

Hope Lutheran Church of Warren



32400 Hoover Road ~ Warren, MI 48093

586.979.9055 ~ www.hopelutheranwarren.com

PASTOR DAN

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God's Blessings, Hope Family.

I pray this letter finds you well. In early August I released a letter with the fall schedule. Since then I have been talking with people, receiving feedback and looking at how we have been doing with live worship and the number of members who are watching online. I'll admit; getting feedback is difficult. We have not had a voters meeting in a long time, and many of my normal channels for receiving the pulse of the congregation is not readily available. That is why it is so important that I hear from you! Based on feedback we will be adjusting our schedule slightly:

Starting Sunday October 4th:

Church will begin at 9:30 am and Bible study will follow after 11am.

I have heard a number of questions on this so I want to take the time and answer them:

Why 9:30? We adjusted the time so that it more evenly splits the difference between early and late service.

Why one service? First, we are only worshipping about 70 people in person and 150 people watching through the live stream. We can still safely distance.

Second, after a town hall with the congregation, the elders decided to have just one service, a Unity service, on Sundays. What is important to realize is that this is not surrender to "the inevitable" or giving up. The church is healthy and doing well. We are still worshipping normal numbers for Hope. Many are just worshipping online. It is my prayer, however, that the Lord continue to bless us with the numbers and that in the future we have such growth that we HAVE to add another service!

Why aren't we running more services on Sunday? Would that increase numbers? For a couple of important reasons, we do not have multiple services on Sunday. As a pastor I have to be conscious of the demands placed on our staff and the needs of our community. A service is not just myself, but also a Deacon, sound booth techs and camera operators, and a sanitation crew that can clean the facility (an hour and a half process) in between each service. To complicate things we have drive-through communion. That takes time to facilitate. The demand is not there for additional live services, but it is for communion.

It is also good to remember that starting in October we will offer two services every week, and they will be different services. Sunday morning will be our routine rotation of services, and Wednesday night will be a service focused on Bible Study and application, with praise music. Communion will be available at both.

Is The Church OK? What I want to emphasize is that we are not doing less in these times. Hope is not gone. As the people of Hope, we are, in fact, doing more. We are just doing more differently! If you look at the schedule, we are streaming a worship opportunity on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, with a published devotion on Monday and Friday. This is an ambitious schedule designed to engage both those in person and those at a distance.

On top of that we are still packing backpacks and providing school supplies to area schools. We have reached out to the principals to see if we can do more. We are providing food to local families, both in person and through the Blessing Box. We have set up outdoor gathering places, and have met and prayed with and for our neighbors. Our youth ministry continues to meet online, and our men gather to do Bible study around a fire on Thursday. I know several small groups that continue to meet over Zoom, and our Caring Servants team is still cutting coupons. Quilts are being made, Visitations are going forward, and as a Church we continue to proclaim not only Christ crucified, but risen, and active in the world through His people. Through you!

God is doing amazing things, my friends, and I want you to be a part of it. In all of these things, understand our desire to be flexible so that we can meet the needs of God's people. I pray that we have shown a willingness to change and adapt over these last two years to meet the challenges of this world. My prayer is simply that we as a church continue to be clay in the potter's hands. For clay to be useful, it must be flexible.

Again, in all things I value both your prayers and your feedback. If you have any questions, ministry ideas or feedback, please give me a call or email me at Pastor@Hopewarren.com.

God Bless you, for you truly are the People of Hope,

Pastor Dan

Our Schedule starting October 4th:

Sunday: Worship at 9:30 am, Bible Study at 11 am.

Monday: Family Table devotion; to receive these, please sign up at: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/the-family-table>, Confirmation Monday night (open to any who want to brush up!) at 7 pm.

Tuesday: A Hope Filled Moment video released every Tuesday afternoon.

Wednesday: Bible Study Service starting at 7 pm. This service will focus on Biblical Accounts and praise music. Communion to follow.

Thursday: Hope on the Go chapel streaming service is live at 11 am.

Friday: A second Family Table Devotion is released.

Saturday: is a family day; celebrate the blessings you have been given.

Our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/HopeLutheranWarren>

Help us grow our ministry, Like, Share, and Subscribe. The larger the user base, the more tools we have.

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. – Acts 2: 46-47