# hope UNITED METHODIST CHURCH newsletter

Issue 32 November 2026

Hope United Methodist Church,7320 Northcote Avenue, Hammond, IN 46324

**Join Us in Worship - Sundays at 10:15**




## Veterans Day Celebration
## Sunday, November 15

Hope UMC will be honoring our veterans on Sunday, November 15! If you have served in any branch of the military, we invite you to please arrive a little early so we can recognize and honor your service.

Dave will be playing special music to celebrate our veterans and express our gratitude for their service and sacrifice. We look forward to taking this time as a church family to recognize those who have served our country. Thank you for your service!




## Community Thanksgiving Eve Service
## Wednesday, November 25 at 7:00 PM

Hope UMC will be hosting a Community Thanksgiving Eve Service at 7:00 PM, bringing together nine local churches for an evening of worship, gratitude, and fellowship. We are excited to welcome our community into our church! Help us spread the word by visiting Hope's Facebook page and sharing the event with your friends, family, and neighbors. The more, the merrier as we gather to give thanks together!

Interested in singing in the combined choir? Please see Dave's article below.

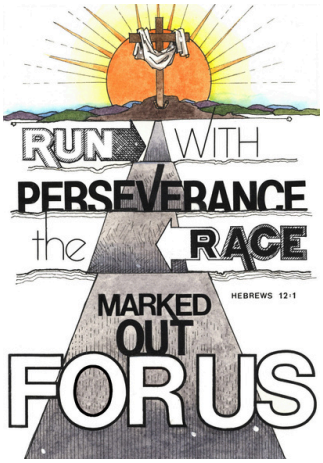


## Sing with the Thanksgiving Eve Choir

Can't sing in the choir every week? Come join us one time on Wednesday, November 25, at 7 PM for our Thanksgiving Eve service! We will be singing "Look At The World" by John Rutter. Several neighboring churches will be singing with us.

Practices are on Saturday, November 21 at 10 AM in the Hope UMC Sanctuary, and then before the service on November 25 at 6 PM. For more information contact Dave Bieschke (davebieschke@me.com ) or any member of the Hope UMC Chancel Choir!


Please join us for a
Thanksgiving
DINNER
November 22 12:00 pm
Please RSVP by Nov 12
Please bring a dish based on your last name:
A–I: Salad | J–R: Vegetable | S–Z: Dessert.
We look forward to sharing this special meal
and fellowship together!
Need it delivered? Call 219-844-3030
hope UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
7320 Northcote Ave
Hammond, IN 46324




*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.*
(Hebrews 12:1-2 NRSV)

# Pastor's Ponderings

## Perseverance

On November 1, we celebrated, honored, and entrusted our dear, departed saints to God. These people were important participants in our lives and played their part in the work of God in the world. They ran the race that was set before them.

We are in the race that has been set before us as well as we each live out our unique Calling. I imagine that we are all familiar with the term "the rat race," where it feels like we are scurrying around with no purpose, and that is exhausting! If we approach our calling without intention and care, it will feel like a rat race.

On November 8 we celebrate the ministries at Hope with our Ministry Fair. At the time that I am writing this, 14 ministries will have displays staffed to share with you what they do and why they do it. The difficult part of preparing for this has been planning out how to squeeze all of this into our Community Center. What a great problem to have!

A lot is happening here at Hope UMC, and many of us are very busy. It is important that all of this wonderful, blessed busyness does not become a mere rat race. When we are living out God's call on our lives, we will experience energy and joy even when the work is tiring and difficult. But we won't find this energizing joy if we do not maintain our connection to God and neighbor in the busyness. Be sure to celebrate the victories, deepen the relationships, and let your work be prayer by communing with God who is present in the work (even in boring and sometimes tense committee meetings!)

When the race begins to drain us more than sustain us, take a moment to become aware of God's presence. Make a connection with another person. Open your heart and share what's in it. Take a sabbath rest regularly. Perseverance isn't stubbornly pushing through the pain to reach the end of the race. It is attending to the things that nourish, refresh, and sustain us as we run the race of ministry.

Blessings,
Jim

# Opportunities to Grow Our Faith

Discipleship and Spiritual Vitality




## Ministry Fair on November 8

As part of our worship on November 8, we will celebrate the many ministries at Hope UMC with a Ministry Fair. We will begin worship in the sanctuary as usual, but in the middle of the service we will proceed to the Community Center. There our various ministries will have displays staffed with people to share with you what they do and why they do it. Maybe you will find a ministry that tugs at your heart to join.



## Interested in Bible Study?

Why not join the Bible Study group that meets Wednesday mornings at 10:30 AM in the Hope library? You do not have to have extensive biblical knowledge, (or you might know a great deal!) to be part of this group. Each week we dig into God's Word to learn more about God, others, and ourselves, and how the Bible can have an impact on our lives today.

On November 11, we will begin a new 7-week series based on the book, "The God We Can Know: Exploring the 'I AM' Sayings of Jesus," by Rob Fuquay. Rob is the Senior Pastor at St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis.

Everyone is welcome! Hope to see some new faces on November 11.

Donna Beifuss, Facilitator




## Calling All Communion Servers!

Would you be willing to help serve Communion during Sunday worship? We would love to create a list of volunteers who can assist Pastor Jim with Sunday morning preparations and help coordinate Communion in advance of the first Sunday of each month.

If you are interested in serving Communion, please contact the church office to be added to the list. Whether you are a longtime member or are looking for a new way to participate in worship, this is a wonderful opportunity to serve our congregation.

## Messy Church

Messy Church will move to the third Tuesday for November and December. Plan to join in at Messy Church on November 17 & December 15.

Evangelism and Outreach

Community Impact and Missions

# Reaching Out to Our Community

## Justice and Mercy, or JAM

Come JAM with us. The music we make together is the music of justice, kindness, mercy, and love. Our small group has accomplished much during the past year: supporting our local schools, encouraging fair elections, actively supporting the Welcome Network, and protesting unfair imprisonment and immigration policies.

This month, we sent 100 postcards with handwritten messages encouraging people to vote. We also passed out these postcards to the congregation during church. In addition, with help from the League of Women Voters and Linda Trinkle, we have offered voter registration at several church events. During our meetings, we discuss legislation and candidates' views on social justice issues.

We continue to support The Welcome Network in their efforts to provide temporary housing, legal guidance, and educational opportunities to local immigrants. Also, we share information about the efforts of the Indiana United Methodist Church to dismantle the school to prison pipeline.

Please join us on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 7:00-8:00 p.m. on Zoom. Contact the church office for the Zoom link.

United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith will meet at the church on Monday, November 2. Georgia Brown will lead the UWFaith council at 11:00 am, when we will plan our annual Christmas Get-Together.

At noon, Donna Benirschke will lead Mary Circle. Both meetings will be conducted in person and in Zoom.

Adam's Rib will meet on the second Tuesday of November, at 5:00 at Hartsfield Village. All women of faith are invited to join either circle of the UWFaith; just come to one of our meetings or call the church office for more information.




## New Blessing Box

Korey Ziemkowski, founder and CEO of the non-profit Girl in Lansing, has generously installed a new blessing box (also know as a micro pantry) for us in our preschool parking lot.

Girl in Lansing is dedicated to building and feeding communities through micro pantries, offering non-perishable food to the community while simultaneously providing space for families to donate to neighbors.

They are dedicated not only to providing food for families but also to creating a greater sense of community, security, and love among families, community members, and local organizations. More information: https://www.girlinlansing.net.

### The Vine Food Pantry
**September 2026**

2.12 Volunteers served 108 hours
Days Open: 17

| | Sept. | Jan-Sept |
|---|---|---|
| New individuals served | 44 | 447 |
| Returning individuals served | 326 | 3249 |
| Total | 370 | 3696 |
| | | |
| New households served | 19 | 161 |
| Returning households served | 163 | 1624 |
| Total | 182 | 1785 |
| | | |
| Pounds of food distributed | 6,217 | 60,887 |



## Second Mile Giving for November Honoring the Fallen: The Legacy of Wreaths Across America

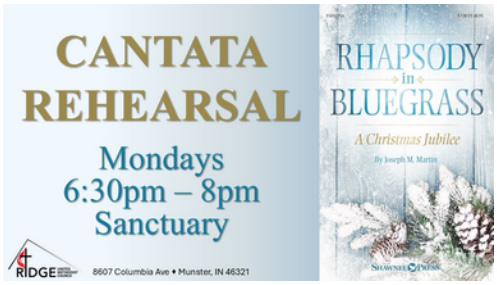
Every December, a solemn yet powerful transformation takes place at military cemeteries across the United States and abroad. Millions of fresh balsam fir wreaths are laid at the graves of fallen service members as part of Wreaths Across America (WAA). This is a national movement dedicated to ensuring that the sacrifices of our veterans are never forgotten.

Their Mission: Remember, Honor, Teach. Wreaths Across America operates on a simple but profound three-part mission:

- Remember the fallen heroes who gave their lives for freedom.
- Honor those who currently serve and their families.
- Teach the next generation about the value of freedom and the cost at which it is protected.

Anyone who is interested in participating in the wreath-laying ceremony that will take place on Saturday, December 19 at 11 am at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery should sign up at the following link: wreathsacrossamerica.org.

Thank you for your ongoing support of all Hope UMC missions. You are making a difference in someone's life!
Blessings, Marcos and the Missions Team.




## Ridge UMC Hosting Cantata

Ridge United Methodist has invited us to join their choir for the canata "Rapsody in Bluegrass." Rehearsals are on Mondays at 6:00 pm and the concert will be Sunday, December 6 at 3:00 pm.




## Spiritual Gifts Assessment

God has given each of us unique gifts that enable us to fulfill our call to love and care for our neighbors. But often we are unaware of what those gifts might be. One great way to discover your gifts is to take a Spiritual Gifts Assessment.

At Hope UMC we have two ways you can take the assessment. You can go to our website at inhopeumc.org, log in, and there will be a link to the assessment. Or you can stop by the church office and pick up a hard copy from Brenda. Feel free to share your results with Pastor Jim so he can give you further guidance.

# Building Relationships

Relational Vitality




## Looking Ahead to 2027: More Ways to Serve

As we look toward 2027, the Worship Committee will be discussing several opportunities to strengthen our worship ministry and support those who help make Sunday mornings possible. Some areas we hope to focus on include:

- Liturgist training to help prepare and support those who lead worship.
- Audio/visual (AV) training for those interested in helping with sound, slides, and worship technology.
- Acolyte training to help participants understand and confidently fulfill this important worship role.
- Creating an Altar Guild to help prepare and care for the worship space, altar, and related items.

These are just some of the ways you can share your time and talents with Hope. You do not need to be an expert or have previous experience to get involved. A willingness to learn and serve is a great place to start! Interested in getting more involved in worship? Talk with Sarah Ward or Pastor Jim to learn more about these opportunities and how you can help.

Thank you to everyone who already gives their time and talents to make worship at Hope special. From preparing the sanctuary to welcoming the community, leading worship, and serving Communion, every contribution makes a difference. We look forward to serving and worshiping together in the months ahead!



We sadly said good-bye to Barb Iler on October 25. She is moving out of the area to be closer to her family.

## Reading is Rewarding.

Hope UMC Book Club has chosen *Strangers in Time* by David Baldacci as their book for November. It is a Goodreads Choice Award Nominee for Readers' Favorite Historical Fiction (2025). "During one of the fiercest conflicts the world has ever known, three strangers' lives collide as they confront the raining bombs of their present and the explosive secrets of their past. Journey back to wartime London in this historical drama from the number one best seller." Please join us as we share our thoughts and impressions on November 16 at 1:00 pm via Zoom. You may call the church office to receive a link for our discussion. We welcome your participation!




## Staff Parish Updates

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Staff Appreciation Sunday such a wonderful success! We are also excited to welcome a new member to our team, Ja'won Williams, who will be serving as our Community Outreach Director.

If you joined us for fellowship on October 25, you may have heard Pastor Jim introduce Ja'won and had the opportunity to meet him. In his new role, Ja'won will help strengthen our connections within the community while providing leadership and guidance to support Hope's continued growth and success in ministry.

We're excited to have him on board! Read on to learn a little more about Ja'won
Staff Parish Relations Committee

This month, Staff Parish is inviting you to enjoy learning a bit more about Ja'won.






## Shop, Swipe, and Support Hope!

Did you know your everyday shopping can help support Hope United Methodist Church? It's true! With the RaiseRight fundraiser, you can turn your regular shopping trips into a simple way to give back to our church—without spending any extra money!

RaiseRight offers gift cards from hundreds of popular retailers and restaurants you already know and love. From your morning Starbucks run to filling up your gas tank, grabbing groceries, or shopping for that must-have item, you can purchase a gift card and a portion of your purchase goes directly to support Hope!

You might be thinking, "That sounds great, but I never have cash or a check with me on Sunday morning!" No worries! RaiseRight makes it easy to participate from the comfort of your own home. You can purchase gift cards online and have them shipped directly to your door or email. That means you can shop when it's convenient for you and still help support Hope!

Think of it this way: You're already buying coffee, groceries, gas, and gifts. Why not make those everyday purchases work a little harder for our church community?

Ready to turn your shopping into a little extra hope? If you're interested in learning more or need help setting up your RaiseRight account, please see Sarah Ward or Nancy Jarmula. We'd be happy to help you get started

Happy shopping and thank you for supporting Hope!



# Help Us "Spruce" Up the Church!

## Hanging of the Greens - Saturday, Nov. 28

It's time to prepare our church for the Advent and Christmas season! We will be holding our annual Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, November 28.

We are looking for a point person to help coordinate the decorating. If you enjoy helping make our church festive and welcoming for the holidays, this could be the perfect opportunity! Please reach out to Sarah Ward if you are interested in coordinating or helping with the decorations.




## Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Eve is a special time of worship and celebration, and we look forward to gathering as a church family to celebrate the birth of Christ. Our Christmas Eve services will be held at **3:00 PM and 7:00 PM.** More details will be shared as we get closer to the holiday. We look forward to celebrating this meaningful evening together!







## Take a Tag from the Giving Tree

Our giving tree will soon be up in the narthex! Tags on the tree (from the Salvation Army) will have the name, age, and gift ideas for a child from a low-income family. If you would like to purchase a gift, just take a tag off the tree. Please bring the **unwrapped** gift back to the church, with the tag attached, by Thursday, December 3.




# Order Form

We would like to have poinsettias beautify the church again this Christmas. If you would like to order a flower, please complete this form and place it along with your payment in an envelope by mail or the church office by Sunday, November 22. Cost: $15.00 per plant.

**In Memory of:** _____

**In Honor of:** _____

**From:** _____

(PLEASE **PRINT** SO NO TRANSLATION ERRORS ARE MADE.)

_____ NO. OF PLANTS @ $15

_____ TOTAL COST

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO HOPE UMC

# Children's Ministries






4 Melinda Hawkins
6 Tom Slaboski
7 Elizabeth Roman-Merced
7 Joseph Lovasko
9 Jenna Tapper
9 Jason Tapper
11 Otie Anderson
13 Francis McCabe
15 Fran Vukovich
16 Anthony Bell
16 Phil Keckich
17 Sandra Smith
21 Cheryle Seljan
22 Margaret Lerner
23 Emory Avina
24 Jason Lewis
25 Jordon Jones
25 Niki Avina
26 Donald Copple
26 Donna Benirschke
29 Julian Valdez




November is a wonderful time to reflect on gratitude, friendship, and all the things that make our preschool community so special! This month our classrooms will be filled with fun fall activities, hands-on learning, and opportunities for our children to practice kindness and thankfulness. We are so thankful for our amazing families and the opportunity to watch their children learn, grow, and shine each day!

🦃 **Classroom Thanksgiving Feasts**

Our classrooms will be celebrating Thanksgiving with special classroom feasts! The children will enjoy time together with their classmates while learning about gratitude, friendship, and sharing. These celebrations are a fun way to make special memories and build our classroom community.

Community Preschool & Childcare will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving. We hope all of our families enjoy a wonderful holiday filled with love, laughter, and time together!

🎄 **Coming in December: Christmas Pageant**

The holiday season is right around the corner, and we are excited to begin preparing for our annual Christmas pageant in December! Our little ones will be working hard to help make this a special celebration for our families. We look forward to sharing their smiles, excitement, and holiday spirit with you!

More details regarding the date, time, and other important information will be shared as we get closer to the event. We hope you will join us for this special holiday tradition!

🎂 **November Birthdays**

Ms. Donna, Thomas, Marcos, and Amari

# Finance and Administrative




## Greetings from the Finance Committee,

The Finance Committee meets monthly to review our balance sheet and profit and loss statements. We discuss options to reduce our deficits, and analyze where our giving comes from and what we may anticipate in future giving.

In September, we had a net loss of $24,450 and a year-to-date loss of $147,910. Of that net loss in June, $6,424, was for bills to maintain 6635 Hohman.

The finance committee will continue to focus on (1) increasing giving, and (2) managing expenses. Because we have very little discretionary spending, we will focus more on how we can increase our giving. To help that focus, the November worship will focus on stewardship. Our plan is a four-week stewardship campaign, ending with a commitment Sunday.

Our goal will be to use this stewardship campaign to challenge you to review your level of giving and prayerfully consider how you can increase your annual giving to Hope UMC. Any increase in your annual giving will directly impact the ministries Hope UMC can offer our community. In the meantime, we will continue to review all expenses to reduce unnecessary spending.

Blessings, Pastor Pete, Finance Chair

## Reimbursement Requests

Last month, Hope UMC had a net loss of $24,450 and a year-to-date loss of $147,910. The finance committee continues to explore ways to increase income and decrease expenses. One way to manage expenses is to have procedures in place for getting approval to spend money and for submitting a reimbursement form. Effective immediately, that procedure is as follows:

1. Before the event occurs, request approval from the finance committee stating the dollar amount that you would be requesting reimbursement for.
2. There is a form in the office that you need to fill out seeking reimbursement. Please attach all receipts to that form before submitting them to Debbie for reimbursement.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me, and I will be happy to discuss why we are implementing this process.

Blessings, Pete Ward, Finance Chair

Hope United Methodist Church
7320 Northcote Ave, Hammond, IN 46324
Phone (219) 844-3030
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30-2:30

Web: INhopeumc.org
Facebook.com/INHopeUMC
Brenda's email: admin@inhopeumc.org
Pastor's email: james.denton@inumc.org

Pastoral care needs may keep Pastor Jim out of the office during office hours. It is always advisable to call to schedule a time to meet with him. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Pastor Jim or Brenda.



# November 2026



Hope UMC Events

Nov 2026 (Central Time - Chicago)

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1<br>9am - Choir Rehearsal<br>10:15am - Sunday<br>11:30am - Youth Group @<br>1pm - Lay Servant | 2<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>6:30pm - Operations | 3<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10:30am - Sonrise Seniors<br>1pm - Staff Meeting @ | 4<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Quilters<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>10:30am - Book/Bible<br>1pm - Pastor's Office<br>4:30pm - Communications | 5<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>11am - CPCC Board<br>12:30pm - Knit & Crochet | 6 | 7 |
| 8<br>9am - Choir Rehearsal<br>10:15am - Sunday<br>11:30am - Youth Group @ | 9<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Knitting and<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food | 10<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10:30am - Sonrise Seniors<br>1pm - Staff Meeting @<br>7pm - Ministry and Care | 11<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Quilters<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>10:30am - Book/Bible<br>1pm - Pastor's Office<br>6pm - Brianna's Hope @ | 12<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>12:30pm - Knit & Crochet | 13 | 14 |
| 15<br>9am - Choir Rehearsal<br>10:15am - Sunday<br>11am - Ministry Fair @<br>11:30am - Youth Group @ | 16<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food | 17<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10:30am - Sonrise Seniors<br>1pm - Staff Meeting @<br>6pm - Messy Church | 18<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Quilters<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>10:30am - Book/Bible<br>1pm - Pastor's Office<br>6pm - Brianna's Hope @ | 19<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>12:30pm - Knit & Crochet<br>6pm - Guiding Council @ | 20 | 21 |
| 22<br>9am - Choir Rehearsal<br>10:15am - Sunday<br>11:30am - Youth Group @<br>12pm - Thanksgiving<br>2pm - Neighborhood Meal | 23<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Knitting and<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food | 24<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10:30am - Sonrise Seniors<br>1pm - Staff Meeting @ | 25<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Quilters<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>10:30am - Book/Bible<br>1pm - Pastor's Office<br>6pm - Brianna's Hope @ | 26<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>12:30pm - Knit & Crochet | 27 | 28 |
| 29<br>9am - Choir Rehearsal<br>10:15am - Sunday<br>11:30am - Youth Group @ | 30<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food | 1<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10:30am - Sonrise Seniors<br>1pm - Staff Meeting @ | 2<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Quilters<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>10:30am - Book/Bible<br>1pm - Pastor's Office<br>4:30pm - Communications | 3<br>8:30am - Church Office<br>10am - Pastor's Office<br>10am - The Vine Food<br>11am - CPCC Board<br>12:30pm - Knit & Crochet | 4 | 5 |