



## Building Congregational Vitality

The Congregational Vitality Committee has met for many months to find ways to revitalize New Hope, increase membership and income and find new sources of revenue. We have been successful in increasing visibility both on site and virtually with a brochure, Outreach cards, Connect cards for visitors, New Hope T-shirts, new signage and a new website which will launch in August. There is still much to do, and we need your help!

### Invite someone to church.

82% of people are likely to attend church if invited by a friend or relative. Ask them if they would like to come WITH you. Be by their side as they step into the unknown.



- \*JoAnn has postcards and invitations to mail to everyone you know.
- \*write a review on Yelp, Facebook and Google
- \*share on Facebook and YouTube
- \*post invitations and flyers
- \*let people know we have facilities for rent
- \*use your Outreach cards
- \*wear your T-shirt
- \*join the Congregational Vitality committee

(We will meet August 2, 16 and 30 at 10 am)

### INSIDE THIS

#### ISSUE

<u>Page 1</u>
Congregational Vitality
<u>Page 2</u>
Pastor's Message
<u>Page 3</u>
Words of Worship
<u>Page 4.</u>
Mission Outreach
<u>Page 5</u>
PW, Congregational Life
<u>Page 6</u>
Your Session at Work
<u>Page 7</u>
CDC News
<u>Page 8</u>
Financial Report
<u>Page 9</u>
Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Coming Events



PASTOR'S CORNER

by Rev. Brian Long

One of the toughest things I think we do as individuals is to walk through the world blind. Now do not get me wrong or misunderstand me. There are a lot of things we simply cannot see, so it is not an intentional blindness. Still, so much can pass before our eyes that we simply do not see, and thus we react in ways that are either inappropriate in the least, and possibly even hurtful.

Let me give an example that learned in my construction days. After seventeen years in construction, it was pretty rare that I was surprised by something, or even alarmed by something. I simply had an abundance of experience to fall back on when a problem came up. Homeowners on the other hand had just invested a lot of money in this new home, and any problem that came up, as they were sure to do, was reason to panic.

Leaks, be they plumbing, roof, or otherwise are never good. Not only can the damage the house, but they can also cause damage to valuable stuff, feed mold, and in really bad cases where they go undetected, they can cause a hazardous condition. So I do not want to make light of a leak. However, it was not uncommon for me to get a call from a homeowner about a leak. Often, these calls included loud voices, choice language, and a high level of anxiety. For me, a leak involved the fairly, and usually simple process of determining where the leak was coming from, and then having the appropriate individuals fix it, and then repairs to the damaged property as appropriate and necessary.

One of the things I learned was to never tell someone their concern was "no big deal." While it may very well have had an easy solution, that I fully understood, it was a big deal to that person.

Here is another one. I frequently got calls for cracks in the walls. I can imagine, if I did not understand how houses moved, that seeing cracks in a brand-new wall could be alarming. Cracks generally mean something is broken. In reality, all houses in this are move. Between settling because of weight, the wind, and the soils expanding and contracting, houses move, and will continue to do so. The cracks are usually cosmetic and easy to fix. (I got good at explaining all of this without taking a breath.)

Now translate this into some other issues. Many people feel anxiety about medical issues, financial issues, relationships and more. I have seen this so many times when someone goes to express their concerns, and the other person says in various ways, "no big deal." Well, it might not be a big deal to the listener, but for the one going through the challenge, it is a huge deal. And all too often, we miss it. We do not see their angst, their pain, their fear, and all of the weight they are shouldering with that burden.

When we dismiss someone's concerns because we see them as insignificant, we dismiss their feelings, and ultimately, we close them off. Furthermore, out of embarrassment, they are just as likely to not talk about their problems and then not get the help, relief, or comfort they so desperately need.

Jesus listened, and he cared about people's feelings. I keep hearing in the public forum that we should not care about people's feelings, or in crass terms, %\$#\* someone's feelings. This is a horrible attitude. Feelings are part of being human. Feelings of anger, happiness, sadness, fear, and all of the other emotions are part of who we are. We would be hurt if someone ignored our feelings, or worse, if they hurt us or a loved one.

As followers of Christ, we are called to open our eyes, our ears, and yes, our hearts. I encourage everyone to not wander about in deliberate blindness. Instead, when someone tells you they are fine, you should probably double check to make sure they are. After all, I am pretty sure everyone is struggling, and can use a friend. Amen.

# Words of Worship

By Lavita Golightly

We have been busy in worship this month with “Christmas in July”. Mini Christmas trees, lights, and figurines decorated the sanctuary. Christmas hymns were sung and a message reminding us to celebrate Christmas all year round provided a mental break from the heat.

In August, we will all be focusing on “Back to School” preparations. If you haven’t picked up a Red Apple for a donation for school supplies for the needy, find them in the fellowship hall. “Back to School” Sunday will be August 20th. Pastor Brian will be blessing the back packs for students and teachers alike! Come join us and stay for cake following the service.

Little Angels is being reinstated. Thank you to Jennye Giles for creating the first lesson for children first grade aged and younger. If parents would like, their children may leave the sanctuary with a volunteer during worship, returning during the last hymn. Speak to an usher if you are interested. If you are volunteering, the bag with lessons and materials can be found on the table in the back of the sanctuary.

How are the flowers in your yard surviving the heat? My purple coneflowers were abundant in the spring but are struggling now with the heat. If you have other flowers or flowering bushes, such as sunflowers, marigolds, mealy blue sage or other sun loving flowers in bloom, we’d love to have you share some of them for an arrangement on any Sunday for the altar table. If you bring them, we will provide a vase!

Since Pastor Brian is recovering from surgery, Elder Linda Owens will be preaching our message on July 30th. Thank you, Linda! The following Sunday, the Reverend Judy Pistole will be delivering the message and communion while Pastor Brian is taking a vacation week. Thanks to Pastor Judy also. We are so blessed to have capable hands in our congregation to step in and fill the rather big shoes of our pastor when needed!

Hope to see you all on Sunday!!



## MISSION AND OUTREACH

*By Debra Caldwell*

The Garden of Grace continues to struggle with heat, lack of rain and pests. We are now planning our Fall Garden and will have a workday in early September.

Please save the dates for New Hope Garden Club meetings and presentations by Harris County Master Gardeners.

September 19	Fall Vegetable Gardening	Debra Caldwell
October 24	Aquaponics	Bennie Matusek
November 14	Plants of Bible	Jean Fefer

### **Red Apple School Supplies and Happy Feet Program 2023**

A big thank you to everyone who generously donated to the project. New Hope was able to provide a backpack, school supplies and a pair of shoes for at least ten children!



New Hope is partnering with Clothed by Faith and many other churches to provide clothes for people in need. We will receive a list of folks with their age, size, and gender. You can contribute with a donation of money, new, or gently used clothing. Only new socks and undergarments are accepted. We also plan to send a team of volunteers to help sort and distribute clothing.



By Iris Hymel

I m very happy to join Session and even happier to be your Congregational Life Elder. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have that will help me serve you best.

Our Christmas in July celebration was a success. Lots of food, great conversations, and so much laughing. I believe everyone enjoyed themselves. August will also be an exciting month. We will have the Blessing of the Backpacks along with asking for blessings for the teachers and staff of the schools. This will take place during the service on August 20 with cake and refreshments after the service. Please come and help us show appreciation for the students, teachers, and staff.

### Presbyterian Women

Iris Hymel, Moderator

Your Presbyterian Women are getting ready for the upcoming year.

We will begin meeting the first Wednesday in September. All women of New Hope are encouraged to join with us. We hold hybrid meetings, both in person or by Zoom. Please feel free to join. If you would like to join in on Zoom, please let me know at [iris.hymel@yahoo.com](mailto:iris.hymel@yahoo.com) and I will be sure to send an invitation to you. There is no fee for you to use Zoom to attend the meetings.

## YOUR SESSION AT WORK

by Linda Owens, Clerk to Session



Session met on July 23, 2023.

We celebrated:

A successful Christmas in July potluck.

Plans to paint the front doors of the sanctuary.

The revival of our Little Angels program.

Plans for our new website to be online as soon as August 7, 2023.

Donations totaling \$600.00 to date for the Red Apple school supply drive.

And we worked on plans to:

Utilize our building to reach out to the community and raise needed funds.

Support the CDC while reaching out to the community to bring in more students.

Rebrand New Hope to revitalize our ministry to the community.

The session welcomes your prayers of support as we work to raise funds and build awareness of our church.



News from the Child Development Center

As we endure the dog days of Summer Julie and Anne have been working steadfastly preparing for another fun and enriching year at our little school.

We often wax nostalgic about past students and memorable events but really, in truth, the details are often vague and all we ever remember are the fun times and how we wonder how certain children are doing and what they look like now. Reality of time sets in when we find that many of those little cherubs are now grown adults in college! New Hope C.D.C. has seen many children come through the program and out into the world and we have been blessed to have been part of that journey.

Our little school has faced a lot of uncertainty and this year is no different. But for now, we look forward with great anticipation to once again open our door and our hearts to welcome the class of 2023-2024.

Our first day of school will be Tuesday, September 5, 2023.

Cheers







*August 2023*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**AUGUST 7 BOOK CLUB (ZOOM MEETING)**

**AUGUST 20 EDUCATION SUNDAY**

**BACK TO SCHOOL**

**SESSION MEETING**