



the anchor

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

May 2026

From the Pastor...

The Book of Matthew wasn't the first of the New Testament gospels written – scholars believe it was Mark's gospel that was written first. But the New Testament begins with the Book of Matthew because of the special role it plays in the biblical canon – connecting the Old to the New Testament.

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament and then for four hundred years nothing new was added to the Bible. During that time - as empires in the Middle East rose and fell – the tiny nation of Israel was occupied by first the Greeks and then the Romans.

And then? A baby was born. A baby who grew into the man, Jesus. Matthew introduces him and opens up a whole new section of the Bible – the New Testament.

From the first – Matthew's intentions are clear. He connects Jesus with – and as the fulfillment of – everything that had been written in the Old Testament. He begins with Jesus' family tree – stretching all the way back to Abraham – through King David – through the Babylonian exile – and up to Joseph and Mary.

Matthew is unequivocal - right up front? Declaring Jesus as God's Messiah – the deliverer promised to the Jewish people back in the Old Testament. The Messiah who's coming would change the course of human history!

Like I said – Matthew's gospel wasn't the first one written but of all four of them? It serves as the perfect bridge between the story of God's relationship with his people initially and his relationship with his people after the birth of Jesus.

After our Lord's bloodline is listed in the beginning verses of the gospel, St. Matthew narrates the story of Jesus' life on earth. Of all the New Testament writers? Matthew relies most heavily on the prophetic narrative of the Old Testament. A typical connecting phrase found throughout Matthew's writing was this: *...so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled.*

Matthew's gospel thus serves as the link that pulls the Old and the New Testaments together. But he's clear too – especially that? In contrasting Jesus as Messiah with the traditional expectation of the Jewish people in their understanding of just who Messiah was to be.

Jesus – a king – ended thousands of years of eager waiting. But as Matthew so clearly shows in his writing – Jesus came to establish a wholly new kind of kingdom – one that was different from what everyone expected.

Matthew was a tax collector – at first not well-liked by the other disciples – and certainly not by the Jewish people of Capernaum for his service to the hated Romans. As you might expect though – because of his background - he was orderly and systematic in his thinking and in his writing. He doesn't tell his story of Jesus chronologically – like Mark or Luke. Rather, he collects his Jesus sayings into five main sections.

First comes his Sermon on the Mount in chapters five through seven. Chapter ten records Jesus' instructions to his disciple on the mission he's preparing them for after he's gone. Chapter thirteen is made up of a series of parables about the Kingdom. Chapter eighteen

contains Jesus' thoughts on the church as a community. And in chapters twenty-three through twenty-five, Jesus shares his thoughts on religious hypocrisy and his predictions for the future. Of course, throughout all the chapters Matthew records events from Jesus' life as it unfolds. I mention all this, because – as you've no doubt probably already noticed – this Year A of our lectionary cycle of Gospel readings each Sunday – primarily comes from the Gospel of St. Matthew. It's been described by many – as being the – *most important book in Christendom!* Matthew's book was written primarily for a Jewish audience – hence the great care that was taken by him to connect the New Testament events of Jesus' unfolding life to the Messianic promises made in the Old Testament.

Our good fortune today – is that Matthew was undoubtedly thinking of us too when he wrote his words!

Peace,
Pastor Dave

Hope's Graduates

Let's take a moment and celebrate with folks at Hope who are graduating from High School and College!

Micah Newton – son of Matt and Krista Newton - is graduating on May 22nd at Pickens High School in Jasper. He'll begin his college studies at the University of Georgia in the Fall.

Ariel Prisco – daughter of Christy and Tommy Prisco-Marler and grand-daughter of Sue and Mike Marler – is graduating on May 15th from the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega with a B.Sc. in Psychology and Sociology. She'll be continuing her studies for a Masters degree in Psychology at Florida Tech University in the Fall.

Brighton Fakier – daughter of Libby and Kenneth Fakier – is graduating on May 8th at the University of Georgia with a BFA with a concentration in Jewelry Design.

And this is a little late (because we just found out) – Matthew Newton graduated last Fall from Arizona State University with a B.Sc. in Biomedical Sciences degree – *summa cum laude*.

Congratulations to all these amazing people!



LADY'S SPRING HIGH TEA

The Ladies of Hope held their first Annual High Tea on Saturday, April 25th in Founders Hall at 2 PM. 42 ladies wearing their high tea finest and decked with colorful hats and fascinators all had a wonderful time! The food was delicious and plentiful!



May CELEBRATIONS



BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Easley Pinson
- 3 Pam Whitsell
- 5 Carol Townsend
- 6 Rudy Kruger
- 7 Eileen Ashley
- 9 Thomas Prisco
- 10 Jim Sease
- 11 Jerry Bobak
- 11 Robin Hanson
- 12 Jeanne Rosenbaum
- 14 Emil Harvey
- 17 Joan Blomquist
- 17 Wendy Bobak
- 17 Barbara Jonason
- 18 Micah Newton
- 21 Suzie Quido
- 23 Jonah Newton
- 29 Mary Young
- 30 Stan Ashworth
- 30 Aaron Engels

ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Kim & Brett Smith
- 14 Suzie & Frank Quido
- 17 Joyce & King Adamson
- 27 Libby & Kenneth Fakier

Thank You from Barbara Fail

Dear Hope Family,

I want to sincerely thank my church family for the many prayers, cards, and angels sent my way during this time of healing. Each message and thoughtful gesture has meant more to me than words can truly express.

Receiving your cards in the mail brought such a smile to my face and reminded me just how blessed I am to be surrounded by so many who care. Your love and support have lifted my spirits and carried me through each day.

I miss my church family dearly and look forward to being back with you soon. Until then, please know that I am grateful beyond measure.

And I can truly say, prayers do help. I can vouch for that.

*With love to you all,
Barbara*

Outreach Team Update

Happy Spring Everyone!

The Outreach Team met in April and packed 141 snack bags for Elderly shut-ins in Gilmer County. Each bag contains 7 treats, some healthy some not! Our goal is to put a smile on their face with goodies to look forward to every other month. We deliver the bags to the Senior Center every other month and they deliver them with meals on wheels. We pack 282 bags per year, 1/2 in April and 1/2 in October. Let Amy Freese know if you would like to join the fun in October.

Thank you!
The Outreach Team

May Worship Assistants

8:15 Lectors

3	Carole English
10	Jan Austin
17	Ann Buehler
24	Charlie Brown
31	TBA

10:45 Lectors

3	Wanda Dodge
10	Janet Smedley
17	Aaron Engles
24	Karen Baker
31	Carol Townsend

10:45 Greeters

3	Ann & Jim Berman
10	Maureen & Ted Grener
17	Kathy & Joe Orlando
24	Wanda & Art Dodge
31	Sandi & Fred St. John

10:45 Ushers

3	Jeannine Sieck & Janice Weber
10	Mike Hoover & Jack O'Donovan
17	June & Leon Edgemon
24	Judy & Rudy Kruger
31	Amy & Steven Freese

10:45 Communion Assistants

3	Wanda Dodge
10	Janet Smedley
17	Aaron Engles
24	Karen Baker
31	Carol Townsend

Counters

3	Sylvia Negri & Barbara Mefford
10	Karie Rench & Mike Hoover
17	Mary Leyden & Steven Freese
24	Barbara Mefford & Sylvia Negri
31	Karie Rench & Karen Baker

Mid-Week Altar Guild

3	Micky Northrup
10	Ann Buehler
17	Doris Goplin
24	June Edgemon
31	Ann Berman

Announcements

Updated Church Directory in Progress

We are in the process of updating our Church Directory. A draft copy is posted on a clipboard by the narthex bulletin board. Please check your listing and let us know if any of your contact information needs to be updated.

You can write directly on the draft, send an email to the office (hope.elca.ellijay@gmail.com) or leave a voice mail on the church telephone (706-636-4673).

If you are not able to get to the church to view the draft, please let the office know of any recent changes to your contact information, especially phone numbers or email.

Blessing of the Bikes

On Saturday, May 23rd, starting with breakfast in Founders Hall at 9:30 AM, Hope's Evangelism Team and Men's Group will be hosting their Annual Spring Blessing of the Bikes. If you know someone with a motorcycle – invite them to come!

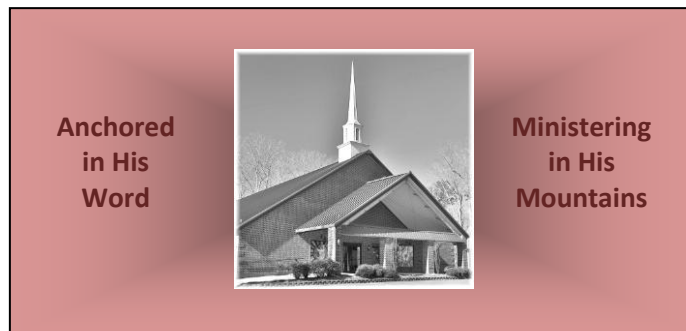
We'll start with breakfast and then move to the parking lot for the blessing.

Sunday School to Study the Book of Job

Beginning on Sunday, May 10th, Hope's Adult Sunday school class will begin studying the Old Testament Book of Job – led by Pastor Dave. Bring your bible!

The Hope Staff

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Director of Music: Sandra Hunter	404.729.1244 smbnotes@aol.com
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

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

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 5:30 PM.