

In Touch with Hope

919 Grand Ave

HOPE REFORMED CHURCH

Phone: 712-262-3016

www.spencerhope.org

October 14, 2009

Join us Sundays at 9:00 a.m. (sanctuary) or at 10:30 a.m. (Harbor of Hope)

Living the Adventure. . .

Mayan Prophecy and Jesus' Return

I was surprised to learn this morning that the world is going to end in a little more than three years.

The Tuesday edition of the *Des Moines Register* contained an article about an ancient Mayan calendar that is set to “run out” on December 21, 2012. Apparently, this has fueled a lot of speculation and internet rumors that the end of the calendar will mean the end of the world. Next month Hollywood’s “2012” will open in theaters featuring earthquakes, meteor showers and a tidal wave dumping an aircraft carrier on the White House. According to the *Register* article, panicky 4th graders are sending emails to astronomy websites saying they are too young to die.

All in all, people seem to be fascinated with end-of-the-world scenarios. Whether it is the Y2K virus, rumors that Saddam Hussein is the anti-Christ, or an old Nostradamus prophecy; there seems to be a never-ending market for speculation about the Apocalypse.

Obviously, the Bible also has some things to say about the end of the world. People are curious about the book of *Revelation* and the things Jesus has to say about His return. Books like *The Late Great Planet Earth* in the 1970s and more recently *The Left Behind* series create a lot of speculation about what the end will be like.

As a preacher, I get my fair share of questions about the end times. While I have my doubts about the Mayan calendar figuring into God’s plans, here are three things I believe every Christian can affirm with certainty about the end:

1. Jesus is coming back.

Jesus often spoke about His return. “You also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (Matthew 24:44) He said, “I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (John 14:3) Immediately after Jesus had ascended into heaven, two angels said to the disciples, “This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)

Clearly, the expectation of Jesus’ return is a dominant hope of the New Testament. We believe that Jesus Himself—personally, visibly and physically—will return to the earth.

2. No one knows the time of His Return.

At the same time, the Bible teaches that we do not, and cannot, know the time when Christ will return. Jesus said: “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.” (Matthew 25:13) Or again, “But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch; for you do not know when the time will come.” (Mark 13:32-33)

If Jesus Himself does not know the time, it is foolish to believe that we can figure it out. That is why we should be justifiably skeptical of any person—whether a preacher, a prophet, a Mayan priest, or whomever—who claims to have insider knowledge of the timing of His return. The Bible is not a codebook to be cracked. Jesus talks about signs of the approaching end (for example, Matthew 24); but I believe these are better thought of as reminders that an end is coming than signposts of immediate doom.

3. We should eagerly long for His Return.

Throughout the New Testament it is clear that Jesus’ return is something we should look forward to with eager anticipation. Titus 2:12-13 says: “[The grace of God teaches us] to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Philippians 3:20 says “Our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

While the New Testament authors did not predict specific dates for Jesus’ return, it appears that many of them expected it to occur in their lifetime (for example, 1 Thessalonians 4:17). While they made plans and worked hard here on earth, they never lost sight of their “blessed hope” and lived as though Jesus could return at any moment. So should we.

I’m often asked about the way I end our worship services. Following the blessing, I say “Even so, *maranatha*, come Lord Jesus! Amen.” *Maranatha* is an Aramaic word used in 1 Corinthians 16:22 that means: “Our Lord, come!” I end our worship services that way to remind all of us that this should be our constant prayer. Not that we get caught up in timelines and predictions, but that we live every day knowing it could be the day our Savior returns.



Upcoming Services

Sanctuary - 9:00 a.m.

The Junction – Harbor Room - 10:30 a.m.

Hello Love...

October 18 ~ *Love is Kind* - 1 Corinthians 13:4

October 25 ~ *Love is Humble* - 1 Corinthians 13:4

November 1 ~ *Love Sacrifices* - 1 Corinthians 13:5

Our Condolences ...

...to **Greg and Paula Raper** with the loss of Greg's mother, Marilyn Raper of Arkansas.

...to **Steve and Lori Taylor Family** with the loss of Lori's grandfather, Duane Osborne of Spirit Lake from time to eternity on Sunday, October 4.

Thank You Notes...

...“Thank you for the flower bouquet and your caring thoughts and prayers after my recent knee replacement surgery.” *Brenda Olson*

...“Thank you to all who helped me observe my 90th Birthday; with attending my party, the cards, flowers, phone calls and the many birthday wishes I received. It all meant so very much and was so appreciated.”

Opal DuBois

Affirming God's Servants:

Wow! When Hope sets their mind to reaching out, they reach out. Saturday, October 10, around 50 people of Hope Church went out into the community to "Be the Church" and share Faith in Action. It started out with snow on the ground, but that did not slow us down. Everything from yard clean ups, to painting, to putting on storm windows, to light bulbs on top of downtown buildings was done. We even had a team to do childcare. Thank you everyone that participated.



PRAYER & PRAISE

Please join us for Hope Church's weekly prayer time at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. It will conclude by 7:15 p.m. The time will consist of praise songs and prayer. This is also a great place to seek prayer for yourself.

Childcare will be available for infants – 3 years old in the nursery. We would like to encourage you to bring your older children along to *Prayer & Praise*.

All other scheduled meetings (except 6th, 7th & 8th Grade Youth Group) will begin at 7:30 p.m. This gives everyone an opportunity to attend *Prayer & Praise*.

HOPE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in finding out more about Hope Reformed Church?

**Sessions will be held Sunday,
October 18 & 25, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.**



This is a great opportunity to find out about Hope's vision, meet Pastor Russell, and learn how we are alike (and unlike) other churches you may have been involved in. Attending does not commit you to joining Hope, but it helps you make that decision wisely. This class is intended for adults. To register you can sign up on the lobby bulletin board, call Pastor Russell (712-346-8480 or 262-3016) or email (rmuilenburg@spencerhope.org).



Do you like to sew? If so, there will be a **sewing group informational meeting** on Sunday, Oct. 18, 10:30 a.m. in The Well. Any questions please contact Stephanie Johnson 262-0121.

Nursery Help Needed on Wednesday nights for infants - 3 years old: Please contact Shelly Helmink (240-4827) or the church office (262-3016) if you would be willing to serve in the nursery for *Prayer and Praise* on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 to 7:15 p.m. Thanks for helping our families be able to take part in our *Prayer and Praise* time.

A.C.T.I.O.N.

Wednesday Meal

(A lot of Church Things In One Night)

Life can be pretty hectic. We want church to bring families together, not pull them apart, so you are invited to come for a meal on Wednesday evenings. If you would like to come with your family and enjoy a meal before youth group or prayer time you are more than welcome. We strongly urge families to eat together, rather than have clusters of children and adults at separate tables.

The meal will be served from 5:15-6:30 p.m. every Wednesday evening in the Harbor for a small suggested donation (\$2-\$3) per person. We'll have a different meal each Wednesday through the school year. So on Wednesdays this school year, let us do the cooking for you as you come and enjoy a meal as a family.



**2nd Annual
TRUNK OR TREAT,**
Saturday, October 31,
5:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Hope Church parking lot

Invite your friends,
neighbors, and families
for a night of fun.

There will be a photo booth, hayride, games, food, and plenty of opportunities to collect candy. This is a chance to bless our community and introduce people to our church.

Everyone can get involved:

- * You can start donating bags of candy. There is a large box in the church lobby for you to put it in.
- * Sign-up in the lobby for decorating a car (limited number of spaces available).
- * If interested in serving in other areas contact Jean Blok at jblok@spencerhope.org or call 712.262.3016.



You are invited to join the
B.C. (Before Church) Prayer Time
 every Sunday 8:30 – 8:55 a.m.
 in the Grace Room.

Join us as we ask God to bless our
 worship and the ministries of Hope
 Church for His Glory.



A Christian Book Club has been
 started at Hope Church for the purpose
 of providing a place for individuals that
 are reading the same book to get
 together and discuss the material.

Books that expose us to different life styles help us to
 grow in our knowledge and faith and encourage us in our
 walk with our Lord. The meetings will be held on the
 third Wednesday night of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the
 Fireside Room. In October, we will be reading Three
 Cups of Tea by Greg Mortensen. Each member is
 responsible for purchasing or borrowing his or her own
 copy. The first meeting will be held on October 21. If
 you have questions, please call Marlis Kuiper 262-7031.

Do you throw your printer ink cartridges away? Why
 not bring them to the church office and we will recycle
 them at Staples. We get a \$3 credit for every cartridge
 we bring in which helps to purchase office supplies.

Nursery Schedule: Sunday, October 18

Tim & DeeAnn Greenough, Dena Giacobbe

Youth Choir/Christmas Choir for children in K-5th
 grade will be every Wednesday evening from 6:30-7:15
 p.m. during the *Prayer and Praise* service. Come join us
 for the ACTION Meal from 5:15-6:30 p.m. Parents are
 invited to stay for *Prayer and Praise* while the kids are
 in Youth Choir. Nursery provided for preschoolers.

Congratulations to the following youth as they received
 a gift of a Bible from the church on Sunday, October 11:
 Lucas Berkenpas, Justin Brown, Claire Christensen,
 Mackenzie Connor, Mercedes Costello, Miguel Garcia,
 Grace Gilderhus, Noah Hoffman, David Holt, Hallee
 Mingus, Emma Richards, Casey Sleight, and Hannah
 Thurman.



Attention 4th graders: We want to help you
 get to know your new Bibles and to grow in
 your faith. Therefore, we are offering 6
 classes for you. The first 3 will be in
 November. **Mark your calendars for**

November 8, 15 and 22 and come to The Well
 (Fellowship Hall) from **4-5:30 p.m.** to do interesting
 activities and play fun games that will help you get to
 know what your Bible is all about. Questions? Call Carla
 van Holsteijn 262-1854.

If you would like to have a meeting (team, prayer, small
 group, etc.) in the church at any time please contact the
 church office (262-3016 or hrc@spencerhope.org) so we
 may put it on the church calendar to avoid confusion and
 interference in setting up rooms. Thank you!

Youth News

SR. HIGH YOUTH GROUP

will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, .

6TH, 7TH & 8TH GRADE

YOUTH GROUP

will meet on Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m.

Spencer **MOPS (Moms of Preschoolers)** meets the 1st
 and 3rd Thursday of the month from 9-11:00 a.m. at Hope
 Reformed Church. We welcome moms with children from
 ages birth to Kindergarten. Childcare is provided!

The Spencer MOPS Group is hosting the **Third Annual
 FALL/WINTER CLOTHING SWAP!** It will be held on
 Monday, October 26th from 5-7:30 p.m. at Hope Reformed
 Church in the Harbor.

This clothing swap is open to the public. We will be
 accepting donations on Sunday, October 25th from 2-4:00
 p.m. and before 3:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26th of the
 following items: Gently Used FALL/WINTER clothing in ALL
 sizes (infant to adult), winter coats, Halloween costumes,
 baby furniture & supplies, toys, household items, and
 books. All items must be in good repair and condition.

Any items left over after the swap will be generously
 donated to the local programs, Cherish House in Spirit
 Lake, or could be taken to consignment stores as a fund-
 raiser for our organization.

Last spring, we served over 50 families in our
 community. We would love to serve even more this fall!
 There are many generous people in this community and
 there are many adult donations as well.

If you have any questions or would like help getting to the
 Swap, please call Cassie at 262-1025.

The **Clay County Pals Program** would like you to be
 aware or our need for adult mentors. We have a real need,
 at the moment, for men to mentor a growing list of young
 boys who are waiting be matched. These are youngsters
 age 6 and above who live in a single parent home and
 could benefit from having a positive relationship with an
 adult friend and role model.

We encourage each of you to consider being that adult
 that helps a youngster develop to his/her full potential and
 offers a positive influence in today's difficult growing-up
 world.

If interested, please contact: Carole Lea Cotton (262-
 1093) or Pam Haak (262-7566).

Three Friends Go to Heaven

After dying in a car crash, three friends go to Heaven for
 orientation. They are all asked the same question: "When you
 are in your casket, and friends and family are mourning over
 you, what would you like to hear them say about you?"

The first guy immediately responds, "I would like to hear them
 say that I was one of the great doctors of my time, and a great
 family man."

The second guy says, "I would like to hear that I was a
 wonderful husband and school teacher who made a huge
 difference in the children of tomorrow."

The last guy thinks a minute and replies, "I guess I'd like to
 hear them say, 'Look, he's moving!'"

Author is Unknown



FAMILY STYLE! TIGER TAIL GATE PARTY



Everyone of all ages are invited to join us
before the Spencer football game on

Friday, October 16
from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
parking lot of Hope Church.



We will be serving taco in a bag, painting faces, playing games and other activities to get us ready to go cheer on the Tigers at their last home game this year! If you would like to volunteer with this event, please contact Kim Smith 262-3016.



WOMEN OF HOPE Soup & Pie Supper



Friday, October 23, 5-7:00 p.m.

Menu: Pea, Chicken, Chili Soup
Assortment of pies with ice cream

REMINDERS ABOUT THE SOUP & PIE SUPPER

- Recipes are available from mailbox 224 or Hope Church Cookbook pages 215 & 220.
- Please thaw your soup before you bring it.
- Have all food items to the Harbor kitchen by 2:00 p.m. on Friday, October 23.
- Check your name off the list when you bring your food.
- Have your name on your container and lid.
- Please pick up your container after the supper.
- The Harbor kitchen will be open at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, October 23.