



the anchor

Hope Lutheran Church
3295 Old Hwy 5 South, Ellijay, GA 30540

November 2025

From the Pastor...

I just returned from a convocation in Asheville, North Carolina for pastors and deacons in our denomination. It takes place every year about this time – usually at the Lutheridge Conference Center and Camp where our young people have attended camp each summer over many years.

The theme of this year's meeting was "Differentiation" – knowing who you are as pastors/deacons and congregations and being able to set good boundaries that help keep everyone healthy.

Rev. Robert Creech, PhD, was the primary speaker sharing the principles of family systems theory as it applies in the parish setting. In 2003, he wrote a book entitled *The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation*.

He served as Senior Pastor at the University Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, as a professor at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary – also in Houston – and as Director of Pastoral Ministry at the George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas.

That all sounds fabulously scholarly and deep – but truth be told – Dr. Creech was easy to listen to and understand. I told Pastor Justin Eller of the Southeastern Synod staff who arranged for Dr. Creech to be with us – that I thought his presentations were the best we've ever had at this annual event.

Dr. Creech stressed how important healthy relationships are to the good health of not only for pastors but for congregations as a whole - people speaking honestly, kindly and clearly with one another. People being clear about what their boundaries are in those relationships – what ethical, spiritual, verbal, ideological and physical boundaries they have as they deal with others.

Gossip is a no-no. If I have a problem with you – I deal with you directly – not by going and complaining about you to others. That last is called *triangling* and usually solves nothing – it only makes matters worse.

Healthy congregations are made up of people who trust one another and their leaders and who act in healthy and trusting ways with one another. They keep the main thing the main thing (Jesus) and they strive to have strong missional relationships with other congregations in their communities.

I very much enjoyed getting away for a couple of days with my colleagues. Lutheridge was heavily damaged – as was Asheville – by last year's hurricane, but they all seem to be bouncing back well.

This, of course, is a busy time of year for us at Hope. We recently held our annual meeting – approving next year's budget, electing new members to our congregation's council and having new officers to that council named. Steven Freese was elected to be the council's president this year. He's already off to a great start!

Sylvia Negri was chosen to be our vice president, Carol Townsend will again serve as our secretary, and Jan Austin continues doing a thorough and great job as our treasurer. Amy Freese is

settling in nicely as our financial secretary, and it's great having Amanda Brookshire serving so wonderfully as our Administrative Assistant.

We'll be having work done on our landscaping in the next little while - taking out dead bushes, planting flowering plants for the spring, sprucing up the columbarium area and trimming and shaping bushes. We recently had our gutters cleaned, and Steven Freese did a wonderful job spray-washing the walkway at our front doors and the walkway down by the kitchen.

Our Christmas Toy Appeal went well – thank you – and we'll have our Annual Blessing of the Bikes on Saturday, November 1st with breakfast in Founders Hall.

We're having just one worship on Sunday, November 23rd, followed by our traditional Thanksgiving dinner downstairs in Founders Hall (this way folks from the early service can join in the fun). Proceeds from the freewill- offering will help with our children's camp scholarship fund.

Peace,

Pastor Dave

All Saints Sunday, November 2nd

At our All Saints service Sunday, November 2nd, we will remember church members, relatives, or close friends who have passed away since November 2024. Forms will be available in the church narthex through Sunday, October 26th.

Names can also be emailed or called in to the church office until Tuesday, October 28th to be included this year. Please be sure to include your name with your request.



Daylight Saving Time Ends

All Saints Sunday, November 2nd, is also when the time changes again. Remember to adjust your clocks and "Fall Back" an hour before you go to bed Saturday night. You wouldn't want to be the one arriving at church an hour earlier than everyone else!

Many thanks to everyone who helped make this year's *OctoberFest* another success! All proceeds will be sent to the Bethesda Mobile Health Clinic.

NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS



BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Joyce Adamson
- 2 Evan Pierce
- 2 Sylvia Negri
- 2 Jordan Pinson
- 4 Erin Wimberly
- 7 Tom Strickland
- 9 Steve Austin
- 10 John Hiscox
- 11 Jason Fort
- 12 Emma Claire Fakier
- 13 Nicholas Christensen
- 14 Billy Huff
- 17 Andy Marquez
- 24 Cristina Cook
- 25 Doris Goplin
- 26 Ron Rogne
- 26 LeRoy Polk
- 29 Bryan Bremm

ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Janet & Pastor Dave Smedley
- 7 Lori & Andy Marquez
- 9 Maureen & Ted Grener
- 11 Jordan & Chad Pinson
- 24 Beverly & John Hiscox
- 24 Shela & Billy Huff
- 26 Sheila & Ed Bohon

Christmas Appeal and Bike Blessing

As in recent years past, our community Christmas gift appeal this year was held throughout October to support our local American Legion Christmas Toy Ride. Thank you for your generous response to this appeal! We have a wonderful selection of toys for children of all ages to bring to the American Legion this year.

Our Evangelism Team and Men's Group are going to host a *Blessing of the Bikes* (and Bikers) on Saturday, November 1st to kick off the Toy Ride and deliver your gifts to prepare for the Legion Christmas party. Please know how much the folks at the Legion appreciate your generosity for the sake of the children in our community!

Thanksgiving Dinner – One Service

On Sunday, November 23rd, we will enjoy our traditional Thanksgiving Dinner Lunch-In downstairs in Founders Hall following one service at 10:00 AM. The church will provide the turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans and rolls. The congregation is asked to bring favorite casseroles and side dishes, salads, or desserts to share.



A freewill offering will be taken up to help with our youth scholarship fund.

Outreach Team News

Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!

My mother's favorite Holiday of the year! The Outreach Team got together Oct. 1st and filled over 140 bags of snacks which will be delivered to Gilmer Co Senior Center. We take 47 bags every other month to the center and they deliver them to the Meals on Wheels clients. The snack bags contain 7 items ramen noodles, apple sauce, fruit cup, trail mix, granola bar, crackers and cookies. Thank you Outreach Team!

We will be having the Diaper Drive on February 15th, 2026. Rhenda at Gilmer Pregnancy Center now has a source to purchase diapers in large quantities more cost efficient than we can purchase. The Outreach Team will be serving Sandwiches, Soup and Dessert and ask you for a cash or check donation to give to the Pregnancy Center.

Thank you all for being so generous!
The Outreach Team

Looking Ahead Calendar Events

Our personal calendars fill up quickly as the holidays approach. Here is a sneak peak of what will be happening here at Hope so you can include these special events in your family plans. We will have greater details as we get closer to Christmas.

- Sat. Nov. 29, 10 AM – Decorate for Advent
- Sun. Nov. 30 – First Sunday of Advent
- Sat. Dec. 13, 10 AM – Choir final Christmas rehearsal
- Sun. Dec. 14, 10 AM** – Combined worship, choir Christmas cantata
- Tues. Dec. 24, Christmas Eve schedule:
 - Festival Christmas services, 4 PM and 7 PM
 - Christmas Cookie Reception, 5:30 PM
- Dec. 26-Jan. 1 Church office closed
- Sun. Dec. 28th, 10 AM** - Combined worship



Poinsettias for the Altar

We will again be decorating the altar with poinsettias given in honor or in memory of special people in your life. Signup sheets and pricing will be available by mid-November. Watch the bulletin and weekly emails for details.

November Worship Assistants

8:15 Lectors

- 2 Ann Buehler
- 9 Charlie Brown
- 16 John Kilpatrick
- 23 No early service
- 30 Sue Marler

10:45 Lectors

- 2 Sylvia Negri
- 9 Rena Ashworth
- 16 Judy Kruger
- 23 John Hiscox
- 30 Barbara Bell

10:45 Greeters

- 2 Jim & Ann Berman
- 9 Art & Wanda Dodge
- 16 Fred & Sandi St. John
- 23 Pam Guenther & Luis Santiago
- 30 Ted & Maureen Grener

10:45 Ushers

- 2 Rudy & Judy Kruger
- 9 Jeannine Sieck & Janice Weber
- 16 Barbara Fail & Jack O'Donovan
- 23 Steven & Amy Freese
- 30 Leon & June Edgemon

10:45 Communion Assistants

- 2 Sylvia Negri
- 9 Steven Freese
- 16 Judy Kruger
- 23 John Hiscox
- 30 Barbara Bell

Counters

- 2 Mike Hoover & Sylvia Negri
- 9 Barbara Mefford & Sylvia Negri
- 16 Steven Freese & Mary Leyden
- 23 Kari Rench & Karen Baker
- 30 Sylvia Negri & Barbara Mefford

Mid-Week Altar Guild

- 2 Micky Northrup
- 9 Ann Buehler
- 16 Doris Goplin
- 23 June Edgemon
- 30 Ann Berman



The Hope Quilters have made another beautiful donation to the Lutheran Camping Corp. quilt auction in Pennsylvania this year. Here are pics to add to the next Hope newsletter. This is the fourth annual donation the quilters have made to this worthy cause. Many thanks to Hope's wonderful Quilters!

The Hope Staff

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Custodian: Jeannine Sieck	contact the church office
Website	www.hopeonthehill.church



Our Mission Statement:
Making Christ known through reaching, welcoming, praising, equipping and sending

Officers & Congregational Council

President	Steven Freese
Vice President	Sylvia Negri
Secretary	Carol Townsend
Treasurer	Jan Austin
Financial Secretary	Amy Freese

Council Members

Vicki Christensen	Jim Sease	Doris Goplin
Ann Buehler	Carolyn Hill	
	Billy Huff	

Please contact any council member if you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns. Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 5:00 PM.