



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2023





# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



## January

- Winter Welcome Back
- God's Work Winter Kickoff
- Winter Youth Night
- Yes You Sermon Series

- Love From Hope Care Packages Sent
- Chaos/HSYG Lock-In
- Outdoor Pavilion Area Completed
- Pancake Breakfast
- Meager Meals

## February

- Concert Series Program Kickoff
- Confirmation Retreat
- 20 Years at Hope for Pastor Ron

## March

- Easter Jubilee
- Trunk or Tr'Easter
- First Holy Communion
- Youth Weekend
- Rise Against Hunger Event

## April

- Men's Lutherlyn Workday
- Coffee & Conversation with Council
- New Member Service
- Car Cruise
- Summer Kickoff

## May

- Outdoor Worship Resumes
- VBS
- Relay for Life
- Pirates Outing

## June





# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



- Kentucky Mission Trip
- Meal with Jesus Sermon Series
- Connellsville Mission Trip
- Fellowship at Union Brothers
- Saturday Picnic

July

August

- Harvest Street Mission
- 15th Annual Tournament of Hope
- Tuesday Breakfast Kickoff

- Fall Kickoff
- Hope Choir Hang
- Weekly 10 am Bible Study Startup
- Hosanna Industries Workday
- Stewardship Appeal

September

October

- Trunk or Treat
- Harvest Street Mission
- Confirmed Confirmands
- Fall Car Cruise

- Election Day Lunch and Dinner
- All Saint's Day
- Trivia Night
- Pinball Outing
- Operation Christmas Child Box Packing
- Board Visioning Retreat

November

December

- Cookie Walk
- Advent Activities
- Hope Choir Outing
- Christmas Program



# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Hope Members,

Hope Lutheran Church continued to achieve its mission (knowing God, inspiring people, transforming lives) and vision (growing community through service, learning and worship) in 2023. Here are some highlights from 2023 that support many of our mission-oriented programs:

- Established the Investment in Ministry Fund, seeded from our Employee Retention Credit
- Conducted a financial review by a 3rd party firm, and received positive feedback our process and systems are great
- Completed the pavilion project, adding sidewalks, electrical and finished landscaping
- Created a two new positions, Media Coordinator and Christian Education Coordinator, and hired Lauren Upchurch as our new Media Coordinator!
- Conducted a Congregation Vitality Survey, results showing our congregation is a strong and vital church. This survey helped council establish goals moving into 2024, focusing on improving our communications, to our congregation and to our community.

2023 was a year of return. Many people returned to in-person worship and our attendance returned to nearly 90% of pre-pandemic levels. Our stewardship appeal was a success, as we learned about MANY of the Gracious Givers that are a part of Hope. Pledging and giving continues to remain strong, and Council and the Congregation approved a budget of \$992k, which is the highest ever for Hope. We thank you all for your continued support!

Moving into 2024 there are several challenges and opportunities that await our congregation. Council has approved a part-time Christian Education Coordinator. This position will be responsible for growing many aspects of our Christian Education Ministry and will allow more time for the DYFM to focus on growing our Ministry among both youth and families. We have established a call committee to help us find our next Associate Pastor. Pastor Amy was an abundant blessing to Hope Lutheran Church for over six years, and we are incredibly happy that Amy, Jay and Eleazar have found their next adventure and calling closer to family. She left some big shoes to fill, but I am confident our call committee will work with diligence to find our next Associate Pastor.

I want to thank the Pastors and staff for another amazing year. 2023 was a year of return and growth for Hope, and it was driven in large part by our incredible Pastors and staff. We are looking forward to the exciting programs planned for 2024. I am honored to continue as Council President for 2024 and am thankful to be a part of such a vibrant, resilient, and vital congregation; and blessed to be working with a great Council in 2024.

In His Service,  
Todd Kane, President – Hope Church Council



# FROM THE PASTORS

*'Give thanks in everything, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.'* (1 Thess 5:18)

Reflecting back on 2023 and the ministry of Hope Church my heart is filled with gratefulness. I am so thankful for my call to serve as one of your pastors. I am finishing my 21st year of service and I still find the call to be your pastor a joy and privilege.


A lot has changed in my time of service here. Families, people, leaders, staff members, community, growth, building, programs. Change has been constant. But what hasn't changed is Hope's core value of making Christ known. Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ to all who walk through our doors so that we can go out into the world, our little circles of influences, to be the 'light' of Christ that God calls us to be. To be a people of HOPE.

Our parish family has always and continues to amaze me in its love of God and service to others. As seen throughout this 2023 report Hope Church continues to live out its mission of 'Knowing God. Inspiring Others. Transforming Lives.'

I am in awe constantly of the Spirits work in and amongst us. From our worship life, rooted in God's Word and Sacrament, where we come together to give our thanks and praise to God. To our faith formation programs such as Sunday School, Youth Group, and adult learning opportunities where young and old alike come to grow in their knowledge of the Lord. To our outreach ministries that enable us to be the hands and feet of Christ helping to care for those in need. The Spirit is at work and is evident in the way that Hope Church glorifies God each and every day.

Grateful! Again, that's what I am here at Hope Church. Grateful for all of you that make this place so special. To our Board and Committee leaders who tirelessly work to ensure that our ministry flourishes. To all the volunteers who give selflessly in their area of serving. To the staff who is here in service to God, each other, and the community. To all the members and guests of Hope Church that participate in the Body of Christ. I am grateful and I give my thanks for you and to God for bringing us all together in this place at this time to do the work of God.

Peace,

Pastor Ronald A. Brown 





# FROM THE PASTORS

*"You've kept track of my every toss and turn  
through the sleepless nights,  
Each tear entered in your ledger,  
each ache written in your book." -Psalm 56:8 (The Message)*

I read somewhere that tears are prayers to God. That's been a life-changing shift in perspective for me. For as long as I can remember, I've been uncomfortable with my own tears. If I'm honest, I still am a little. Old habits and thoughts die hard I suppose.

Many of you may remember that as I said goodbye to you all in January, I cried. What you may not have known was that I was uncomfortable with it. But then, I would think about what I read – tears are prayers to God. And that's exactly what they were. They were prayers giving thanks to God for all of you, for Hope, for this strange and blessed calling, for the love that I have for you and that you have shown me, for the memories and growth. They were prayers asking God to watch over you, bless you, and keep you. They were prayers of surrender to God's will and God's way. They were prayers about missed opportunities and thoughts unspoken. They were prayers that I can't put into words. And I believe that they were prayers that God received and held just as closely as if they had been spoken. They were a gift (which I can't believe I'm writing, but it's true) because anything that helps connect us to God is, at least in part, a gift.

God has given us the gift of feelings, even when we may struggle to receive them as gifts. Life is full of opportunities to feel and to turn to God in prayer – with tears and laughter, in anger and in awe. My prayers continue for you. And though life will always put distance between us and some of the ones we've come to know and love, we will always walk this way together as part of the Body of Christ. This year, and all your years to come, may you feel all there is to feel and may you turn to God in prayer.

Keep loving God, keep loving one another, and keep loving yourselves.

In Christ's love,

*Pastor Amy Moulton*



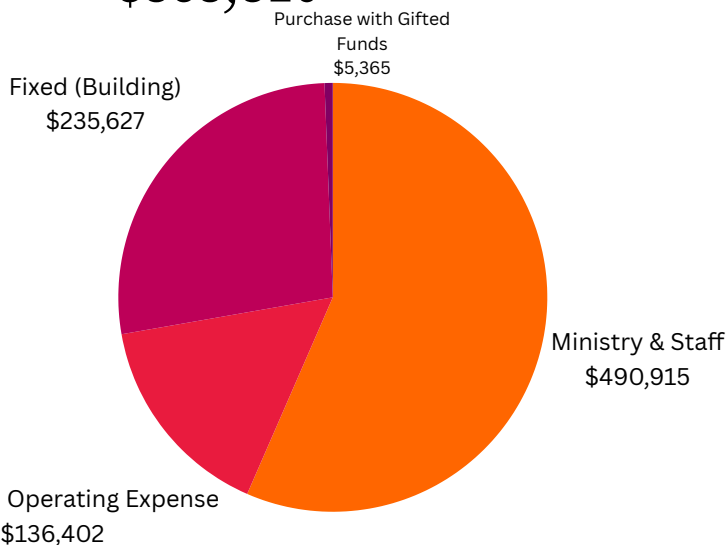
**Hope Lutheran Church**  
**Annual Finance Report - 2023**

	<b>2023</b>		<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>General and Youth Funds:</b>				
<b>Income</b>				
Congregational Giving	\$ 904,598	\$ 864,992	\$ 863,268	\$ 775,381
Designated Giving-Gifts and Operations	\$ 18,681	\$ 11,045	\$ 41,681	\$ 49,960
Other (Interest, Grants, VBS, misc.)	\$ 16,540	\$ 25,434	\$ 15,811	\$ 76,954
Youth Donations and Fundraising	\$ 8,110	\$ 7,400	\$ 8,246	\$ 8,719
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 947,928</b>	<b>\$ 908,871</b>	<b>\$ 929,006</b>	<b>\$ 911,014</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Benevolence	\$ 29,245	\$ 23,400	\$ 17,590	\$ 20,840
Pastoral Staff Expenses	\$ 235,806	\$ 238,429	\$ 239,064	\$ 223,523
<i>Operating Expenses</i>				
Non-pastoral Staff & Taxes	\$ 255,109	\$ 262,709	\$ 234,013	\$ 205,590
Office (Supplies, Equipment, Software, Postage)	\$ 27,067	\$ 28,905	\$ 24,363	\$ 27,812
Church Exp. (Flowers, Candles, Coffee)	\$ 4,872	\$ 4,617	\$ 5,482	\$ 3,723
Music Expenses	\$ 3,844	\$ 4,200	\$ 2,401	\$ 3,034
Christian Education/Adult Ed/Bible School	\$ 8,172	\$ 9,390	\$ 8,296	\$ 7,334
Small Group and Social Ministries	\$ 1,387	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,174	\$ 113
Fellowship/Hospitality	\$ 4,929	\$ 4,724	\$ 3,881	\$ 2,280
Evangelism & Outreach	\$ 1,442	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,110	\$ 1,436
Worship	\$ 4,858	\$ 7,500	\$ 5,845	\$ 5,509
Stewardship & Finance and Consulting Fees	\$ 11,591	\$ 18,495	\$ 10,194	\$ 8,646
Public Relations & Advertising	\$ 5,510	\$ 8,570	\$ 4,548	\$ 1,218
Training & Seminars and Synod Assembly	\$ 1,759	\$ 4,900	\$ 489	\$ 1,492
<i>Sub-total Operating Expenses</i>	<i>\$ 330,540</i>	<i>\$ 357,510</i>	<i>\$ 301,795</i>	<i>\$ 268,185</i>
<i>Property &amp; Bldg Maintenance</i>				
Utilities	\$ 34,294	\$ 33,670	\$ 32,661	\$ 23,413
Insurance	\$ 8,190	\$ 8,117	\$ 7,211	\$ 6,430
Property Expenses	\$ 44,997	\$ 73,175	\$ 48,378	\$ 83,568
Monthly Mortgage Payments	\$ 145,302	\$ 145,302	\$ 145,302	\$ 170,355
Furnishing/Computer Expense	\$ 2,825	\$ 3,450	\$ 1,582	\$ 1,101
<i>Sub-Total Property Expense</i>	<i>\$ 235,607</i>	<i>\$ 263,714</i>	<i>\$ 235,134</i>	<i>\$ 284,866</i>
Payments made from Gifted Funds	\$ 17,005	\$ 9,731	\$ 62,221	\$ 19,041
Youth Expenses	\$ 20,087	\$ 26,724	\$ 11,919	\$ 10,333
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 868,290</b>	<b>\$ 919,508</b>	<b>\$ 867,722</b>	<b>\$ 826,788</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss) General/Youth Funds</b>	<b>\$ 79,638</b>	<b>\$ (10,637)</b>	<b>\$ 61,284</b>	<b>\$ 84,226</b>
<b>Building Fund:</b>				
Income: Donations/Grants/Fundraising/Interest	\$ 107,790	\$ 130,047	\$ 130,462	\$ 188,099
<b>Columbarium Fund:</b>				
Income: Sales	\$ 5,013	\$ 10,000	\$ 6,300	\$ 17,400
Expenses: Maint. & Landscaping	\$ (20)	\$ (2,000)	\$ -	\$ (8,556)
<b>Net Income (Loss) Columbarium Fund</b>	<b>\$ 4,993</b>	<b>\$ 8,000</b>	<b>\$ 6,300</b>	<b>\$ 8,844</b>
<b>Investment in Ministry Fund:</b>				
Income: Donations/Grants/Interest	\$ 92,682	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Disbursements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Net Income (Loss) Investment in Ministry Fund</b>	<b>\$ 92,682</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>ALL FUNDS-GENERAL, YOUTH, BLDG. COLUMB. &amp; INVEST IN MIN</b>				
Income	\$ 1,153,413	\$ 1,048,918	\$ 1,065,769	\$ 1,116,513
Expenses	\$ 868,310	\$ 921,508	\$ 867,723	\$ 835,344
<b>INCOME/(LOSS) ALL FUNDS BEFORE DEPRECIATION OR</b>				
<b>MORTGAGE RESET PRINCIPAL PAYDOWN</b>	<b>\$ 285,103</b>	<b>\$ 127,410</b>	<b>\$ 198,046</b>	<b>\$ 281,169</b>
Depreciation Expense	\$ (186,065)	\$ -	\$ (186,065)	\$ (186,065)
2021 Mortgage Principal Paydown	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (310,000)
<b>NET (LOSS) ALL FUNDS AFTER DEPRECIATION</b>	<b>\$ 99,038</b>	<b>\$ 127,410</b>	<b>\$ 11,981</b>	<b>\$ (214,896)</b>

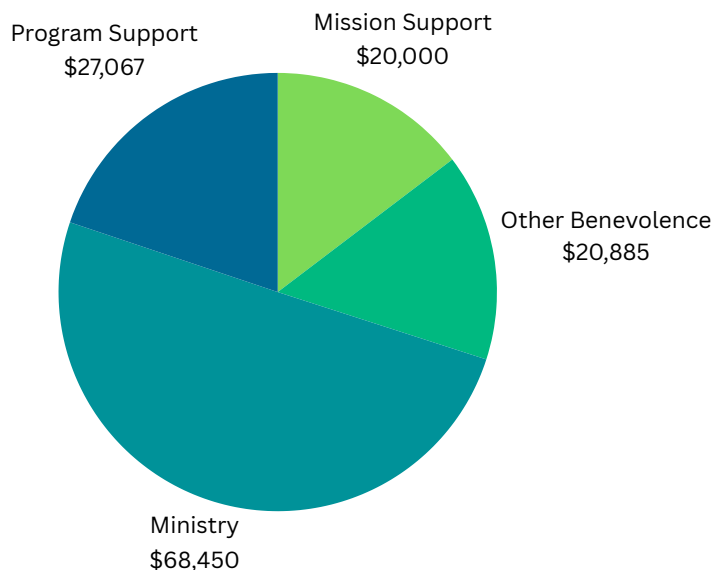
<b>CASH BALANCES AT YEAR-END</b>			
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
General Operating Funds	\$ 376,588	\$ 269,696	\$ 124,679
Designated - Youth, Memorials, Operations, etc.	\$ 154,077	\$ 173,484	\$ 181,691
Capital Appeals Building Fund	\$ 240,774	\$ 133,011	\$ 62,548
Investment in Ministry Fund	\$ 92,682	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$ 864,121</b>	<b>\$ 576,191</b>	<b>\$ 368,918</b>

<b>MORTGAGE - PRINCIPAL BALANCE AT YEAR-END</b>			
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Principal Balance	\$ 1,567,823	\$ 1,650,627	\$ 1,730,288

## Total 2023 Expenses: \$868,310



## Breakdown of Non-Fixed Operating Expenses: \$136,402



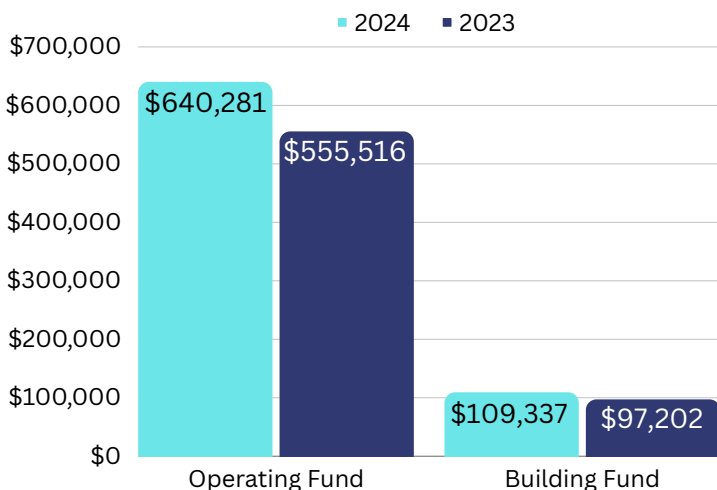
## 2022 Procedural Review Update

Case Sabatini completed a procedural review of the year 2022. They identified no adverse findings and that the church has a strong checks and balances system. They provided a few suggestions to consider, but otherwise the Treasurer and Finance Committee are happy to report that our practices are consistent with guidelines from the ELCA. Case Sabatini provided a few suggestions including but not limited to:

- Minor changes to the contribution statement sent to parishioners to correspond to the ELCA suggested wording.
- Having two ushers accompany each other to deposit offerings in the safe
- Develop and apply a formal records retention policy
- Update property and equipment lists and periodically record a video walkthrough for insurance purposes

Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Treasurer or Finance/Office Manager.

*Thank You for Pledging!*



## Stewardship & Finance Updates

- 201 pledges for multiple funds in 2024 - excellent growth from the congregation!
- Established Investment Fund
- Started the "Gracious Givers" Blog
- Stewardship committee is looking for more members who are excited about Stewardship and can provide fresh ideas! Contact Brittany in the office if you would like to join!



# Life of the Church

## Worship Highlights

- The weekly and special services continue to be live-streamed with new student volunteers
- Replaced and received new paraments and antependium, some donated by an anonymous giver.
- New white Festival Sundayambo parament and burse and veil were designed, constructed and donated by Mary Best.
- Adult choir continues to increase with over 30 members!
- Hope's worship attendance is nearing pre-pandemic numbers.
- Lay participation increased with approximately 40 members serving on the altar guild and assisting ministers and lectors.
- Plans are in place to replace the non-functioning baptismal font.
- Contact David Best if you are looking to volunteer or have any questions about the service you attend!

## Hope's Milestones

- Baptisms performed - 11
- Funerals performed - 7
- Weddings performed - 8
- Confirmed Youth - 13
- First Communion - 17
- New Members - 54
- Sunday School Participants - 175



### 2023 First Communion



### 2023 Confirmation Class

# Life of the Church

## Social Outreach Accomplishments

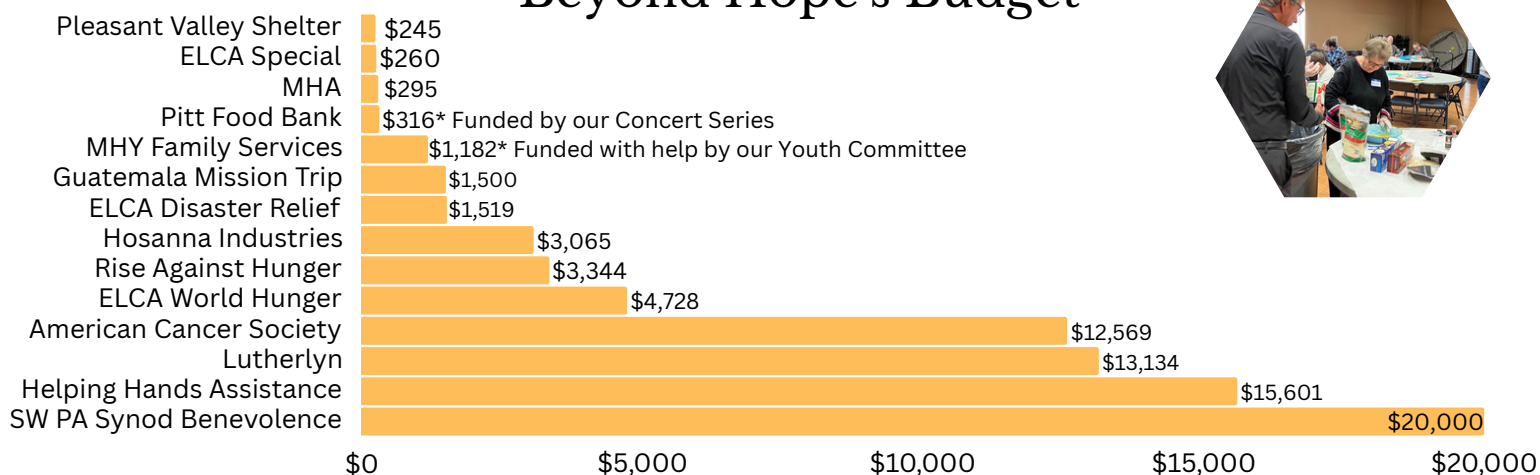
- Collected food for Hope's food bank, Gleaners Food Bank, Family Matters, Southwest Butler Food Bank.
- Pleasant Valley Men's Shelter: organized meals throughout the year either serving to men of shelter every other month
- VOICe: Church collected articles based on their needs for families that have dealt with violence.
- Quilting Hope: Handmade queen size quilt donated to Save Out Sentinels
- Angel Tree: Glade Run Foundation, delivered 95 gifts
- Hosanna Industries: September 23rd, 12 volunteers built a wheelchair ramp & water mitigation concrete work, Butler PA
- Relay for Life raised over \$20,000
- Harvest Home Mission served lunch on the Northside
- Golf Tournament of Hope raise money each year for the American Cancer Society



### God's Work, Our Hands

- Card ministry for encouragement, Valentines Day
- Mental Health Association of Beaver Co.-provided baked goods, chocolate covered pretzels, rice crispy treats. Donated crockpots and fleece blankets
- Lasagna Love
- RAKindness
- North Country Trail
- Quilt Squares for St. Kilian
- Fleece Blankets sent to Butler Child & Youth Services, Cancer patients & Glade Run
- Beverly's Birthday-Itty Bitty Birthday Cheer for newborns
- Light of Life – 150 bagged lunches, cards of encouragement, Hygiene Kits
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace-13 volunteers made beds that will be donated
- Helping Hands-collected gift cards for families in need
- Book Drive for Glade Run-donated over 1100 books
- Rise Against Hunger-packed 10,800 meals
- Lutheran World Relief – 17 fabric kits
- School supplies donated: Glade Run Lutheran Services, Mars Home for Youth, The Foster Love Project, Human Trafficking Service Center
- Collection of used computers and computer supplies donated to Computer Reach

### Radical Generosity Beyond Hope's Budget





# Behind The Scenes

## Safety Team

- New PTZ camera on picnic shelter roof to better view the back of the parking lot
- New camera added to view the front lawn area of the church
- Added increased security with a light to indicate an emergency situation when button is pressed.



## Property Team

- Spring and Fall work days were both well attended
- Completed Pavilion landscaping, HVAC maintenance and various roofing repairs
- Upcoming projects include repaving the parking lot, HVAC Maintenance and additional roofing repairs.
- We are in a great need of property volunteers - contact Brittany in the office to sign up to help!



## Columbarium Updates

- Brought in profits of \$5,012.50 for the columbarium
- As of 2024, officially opening the columbarium to the public and notified all area funeral directors.
- Niche's are still available! Contact the church office with any questions!

# Youth & Family Ministry

Dear Hope Church Family and Friends,

What a year! I have loved my time here at Hope and am always happy to share a brief review of our year together. We have had so many great programs and opportunities here at Hope during 2023! Our Sunday School program continues to flourish and grow. We grew all our teaching teams this year, and that has helped us with teacher retention. (And we have also added new teachers and substitute teachers to the teams as well!) We also added some teen helpers to our classrooms. They have been a real blessing to the younger students...and to our teachers. Thank you to everyone who makes Sunday School possible each week!

Our youth groups continue to amaze me. Our youth are willing to invite their friends and step out of their comfort zones to make sure that their friends hear about the love of Jesus. I love it when kids minister to other kids. There is something so special when that happens. We shared with others through the Operation Christmas Child boxes in November, and the youth made beautiful, heartfelt cards to send along with the boxes to our friends overseas.

Vacation Bible School had another fantastic year! The curriculum was super fun...and everyone really wanted to be a part of it. We had over 85 students at VBS and more than 70 volunteers this year...it was amazing! Did you see our set? I think it was one of the best we've ever done! Wait until you "see" what is coming for next year! (I might be a little excited!)

And then we had our two awesome mission trips! We spent a week in Kentucky serving those who are truly in need. It was an amazing experience to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We were all really moved by what we saw and by what we experienced. We also spent a few days in Connellsville (Pastor Ron's hometown!) We served in the Connellsville Area Community Ministry building. We painted, organized, cleaned, pulled weeds, and spent time with the people there. It was a beautiful experience. We had lots of fun and good conversations on both trips, too. We are so thankful for our Hope family who always supports our youth in our fundraisers so that we can go on these mission trips to serve others.

We had many other programs throughout the year: youth nights for all ages; Trunk or Treat, Trunk or Tr'Easter, Fun Slides Carpet Skate Park, Family Christmas Event with caroling and gingerbread house making, Shooters Golf, Flying Squirrel...and so much more! We also served a meal with the Harvest Street Mission again this year. That is always a special time of sharing and serving.

Thank you for another awesome year!

Many Blessings,





# Youth & CE Highlights

Thank you for your help funding our mission trips!

Election Dinner  
\$1,152.05

Zroni Roll Sale  
\$917.00

Pancake Breakfast  
\$789.18

Mussig's Sale  
\$1,615.05

Spring Car Cruise  
\$1,791.41

Cookie Walk  
\$2,930.78



## Top Service Projects of 2023:

- Harvest Street Mission
- Mars Home for Youth
- Play it Forward Fundraiser
- Mars Home for Youth

## Youth Room Updates:

- Added a couch
- Added a shuffleboard table
- Purchased lighting to be installed over the booth tables

## Kids Programs & Events 2023:

- Trunk or Tr'Easter
- Car Cruise
- VBS
- Trunk or Treat
- Family Christmas Event
- Cookie Walk
- Tiny Tots
- Family Christmas Event
- Children's Christmas Program



Special thanks to Mario Buccini for organizing the Cookie Walk as his senior project!!



# Music with Mr. Chase

Dear Hope Friends and Family:

The Song of Moses:

“Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord: ‘I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my might and He has become my salvation... Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?’”

This song, which is later taken up by Miriam, the prophetess and sister of Moses, is a celebration of celebrations! In short, the decently long song says this: Glorious God, THANK YOU for your provisions! With grateful hearts...we shall sing!!! What a beautiful response after being set free from slavery! MUSIC! In response to God’s mercy and grace, provisions and gifts, blessings and teachings, guidance and correction- we here in Hope’s Music Ministry- with grateful hearts... make music unto the Lord!

During this year, our Music Ministry was busy doing the work of God for the people of God. We created a new Concert Series that offers FREE concerts to our community and raises money for different charities in Pittsburgh like the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank! Our existing Music Ministry programs were strengthened by the hand of God as we ministered through voice and instruments the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our choir, at its peak, reached 40 ROSTERED MEMBERS this season!!! Talk about the abundance of God!!! The special music offerings, Easter Cantata, and discipleship that these members brought to Hope was encouraging and uplifting! Our Praise Band offered original and contemporary music at our Fall and Summer Kick Offs and brought the energy of the Spirit to our Easter Celebration! Our Children’s Choir, small yet mighty, sang the praises of God and ministered to us through their voices. Our Joyful Noise Band used God’s instruments and played beautiful familiar hymns that stirred within our hearts the joy of Christ.

While God has been blessing us, we might remember that what happened to the Israelites AFTER they sang songs of praise, worship, and celebration. They were quick to celebrate, and even quicker to fall from their place of holiness. In this way, we might learn that while we celebrate, we should look earnestly and pray-fully to the future, keeping God at the center of everything that we do! Keeping this in mind, I issued a Music Survey to examine the hearts of our congregation and their disposition towards our Ministry. 140 members participated and the outcome said that 87% of participants thought our program was ABOVE AVERAGE! This is a stark difference from the last survey.. the “Holy Cow” survey. Additionally, we also collected data that was helpful to see from other perspectives. As Paul reminds us, the Body of Christ is diverse, and while we are unified, we each bring different perspectives and gifts to the Body. We look to the future with hopeful and Christ centered hearts!!!

On a personal note, I (Mr. Chase) was blessed and humbled to be at the helm of God’s Music Ministry for another year. But, God did not stop there. God called me into Seminary where I have been studying God in a more academic way, and God even called on me to preach His word, and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit- it all came together, to glorify Him.

I want to thank the congregation for their encouragement and support, the staff for their patience and skilled work, the members of our music ministry for their discipleship and time, and our music ministry staff, Ms. Beth Wehr and Mr. Rob Lynch (Saturday night musician) to whom I owe so much and without whom, I could not do this job. Without all of the people above, God’s work would not be so fruitfully completed both here at Hope and in Cranberry! All glory to God!





# December Congregation

## Meeting Minutes

### Saturday – December 9, 2023 5pm Service

The congregational meeting was called to order by Board Vice President Les Aloï at 5:53 p.m. Les explained that according to the constitution, confirmed active members who have communed or contributed within the last calendar year are eligible to vote. A QR code was displayed and paper ballots were passed out to those who requested one.

The first item to approve was the March 2023 congregational meeting minutes. The minutes were included in the Annual Budget & Election Meeting packets.

Les gave a brief report on the Congregational Vitality Survey results. This is a standard survey provided by the Synod. Pastor Melissa Stoller from the Synod facilitated the survey and worked with the board to interpret the survey results. 90 people responded. The results showed zero at-risk elements. This means our congregation is in good shape. Hope is the only church Pastor Stoller has worked with who had no at-risk elements. The board and staff took the same survey but their results were counted separately. The board and staff results were closely aligned. The board is going to set goals next year for areas we should address. Further details of the survey are included in the meeting packet.

The second item to approve was the 2024 budget. Les invited Jamie Randall, the Budget Committee Chair, to talk about the 2024 budget which was passed by the board. Jamie stated the we are in great financial shape. For 2023, income is currently ahead of budget by 3.6% and is 5.1% ahead of last year. For 2024, a conservative 4% increase was used. The building fund is expected to be less since there is no current capital appeal campaign. The mortgage paydown in 2021 freed up \$15,000 per year. The largest increase in expenses is staff. This is due to increasing compensation to retain and reward current staff and adding a part-time youth position which was approved by the board. Other notable increases are in benevolence, office expenses, utilities, and property expenses. Our cash balances are healthy. Excess cash has been invested in multiple CDs with different maturity rates to ensure cash will always be available. The CDs are expected to provide about \$17,000 in 2024. It was noted that the parking lot repaving is not in the budget. We hope to be able to push it off until 2025, but If it needs to be done in 2024, it will be paid out of cash reserves. Jamie then asked for questions and there were none.

The last item to vote on was Board elections. There are three candidates. Their bios are available in the meeting packet. Les opened the floor for additional nominations. There were none.

The floor was opened for questions or comments. No questions or comments were presented. The congregation was asked to vote via QR code or paper ballots. The meeting recessed at 6:03 p.m. until the 9:00 a.m. service on December 10th.

## Sunday – December 10, 2023, 9:00 AM service

The congregational meeting was resumed and called to order by Les Aloï at 10:09 a.m. Les explained that according to the constitution, confirmed active members who have communed or contributed within the last calendar year are eligible to vote. A QR code was displayed and paper ballots were passed out to those who requested one.

The first item to approve was the March 2023 congregational meeting minutes. The minutes were included in the Annual Budget & Election Meeting packets.

Les gave a brief report on the Congregational Vitality Survey results. This is a standard survey provided by the Synod. Pastor Melissa Stoller from the Synod facilitated the survey and worked with the board to interpret the survey results. 90 people responded. The results showed zero at-risk elements. This means our congregation is in good shape. Hope is the only church Pastor Stoller has worked with who had no at-risk elements. The board and staff took the same survey but their results were counted separately. The board and staff results were closely aligned. The board is going to set goals next year for areas we should address. Further details of the survey are included in the meeting packet.

The second item to approve was the 2024 budget. Les invited Jamie Randall, the Budget Committee Chair, to talk about the 2024 budget which was passed by the board. Jamie stated that we are in great financial shape. For 2023, income is currently ahead of budget by 3.6% and is 5.1% ahead of last year. For 2024, a conservative 4% increase was used. The building fund is expected to be less since there is no current capital appeal campaign. The mortgage paydown in 2021 freed up \$15,000 per year. The largest increase in expenses is staff. This is due to increasing compensation to retain and reward current staff and adding a part-time youth position which was approved by the board. Other notable increases are in benevolence, office expenses, utilities, and property expenses. Our cash balances are healthy. Excess cash has been invested in multiple CDs with different maturity rates to ensure cash will always be available. The CDs are expected to provide about \$17,000 in 2024. It was noted that the parking lot repaving is not in the budget. We hope to be able to push it off until 2025, but if it needs to be done in 2024, it will be paid out of cash reserves. Jamie then asked for questions and there were none.

The last item to vote on was Board elections. Les thanked Tim Sechler and Jean Bayer for their 6 years of service and Diane Herzog for 3 years of service on the Board. There are three candidates for the 2024 Board. Their bios are available in the meeting packet. No additional nominations were presented at the 5:00 PM service.

The floor was opened for questions or comments. No questions or comments were presented. Voting was done via QR code or paper ballots which were collected by the usher. The meeting recessed at 10:18 a.m. until the 11:00 a.m. service on December 10th.



Sunday – December 10, 2023, 11:00 AM service

The congregational meeting was resumed and called to order by Les Aloï at 12:06 p.m. Les explained that according to the constitution, those eligible to vote are confirmed active members who have communed or contributed within the last calendar year. A QR code was displayed and paper ballots were passed out to those who requested one.

The first item to approve was the March 2023 congregational meeting minutes. The minutes were included in the Annual Budget & Election Meeting packets.

Les gave a brief report on the Congregational Vitality Survey results. This is a standard survey provided by the Synod. Pastor Melissa Stoller from the Synod facilitated the survey and worked with the board to interpret the survey results. 90 people responded. The results showed zero at-risk elements. This means our congregation is in good shape. Hope is the only church Pastor Stoller has worked with who had no at-risk elements. The board and staff took the same survey but their results were counted separately. The board and staff results were closely aligned. The board is going to set goals next year for areas we should address. Further details of the survey are included in the meeting packet.

The second item to approve was the 2024 budget. Les invited Jamie Randall, the Budget Committee Chair, to talk about the 2024 budget which was passed by the board. Jamie stated the we are in great financial shape. For 2023, income is currently ahead of budget by 3.6% and is 5.1% ahead of last year. For 2024, a conservative 4% increase was used. The building fund is expected to be less since there is no current capital appeal campaign. The mortgage paydown in 2021 freed up \$15,000 per year. The largest increase in expenses is staff. This is due to increasing compensation to retain and reward current staff and adding a part-time youth position which was approved by the board. Other notable increases are in benevolence, office expenses, utilities, and property expenses. Our cash balances are healthy. Excess cash has been invested in multiple CDs with different maturity rates to ensure cash will always be available. The CDs are expected to provide about \$17,000 in 2024. It was noted that the parking lot repaving is not in the budget. We hope to be able to push it off until 2025, but If it needs to be done in 2024, it will be paid out of cash reserves. Jamie then asked for questions and there were none.

The last item to vote on was Board elections. Les thanked Tim Sechler and Jean Bayer for their 6 years of service and Diane Herzog for 3 years of service on the Board. There are three candidates for the 2024 Board on the ballot. Their bios are available in the meeting packet. No additional nominations were presented at the 5:00 PM service.

The floor was opened for questions or comments. No questions or comments were presented. Voting was done via QR code or paper ballots which were collected by the usher. The meeting adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

March 2023 Meeting Minutes were approved with 97.1% of the vote:

- Approve: 168
- Not Approve: 0
- Abstain: 5

2024 Budget was approved with 97.1% of the vote:

- Approve: 168
- Not Approve: 1
- Abstain: 4

2024 Board Ballot – All 3 candidates were approved with the following number of votes:

- Elizabeth Bauer: 172
- Bryan Sandmann: 168
- Jon Vogel: 169

# THANK YOU TO OUR CHAIR LEADERS AND BOARD MEMBERS!

## Committee Chairs

David Best - Worship  
Jessica Randall - Youth  
Sam Hurst - Christian Education  
Angie Wentz - Social Outreach  
Jamie Randall - Finance  
Tom Majeski - Stewardship  
Scott Milk - Property  
Darrell Miller - Security

## Hope's 2023 Board

Todd Kane- President  
Les Aloï - Vice President  
Judy Buccini - Secretary  
Carol Zimmerman - Treasurer  
Jean Bayer  
John Blough  
Diane Herzog  
Jeff Karcher  
Barb Pezze  
Donna Pfeiffer  
Tim Sechler

