

hope UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Newsletter

Issue 25

April 2026



Hope United Methodist Church, 7320 Northcote Avenue, Hammond, IN 46324
Join Us in Worship - Sundays at 10:15



H O L Y W E E K

Maundy Thursday, April 2

7:00 pm - Combined Evening Service
with Communion
at Hope United Methodist Church

Good Friday, April 3

3:00-6:00 pm - Walk-In Stations of the Cross
At Ridge United Methodist Church
8607 Columbia in Munster

7:00 pm - Combined Evening Service
at Hope United Methodist Church

Easter Sunday, April 5

10:15 am - Worship Service



Thoughts from Pastor Jim

He is risen!

“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead...” 1 Corinthians 15:20a NRSV

Easter and Eastertide, the season between Easter and Pentecost, are here. We celebrate the risen Lord and all that means for us. With the many challenges in the world today I greatly appreciate and need the reminder to focus on God’s victory over sin and death in Jesus Christ!

Frequently as we work hard to address and focus on all of the challenges in our life, in the world, and in the church, we forget to look up and see all of the wonderful things that God is doing.

Here at Hope United Methodist Church we are experiencing new life and the renewal of hope. Attendance at worship is up by 10% over the same period last year. Several new families have joined us in worship regularly.

Messy Church continues to connect us to people and families beyond our Sunday morning congregation and we are seeing the development of a sense of community with the Messy Church congregation.

We have six young people who are preparing to embrace the faith for themselves through confirmation, and they are bonding into a group. These youth have asked to continue meeting together as a youth group – how exciting!

The First Church property was a hot item on the real estate market and we have accepted a bid on the property. We are close to having new signage outside and are working to hire both a custodian/maintenance person and an Outreach Coordinator, who will focus on connecting us to our community, which is essential to reaching new people.

I am witnessing energy and joy increasing among us and we are dreaming and planning for new ministries to our community. God is good!

Yes, forming a new church has challenges and frustrations. We are still adapting to our new identity and new ways of doing and being the church. We are developing new relationships and working through shifting responsibilities.

Change is hard but God’s Spirit is moving, inspiring, and energizing us. The resurrection of Jesus means the gates of heaven are open now and we can live as resurrection people in this world as we build the Kingdom of God among us and in our community as we fulfill our mission and Jesus’ Great Commission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. That transformation is underway at Hope and we hope that it will flow out to our community. He is risen and we are rising! Praise God and thank you Jesus!

Blessings,
Jim

Opportunities to Grow Our Faith

Discipleship
and Spiritual
Vitality



Messy Church will meet on Tuesday, April 28, 6:00 – 7:30 pm.

Missions Committee

Our mission for April is Messy Church, a monthly program that unites creative and unique approaches to church and community life. The program reaches out to families and individuals who may not traditionally attend church services.

There are many reasons for us to support Messy Church; one is that attendance has recently started trending upward. We had about 12 young kids attending with their families on March 24. Eight of the 12 kids were new or came to us through the preschool, along with a few regular attenders from Hope. This is a big “Thank you, Jesus!”

Also, we would like to thank everyone who supported our March Mission, which was the Preschool/Childcare Food Program. It means a lot to our preschool children and families. Blessings, Marcos Pontes and Missions Team



Prayer Team

If you would like to be on the prayer team and receive our weekly prayer list (complete with last names!), please let both Donna Beifuss (who is our Congregational Care Team Leader) and the church office know, and we will send you the prayer list each week. Prayer Team members can also access the list on our website at INHopeUMC.org/PrayerTeam. You will need to log in or register if you haven't already.

Reaching Out to Our Community



Pastor's Time Away

Pastor Jim will be taking some needed vacation and renewal time in the coming months. During these times away, Pastor Pete and Pat Mosley will be covering the pulpit, and Pastor Pete will be available for pastoral care.

- April 6-12 - Vacation
- April 23-24 – Fruitful Journey’s Retreat
- May 11-17 – Vacation
- June 3-6 – Annual Conference
- June 8-21 – Vacation

Social Justice Ministry

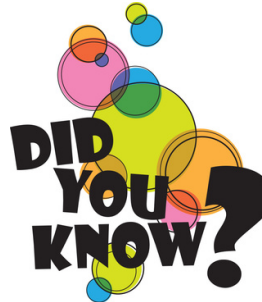
Members of the Social Justice Ministry are doing our best to fight injustice, and we need your help. Join us on Zoom on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 7:00-8:00pm for respectful, faith-based discussions.

- We are continuing our efforts to ensure fair elections. We had a booth at the Special Someone's Dance to register voters. Many thanks to Linda Trinkle and the League of Women Voters for manning that booth.
- Some members are attending rallies to protest ICE raids or to protest unconstitutional actions.
- We are supporting the Welcome Network in their efforts to aid local immigrants. We need your help to fill a table at their banquet on May 2 at the Croatian Hall in Merrillville. If you are interested in attending, contact Cyndi Slaboski or Mary Jo Shea. We will be happy to share information with you about how to support this organization financially or by volunteering.

Worship Committee Update

The Worship Committee continues its work to enrich worship experiences and prepare for the upcoming Easter season. Recent updates include positive feedback on the new sanctuary banners. The committee is also reviewing the need for new attendance pads and exploring options for updated name tags to better serve the congregation.

Additional efforts include ordering new church mugs for hospitality and supplies such as prayer cards. The committee is also continuing discussions on future improvements, including liturgist training and communion practices.



Did You Know?

In 2025, The Vine distributed 93,275 pounds of food and provided food to 2768 families in our community!

The Vine Food Pantry

February 2026

Days open: 16

Two volunteers served 96 hours

Pounds of food distributed: 7.045

New individuals served55

Returning individuals served.....372

Total.....427

New households served.....16

Returning households served.....186

Total.....202



Turning Leftover School Supplies Into Lasting Impact

While visiting Honduras last year, Midwest Mission saw firsthand the significant need for school supplies across public schools.

The Problem:

Teachers often lack even basic materials to distribute to their students, and many families cannot afford to provide the proper tools for learning. As a result, students begin the school year without the notebooks, pencils, and supplies they need to succeed.

The Other Problem:

At the very same time, as the school year ends in the United States, countless usable supplies are discarded. Students clean out desks and lockers, and notebooks with empty pages, gently used pencils, rulers, and crayons are thrown away — or sent home only to become clutter and eventually trash. Many of these items are in excellent, usable condition — some are even brand new — yet they are treated as waste.

The Solution:

What if these two problems could solve each other? By collecting gently used school supplies at the end of the school year, we can redirect valuable resources and send them in bulk to Honduras, where teachers can distribute them directly to students who need them most.

An Even Better Solution

Our church has agreed to be a drop-off site. This simple partnership connects churches and schools in a meaningful way, transforming items that might otherwise be discarded into valuable learning tools. We will be partnering with schools and churches in the area. If you have some of these items, there will be a box at church to put them.

What to donate

Please bring gently used school supplies from the following list: Backpacks, pencil cases, markers (color, dry erase, permanent), highlighters, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, colored pencils, crayons, glue, scissors, spiral or composition notebooks, construction paper, rulers, compass sets, geometry kits

We will collect items until the end of the school year and hope to bring the donations to the Annual Conference on June 3. Otherwise, they will be delivered directly to the Midwest Mission in Pawnee, IL. Please watch for more upcoming information. Contact Marcos Pontes or Lora Ward for more information, or visit www.midwestmission.org to learn about this mission and many other initiatives.



- 1 David Wilkinson
- 2 Pat Mosley
- 2 Peter Wicklund
- 3 Susan Bravo
- 3 Edwin Echlin
- 4 Stephen Meeker
- 5 Phyllis Sovola
- 5 Ivan Lewis
- 6 Jonah Hawkins
- 8 Janice Wilson
- 9 Jeanette Jancosek
- 10 Tracie Geurts
- 11 Bently Vallejo
- 15 Corbin Mendoza
- 15 Betty Merrick
- 17 Wayne Barnes
- 20 John Schu
- 20 Bobby Jones
- 20 Kathy Baker
- 22 Sue Thomas
- 24 Chuck Anderson
- 25 Suzanne Wasmund
- 27 Brandi Baker

United Women in Faith

Mary Circle of United Women in Faith hosted the Agape meal on Tuesday, March 31. Meatless dishes traditionally eaten during Holy Week were served, including Kuggle (a Lithuanian recipe), assorted olives, bread, and cheese. Reverend Jim Denton offered communion.

Carrie Greer of Haven House was the speaker. Haven House NWI provides emergency shelter for domestic violence victims and their children in Hammond. Their goal is to provide resources to help survivors develop independent living skills. Some items they currently need include twin-size sheets, cleaning products, personal hygiene products, new kids' toys, gift cards, or money.

The executive board of United Women in Faith decided to keep two circles to accommodate the women in our church. Mary Circle meets on the first Monday of the month at noon. Adam's Rib Circle will start meeting on the second Tuesday of the month. Their next meeting will be held on April 14 at Hartsfield. Sue Yerkes has acquired the use of one of the rooms there. We will meet at 6:00 pm. See the bulletin for upcoming information.

What We're Reading Next

Hope UMC Book Club has chosen *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. From Goodreads, "As president, Lincoln was able to bring his disgruntled opponents together, create the most unusual cabinet in history, and marshal their talents to the task of preserving the Union and winning the war." Because this selection has 916 pages, we will take two months to finish reading and discuss it in May.

However, we will meet on Monday, April 20 on Zoom at 1:00 pm to share suggestions and recommendations for books to complete our year of reading. We encourage anyone interested in joining our casual group to call the church office for a Zoom link. Come, listen to the discussion, and give us input on what you'd like to read and discuss.

Member Directories Available

Our first version of Hope's Membership Directory is now available. Printed copies can be obtained in the church office. Please let us know of any corrections and omissions. The directory can also be accessed through our website at INHopeUmc.org by logging in (register if needed) and clicking on your photo (or initials if we don't have a photo of you) in the upper right corner. Members and regular attenders can click on "Church Directory" to access the directory.



Week of the Young Child – April 11–17

We are excited to celebrate the Week of the Young Child, a special time dedicated to recognizing the uniqueness and importance of every child! Each day will have its own fun theme:

- Music Monday
- Tasty Tuesday
- Work Together Wednesday
- Artsy Thursday
- Family Friday

If you'd like to learn more about this special week, please visit: [Learn More About Week of the Young Child](#).

Popcorn Fundraiser Pickup

Popcorn orders will be available for pickup on **April 9**. Please plan to pick up your items when you pick up your child that day. Congregation orders will be distributed on Sunday, **April 12**. If you need to make other arrangements, please contact Karianne at (219) 844-3030 ext. 305.

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who participated in our fundraiser! We raised about \$1,650 toward new mulch and sand for our playground! **ANOTHER BIG THANK YOU** to our congregation, March's monthly mission, and Hope UMC Endowment Committee for their generous donations to support our food program transition. We are incredibly grateful for your continued support and generosity!

Our Paper Pie book fair sales totaled \$520, which earned us \$270 in free books!

April Birthdays: Sebastian Z (14) Ms. Crystal (18) Gianni (20) Ms. Gracie (22)



On May 3, we will celebrate the confirmation of our newest young members. Plan to be there to welcome them into full membership in Hope UMC! Our confirmands are: Bellamy Avina, Andres Castro, Leya Castro, R.J. Heady, Ameya Serna, Sam Smith, and Sofia Smith.

Summer Camp Scholarships

Summer Camp is not just fun for our children and youth, it is also a powerful way for them to grow in their faith and discipleship. Yet, camp is expensive, although our United Methodist Church camps are more reasonably priced than many alternatives. To support our youth and ensure that everyone who wants to attend camp can, we are accepting donations to fund camp scholarships.





Items from 6635 Hohman Ave. have been taken to St. Mary's Church in Whiting. Thank you to the muscle and truck from the Whiting High School football team, the Hammond Optimists, and Cash for Charities.



Staff Parish Updates

Maintenance Position Update: Joseph has decided to pursue another employment opportunity, and we wish him well in his new role. As a result, we will continue our search for a new church custodian/maintenance person. We are currently in the process of scheduling an interview with a prospective candidate and will share updates as they become available.

We successfully held our first Child Protection Training session in March. If you have ongoing interaction with the children in our church, please watch for information about upcoming training opportunities.

This month, Staff Parish is inviting you to enjoy learning a bit more about Sarah. Staff Parish Relations Committee

Property Update

The Trustees have an update on the status of the former First United Methodist Church property located at 6635 Hohman Avenue. Over the last several months, a number of people have worked to move items from 6635 Hohman Avenue to Hope UMC. These items are things Hope UMC can use.

A number of items have been purchased by members of Hope UMC, and others have been given to outside organizations that have indicated they can use them. There are a few that still need to be moved to Hope UMC, and a few items we need to decide what to do with.

During the month, the Trustees entered into an agreement with Latitude Commercial Real Estate Services to sell 6635 Hohman Avenue. An agreed-upon selling price was determined, and a For Sale sign was placed on the property during the second week of March.

Since then, we have had several meetings with various individuals who may be interested in purchasing 6635. We are currently negotiating with one of these parties and are optimistic that a sale can be completed by the second quarter of 2026. The Trustees will keep you informed as we negotiate the sale.

Meet Sarah Ward, Handbell Director

<p>Favorite Movies: There are a lot! Crazy, Stupid, Love; Remember the Titans; Terms of Endearment, The Princess Bride; Empire Records (I watch a lot of movies)</p>	<p>Favorite Meal: tater-tot casserole; polish sausage with peppers & onions, potatoes in any form</p>
<p>Favorite Quote - "There is no crying in baseball" or "Without music, life would be a mistake."</p>	<p>Dream Destination: Hawaii</p>
<p>Activity: watching sports (in person or tv)</p>	<p>Go-to Starbuck's Order: Vanilla Sweet Cream Cold Brew or Ice Chai Latte (dirty..shot of espresso)</p>

Finance and Administrative



In the name of our Lord and Savior and in Jesus Christ his only Son, greetings.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I want to share with you where Hope UMC stands financially as of the end of February. For the month of February, Hope UMC had a profit of \$5,865. Our year-to-date finances show a net loss of \$12,297. When we do a deep dive into the month's finances, we find that our income from offerings was approximately \$31,086. The total income generated from Sunday offerings, parsonage rental, income from flowers, mortgage payments, and miscellaneous income was \$34,692.

Expenses for the month were \$28,826. These expenses are predominantly fixed expenses with very little discretionary spending. Our income for the month was up approximately \$8,000, while our total expenses were down approximately \$8,000.

The Finance Committee continues to work with Vanguard and Heartland Foundation to consolidate our funds from Vanguard to Heartland.

Remember, the finance committee is here to serve you. If you have any questions about our budget, expenses, or income, please feel free to reach out, and we will do our best to get you an answer as soon as possible.

Blessings, Pastor Pete, 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](https://www.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.



April 2026



Hope UMC Hammond, Hope UMC Events

Apr 2026 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8:30am - Pancake Breakfast @ 9am - Choir Rehearsal 10:15am - Palm Sunday Worship 10:15am - Sunday Worship @ 11:30am - Adult Bible 11:45am - Confirmation Class	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Pastor's Office Open @ 10am - The Vine Food Parity @ 1pm - Food Parity Committee	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Pastor's Office Open @ 10:30am - Sunrise Seniors @ Hope 12pm - Agape Meal @ Nerhex 1pm - Lenten Study @https:	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Quilters 10am - The Vine Food Parity @ 10:30am - Book/Bible Study @ 1pm - Pastor's Office Open @ Hope 6pm - Bharna's Hope @ Hope UMC 7pm - Praise Bells Rehearsal @	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Pastor's Office Open @ 10am - The Vine Food Parity @ 10:30am - Book/Bible Study @ 12:30pm - Knit & Crochet @ Hope 7pm - Maundy Thursday Service @	Good Friday Stations of the Cross 7pm - Good Friday Evening Service	
9am - Choir Rehearsal 10:15am - Easter Service @ Hope 10:15am - Sunday Worship @ 11:30am - Adult Bible	Pastor Jim Vacation 8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Lounge - Crochet 10am - Pastor's Office Open @ 10am - The Vine Food Parity @ 6:30pm - Operations Team @ Hope	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Pastor's Office Open @ 10:30am - Sunrise Seniors @ Hope 5:30pm - League of Women Voters 5:30pm - Nerhex/Lobby- Legal	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Quilters 10am - The Vine Food Parity @ 10:30am - Book/Bible Study @ 1pm - Pastor's Office Open @ Hope 6pm - Bharna's Hope @ Hope UMC	8:30am - Church Office Open @ 10am - Pastor's Office Open @ 10am - The Vine Food Parity @ 12:30pm - Knit & Crochet @ Hope 6:30pm - Nerhex-Girl Scout		
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