there is more.

As you can begin to see, apportionments are an important part of our connection to the bigger church of our denominations and as a bigger presence in the world as the hands and feet, the heart and lips of Christ here and now.

Each church's apportionment figures are based upon membership numbers and capital expenses of that local church as listed two years before. Thus these numbers will fluctuate year to year depending upon the life of that local church.

In our case, as a union church of two denominations, we report only half the number of members and capital expense to each denomination and thus receive a total figure between them like any other church of one denomination.

Every Presbyterian Church and every United Methodist church across the United States is apportioned something of the cost of running our denominations ministries and mission each year. When any one church doesn't do its' part in paying those apportionments, ministry and mission are directly affected just as at the local church level when we don't meet our budget.

I hope you can begin to see how very important it is that we do our part in meeting our apportionments throughout the year as a valid and vital part of our budget.

For 2011 our church's apportionment is \$24,000. If each member pays \$279 we would have that part of our budget fulfilled. That doesn't sound too difficult does it? So let us together step up this year and make sure we do our part to bring the kingdom of God into the world and pay our apportioned share.

God bless you!
Pastor Karen



Love, INC In the Name of Christ

Who is Love INC?

Love INC is thousands of caring Christian people in the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

What We Do:

Love INC hosts several events and ministries in an effort to respond to the needs of the hungry, hurting, and helpless:

- *CREATE-A-GIFT BAZAAR*
- *ADOPT-A-FAMILY*
- *PERSONAL NEEDS CLOSET*
- *DIAPER BIN*
- *FIREWOOD PROJECT*
- *TRANSPORTATION*
- *RELATIONAL MINISTRIES*

How You Helped in 2010

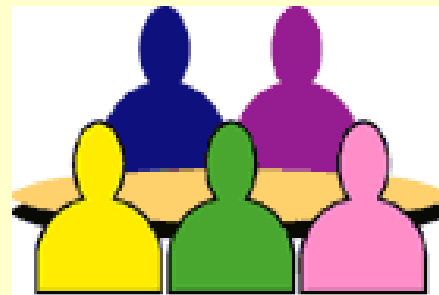
860	requests for rides were met by 16 volunteer drivers in the Transportation Program
1318	requests for help were received by the Love INC Telephone Clearinghouse
69	people had items such as food boxes, furniture, or toiletries delivered to them, many of them receiving food box deliveries on a weekly or monthly basis
165	families were provided food referrals for various food programs at the Food Bank
114	people received free admission to the 2010 Create-A-Gift Bazaar.
94	families were helped financially with energy assistance, firewood, glasses, gasoline, laundry, prescriptions and rent
89	families were provided toiletry items or diapers from the Personal Needs Closet
82	families including 126 adults and 193 children were blessed at Christmas through the Adopt-A-Family program by 68 sponsors
64	families received services such as advocacy, visitation, budget counseling, childcare, home or vehicle repairs, household chores or yard work, housing and moving assistance
54	families received miscellaneous helps such as backpacks, school supplies, bus passes, bicycles and hair cuts
33	families were provided furniture, household items or clothing
31	families received a home cooked meal at Thanksgiving
12	people were provided professional services such as legal advice, dental or medical care, and counseling



ECUMENICAL GATHERING FOR WORSHIP AND BUSINESS

An exciting development is happening this year for both the United Methodist and Presbytery meetings of February. We are coming together for the same weekend to hold our meetings and in union with the Lutherans and Episcopalians, will be sharing an evening meal, worship, assembly and conversation together. All this is happening the weekend of February 25-26, 2011. Cathy Johnson is our lay delegate to the Presbytery meetings and Pastor Karen will be there as well. Please keep us in prayer for a very fruitful and generous time together.

- 3rd ~ Karl Reid**
- 4th ~ Don Elgin**
- 5th ~ Hunter Bengs**
- 6th ~ Ashley Anderson**
- 7th ~ Bobby Logan**
- 8th ~ Joe Krizek**
- 9th ~ Dan File**
- 12th ~ Janet Jahn**
- 13th ~ Patrick Trometter**
- 14th ~ Dennis & Darcey Sharp**
- 15th ~ Jim Anderson, Chanda File**
- 18th ~ Sarah Elgin**
- 19th ~ Dennis Sharp**
- 20th ~ Amy Samuel**
- 23rd ~ Hannah Beck**
- 27th ~ Curt Stables**
- 28th ~ Richard Ross**



OFFICE AND WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sunday Worship Service: 11:00am

Sunday School: 9:30am

Church Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00am – 1:00pm

Pastor Karen's Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

10:00am to 12:00pm or by appointment

New Hope Methodist Presbyterian Church

2371 Bradway Road

North Pole, Alaska 99705

(907) 488-9191

newhope@mosquitonet.com

www.newhopempc.com

February Worship Schedule & Other Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Bible Study 6:30pm	3	4	5 Men's Breakfast 8am Country Cafe
6 Sunday School 9:30am Worship 11am	7 Quilters 10am	8 NHCS Board 6:30pm	9 Bible Study 6:30pm	10	11 Youth Group 6:00pm	12 Prayer Vigil
13 Sunday School 9:30am Worship 11am Mustard Seed Club 4-6pm	14 Quilters 10am Trustees 6pm	15	16 Bible Study 6:30pm	17	18 Youth Group 6:00pm Young Adults @ AK Coffee Co 6:30pm	19 Council Retreat 9am-2pm
20 Sunday School 9:30am Worship 11am	21 Quilters 10am Council Meeting 6:30	22	23 Bible Study 6:30pm	24	25 Youth Group 6:00pm	26
27 Sunday School 9:30am Worship 11am Mustard Seed Club 4-6pm	28 Quilters 10am					