

Word of Hope

MOUNT HOPE
United Methodist Church



Pastor McGill Writes. . .

The Danger of Familiarity

Now that we have celebrated 200 years of ministry at Mount Hope Church, I believe the challenge of the future for the 933 members of the Church Family is that we do not become so familiar with the things of God that we begin to lose out on the power of the blessing. Have you become so familiar with church and Jesus that they are “just words” to you?

Today in the church, people often become so familiar with the teachings of the Bible and the routine of being a Christian that they no longer see Jesus for Who He really is—The Savior! They hear so much and practice so little that it becomes Christian cliché.

It’s easy to get like the townspeople in Mark Chapter 6—all you have to do is think you know it all. But that attitude is wrong and if you’ve got it, you might as well go on and sin with gusto because talking about the Bible but not doing what it says is just foolish. It’s not just hypocritical, it makes for a miserable life too. Attitude is important and it’s the lack of recognition for Jesus’

real and life-changing power that will stop you from receiving what you really need in life.

You may have grown up in church or you may have been saved for so long that it’s become “familiar” to you—that can be good or bad.

Familiarity can bring wisdom if you keep your attitude right and keep on believing God. But the danger in being familiar with the things of God is that you can let yourself get so mentally accustomed to being religious that you stop recognizing Jesus Christ, the person. This is one of the ways Satan deceives people in the church. This is why he fights your faith. He wants to degrade your thinking and render you powerless by ruining your attitude about Christianity.

When you become a “C & E” member—attend worship only at Christmas and Easter—a question to be considered is, has scripture become a cliché to you? If so, watch out! There is danger in letting the powerful Word of God become just words to you—and the danger is that you’re living below your

privileges as a child of God. If temptation comes, you’re probably going to be a wimp. You won’t have what you need inside to fight the devil off, and you’re going to end up lying down like a whimpering dog.

Don’t do that! If you’ve gotten lax, just pull yourself up and go to God in prayer. Repent and then ask God to give you a greater revelation of the truth and know you can apply it to your life.

Remember that the Bible isn’t just a book of teachings; it’s words are inspired by a Holy God. He is real and true, and His Word includes promises that will work for you if you will believe them. When His Word is real to you, watch out, devil! You’re going to use the Word and enforce his defeat. You are going to be someone that other people look to for support.

I find that too many people fall into the thinking that Jesus Christ is just a part of organized religion. But to me, Jesus is and always will be a Person! Jesus came to earth, died and rose again. He gave all those who call on His name - that includes you and me—the power to resist the devil,

January 2008

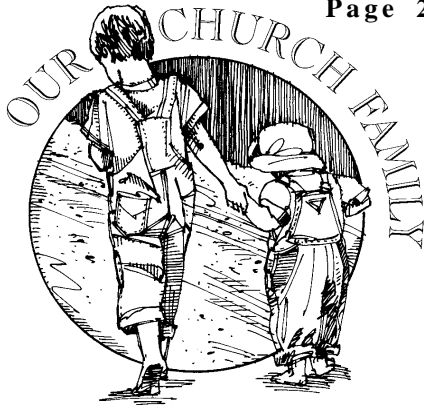
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Special points of interest:

- ◆ *1st: Happy New Year!*
- ◆ *Wednesdays: Devo Desserts*
- ◆ *3rd: MHCC Resumes*
- ◆ *4th: Couples’ Fellowship*
- ◆ *5th: Confirmation classes begin*
- ◆ *6th: Communion*
- ◆ *13th YF Midwinter Madness*
- ◆ *18-20th: YF Retreat*
- ◆ *21st: Office closed*

(continued on page 5)



BAPTISMS

Maya Jin Xiao Ross, daughter of Laurie and John Ross
Haleigh Page, daughter of Gerald and Becky Page

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Amber Albert
Scott Ashton
Dorothy Blankenship
Shaun and Andrea Griffith
Dick and Mary Alice Hoffman
(as of February 1)
Bryan and Jennifer Kline
Brian McAdams

A Letter from Your Pastors

Dear Mount Hope Church Family,

As pastors of Mount Hope Church, we consider it a privilege to serve this congregation of Christ. When called into the ministry, a person resigns to go where called. It is awe-inspiring to consider the Lord leading us to such a wonderful situation as serving you here at Mount Hope.

We're writing to thank you for your love, prayers and support this past year. You have shown your

dedication to us and the Lord in many ways. Pastor George, Suzanne and I express our thankfulness for those who have reached out to us over this past year during times of grief and illness. Pastor Phil, Linda and family are personally obliged to those who helped with their parsonage transition. One can truly say that there is a spirit of love expressed in this body.

We would also like to thank you for your tre-

mendous generosity in the presentation of our Christmas gift. It is with joy that we accept the thoughtfulness of so many who not only sustain and support their pastors, but overwhelm us with love. We also want to say thanks for the many cards we receive but are unable to acknowledge in any individual and personal way.

Pastors Tom, Phil and George

Couples' Fellowship

Couples' Fellowship will have its 2008 "kickoff" on Friday, January 4th at 6:30

p.m. at Pastor Phil and Linda Ealys' home: 1680 Erb DR, Aston. Please call the Ealys

(610.358.3980) to let them know you'll be there.

February 6, 2008: Ash Wednesday

The Lenten Season comes early this year with Ash Wednesday on February 6. Plan now to start the Lenten Season with worship. This six-week period prior to Resurrection Sunday can be a time of renewal in your life if you will choose to take the

time to draw close to your Lord.

The Lenten Season will begin with an uplifting time of worship and communion in the Sanctuary. Come let the joy of praise and the fellowship of other Christians warm your heart.

The service will be

preceded by a pot-luck covered dish dinner at 5:45 p.m. in Habbersett Hall. Plan now to bring your favorite dish; beverages will be provided.

Watch the Sunday *Messenger* for further details.

Our Church Family (continued)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Lcpl John E Michael Jr.
 2/8 Golf Co 3rd Platoon
 Unit 73240
 FPO AE 09509-3240
Dawn Michael
 USS Chafee
 FPO AP 96662-1305
George Ormsby
 15 Drayton RD (*renumbered*)
 Aston PA 19014-1064
Bill and Lillian Rouke
 506 Vernon Woods
 Glen Mills PA 19342-3316

Bill Seigfried

2536 Covington AV
 Bethlehem PA 18017-4006

Can you give us the new address of Sean, Melissa Donovan; Brian and Susan O'Neill; Ben and Julia King; Donald and Brenda Porter; or Frank and Terri Westenberger? Please call the office at 610.459.0248.

790 Capri CIR
 Boothwyn PA 19061-3102

Holly Paige

2270 Weir RD
 Aston PA 19014-1639

Elaine (Mrs. Barry) Kraje

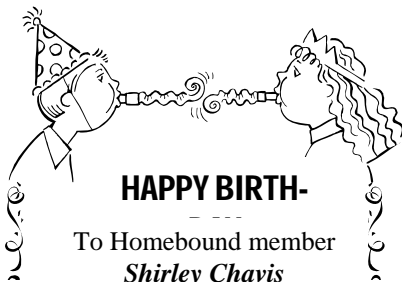
Kristin
 2898 Dorman AV
 Broomall PA 19008-1130

Rebecca (Mrs. Paul) Smith

Angelina
 51 Norman ST
 Aston PA 19014-2107

NEW MEMBERS

Russell and Rebecca Foss
Susanne Davis
 Jessica and Jacklyn Foss



HAPPY BIRTH-

To Homebound member
Shirley Chavis
 January 17



Confirmation Class

Confirmation Class begins Saturday, January 5th for youth 13 or older, who want

to join Mount Hope Church in full membership.

Class will meet from 10

a.m. to Noon in the Lounge. Call Pastor Phil or the office to sign up.

New Prayer Group

A new prayer group will meet every Tuesday beginning January 15, 2008, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, in the lounge. Jack Goodman will be leading this group in prayer. It

is important as we move into our 201st year that we become more diligent in our prayers for our country, community, church, family, and friends.

Come when you can.

Bring a friend if you would like. Everyone is welcome to participate. If you would like more information, please contact Jack at 610-485-6444.

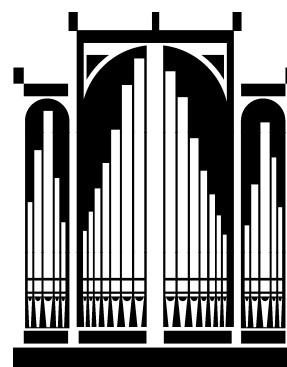
Note'able Notes

Each month you read that progress continues on the installation of the new organ. We were promised to have it by our 200th Anniversary celebration...which passed... and then in time for Christmas. Unfortunately, there have been numerous unforeseen setbacks that have prolonged the delay of the glori-

ous organ sounds to once again fill the sanctuary. We still need to collect \$21,733.50 to reach our goal of \$40,000 needed for the third manual.

Your contribution to this wonderful instrument will provide a legacy for generations of Mount Hope Church worshippers to come. Envelopes are available in the pew

racks. You can "sponsor" a note with your donation of \$100 or more, \$50 or \$25, or in any amount that you want to give. Please consider your participation in this project prayerfully. Questions? Please speak to Dick Spitko (610-490-0521) or Sharon Kope (610-892-9607).



Thank You!

The 200th Anniversary has been a terrific year of celebration and remembrance of days past. We couldn't have ended the year any better

by presenting the Messiah. I would especially like to thank the choir for all their time, energy and support during this busy Christmas season. You deserve a huge

round of applause. You blessed many, many people with your gift of song!

Schedule Now: Life Line and Red Cross

Schedule Now!

Life Line Screening on Monday, February 11 in Habbersett Hall. Pre-registration is required; call 1.800.324.1851.

In less than an hour, LifeLine Screening can test for stroke/carotid artery;

abdominal aortic aneurysm; peripheral arterial disease and osteoporosis. The total cost for testing for these 4 critical conditions is \$129.

Having these tests can be a life saver. They're given by appointment only—call now for yours.

Red Cross Blood Mobile

Thursday, February 21 is our next Red Cross Bloodmobile. If you are willing to give the gift of life by donating blood, please call Jeanna Imbesi at 610.497.0199.

A New Health Test

Please follow these instructions carefully: **HOLD THE BOX AT THE RIGHT CLOSE TO YOUR FACE AND BLOW ON IT.**

◆ If it turns yellow, see your physician.

◆ If it turns brown, see your dentist.

◆ If it turns purple, see your psychiatrist.

◆ If it turns red, see your banker.

◆ If it turns black, see your

lawyer and make a will.

◆ If it remains the same color, you are in good health, and there is no reason on earth why you should not be in church on Sunday!



Word of Hope

Children's Center News

Our January Bible Verse:
"Jesus is the light of the world." John 8:12



Happy New Year from all of us at the Children's Center. Our children and their families were very generous again this year. Starting with our food drive, we collected eight large boxes of non-perishable food, two of the boxes were donated to a local family in need and the rest went to the food bank. Generous parents joined our staff giving to Samaritan's Purse, and of course, our annual hat and mitten tree, which was donated to the Women's Shelter

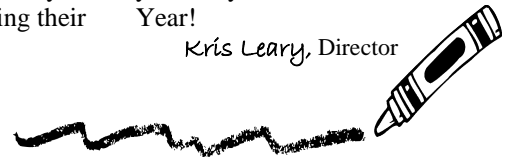
at Wawa. Our families know that you teach best by example and outdid themselves showing their children the true meaning of the Christmas Season.

January seems quiet after all of the excitement of the Christmas Holiday. We begin evaluating the children to make sure that they are all on track for their age appropriate skill level. The children have reading contests that conclude with ice cream parties at the end of the month. They study polar animals and the colors of the month are black and white (think penguins!). Our 3-year old class will be having their

pajama party this month. Our Fruit of the Spirit is "Kindness" this month, and our 2-year old class will host our chapel on Wednesday, January 30th and Thursday, the 31st at approximately 11:30 AM.

We will begin our in-house registration for the 2008-2009 school year, registration forms go home with my newsletter at the beginning of this month. As always, we invite you to come and visit our program and our happy children! If you would like more information, please call 610-558-0442. We wish you and yours a blessed New Year!

Kris Leary, Director



What's New In the Library

First I want to say good-bye to Fran Slawter who retired from the library this fall. Many thanks for your years of volunteer service -- we miss you!

Starting in January, the library will be open every morning from 9 until noon on a self-serve basis. There will be a chart to show you how to check out the different materials. If you need help of any kind, staff is available on Tuesday and Friday mornings, as well as every Sunday morning.

If you like to start the new calendar with a fresh start on some aspect of your life, we have several new books you

could use as inspiration. *Become a Better You -- 7 Keys to Improving Your Life*, by Joel Osteen. No matter where you are in life, you can be better! Joel says, "God is preparing you for greater things. He's going to take you further than you thought possible, so don't be surprised when He asks you to think better of yourself and to act accordingly!"

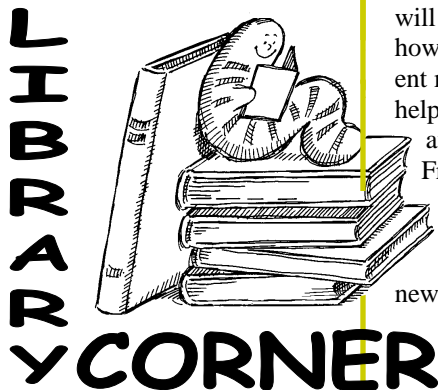
Joyce Meyer has a challenge: *I dare you -- Embrace Life with Passion*. Her answer to "What am I here for" is, "We are here to enjoy God and do His will. Even the bumps in the road on life's journey have a purpose." And Dr. Kevin Leman promises to tell you *7 Things He'll*

Never Tell You (but you need to know), and he comes through on that promise with his usual wit and wisdom.

Finally, we have a new work of fiction by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins titled, *John's Story, the Last Eyewitness*. John is near the end of his life as the story begins and shows us how the writing of his gospel, his letters, and the Book of Revelation might have come about.

Wishing you blessings and good reading in 2008!

Lynn Ward
 Librarian





The Danger of Familiarity (continued from the first page)

speak the Word with authority, and live an abundant life.

Jesus wants you to have an abundant life. If you've accepted Jesus, His Spirit is with you and inside you now. Christianity represents Christ. It's not a series of doctrines to be adopted, a code of morals to be followed, or a church to be joined. Christianity is about a Person—Jesus—to be received, trusted and obeyed.

You can overcome anything this life throws your way, but if you become so complacent in your faith that you stop recognizing its power as real you're not going to be able to live the abundant life. Joy comes from God. Without a realization of His goodness, you're headed down a dangerous path. Life is going to keep beating you in the head and you'll ask yourself, "Why?" You see, if you want to have joy, Jesus has to be more to you than just a spiritual source that you sometimes praise in church. He's got to become Who you turn to in dealing with the reality of daily living.

Familiarity can slowly drain the faith out of your heart. The devil would have you believe that God's Word is only good in church, but that's a lie. It's good in your car, in your house and as you walk down the street. If you let the devil, he will steal, kill and destroy your hope. How does he steal your hope? By trying to convince you to keep his

temptations your little secrets. He'll try to convince you to keep those sinful desires hidden away from God, as if that's possible! You can't hide sin from God and when you repent, it isn't the first time He ever heard about it. Those secret things of the flesh that threaten to ruin your life are as visible to Him right now as if you just hollered the secret to your whole family.

God knows what's up with you. Hebrews 4: 12-13 says, "For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."

God is not oblivious, but He has a way of doing things. He has given you the Bible to live by, and it's His Word that is going to help you the most.

The Word is powerful and sharp and can cut through those fleshly things, if you use it. That's why the devil works so hard to get you to stop believing. If he can cut your hope out, keep you out of church and out of the Word, then he can dampen your faith. If you stop having faith, you won't do anything—and it's faith and patience to keep on acting on the Word that brings results.

What is it going to take for Mount Hope to be a vital witness for Christ in the future? I believe part of the answer at least is a "Don't quit" church attitude. The early years of Christianity were filled with life, truth, healing, excitement, and a "don't quit"

attitude. The later years should be the same way. Until Jesus comes back for His church, we should be following in the life that He came to give us (John 10:10).

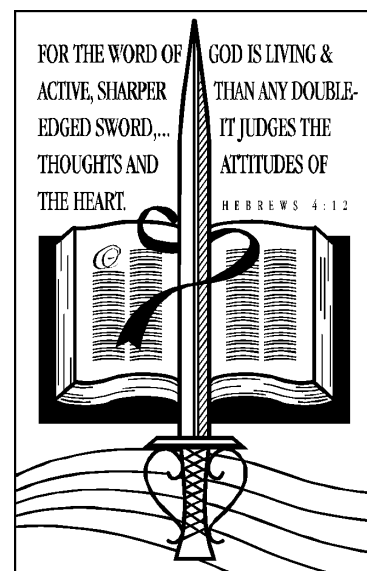
I believe that if Jesus came to town to preach, many church people today would probably smile to His face, but never ask Him back! Why? Because Jesus taught and preached a real Gospel that was full of truth and life. He knew people would mess up, but He still preached righteousness. He knew people would fall, and so He preached repentance. He preached love, mercy, and was constantly telling people to have faith in God.

Jesus didn't play church; he hit the heart of matters with truth. Sometimes the truth is hard for people to take. Truth makes you reflect on yourself. It doesn't let those dangers of familiarity hang around. It makes you stretch your faith.

Jesus wants to raise our standard of living and bring us as individuals and corporately as a church family to a higher level - not just intellectually, but spiritually, emotionally, and in a way that will transform the way we live everyday life and carry out our future witness as the body of Christ to the world.

So "Don't Quit!", Church! So often when a person ceases to attend worship they in reality have given up faith in Jesus. I believe God wants to reveal Himself to us and lead us into greater ministries for Him! I invite you to step with me into the New Year in faith!

Pastor McGill





COUNTDOWN TO THE New Year

Celebrate the blessings of the previous year and the hope of the New Year with this fun party idea and craft.

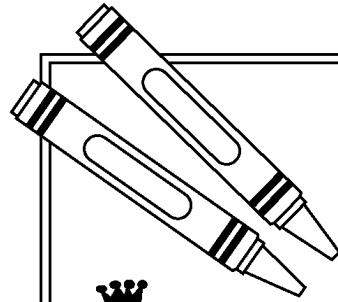
What you need:

- Brown paper lunch bags or colorful bags
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Stickers (optional)
- Inexpensive prizes or treats (see ideas below)



What you do:

1. Before New Year's Eve, assemble a bag for every hour before midnight that you plan to celebrate.
2. Use construction paper and markers to make a clock with a different time for each bag.
3. Glue a clock onto each bag.
4. Decorate the bags with stickers or other designs.
5. Fill the bags with inexpensive prizes or treats, each accompanied by a Bible verse. Here are a few suggestions:
 - Plastic party-favor watches ("The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore" Psalm 121:8, NIV.)
 - Bookmarks ("Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture" 1 Timothy 4:13, NIV.)
 - Small notepads and pencils ("Let love and faithfulness never leave you ... write them on the tablet of your heart" Proverbs 3:3, NIV.)
 - Sweet treats ("Taste and see that the LORD is good" Psalm 34:8, NIV.)
 - Party noisemaker, in a bag to be opened at midnight ("Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth" Psalm 98:4, NRSV.)
6. Open each bag at the time shown on its clock.

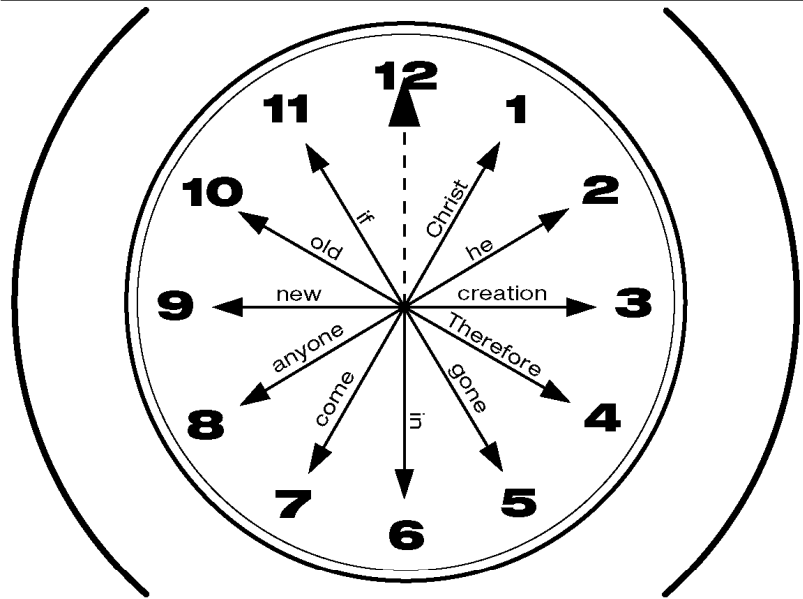


Just for KIDS

IN WITH THE NEW

It's "time" for New Year's resolutions! We should always want to improve ourselves for God, looking to Jesus as our example. God will work with us and through us when we come to him in prayer.

Using the clock's hour hand, copy each word to help you complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV.



" _____ , _____ is _____ , is a _____
 _____ ; the _____ has _____ , the _____ has _____ !"

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17, NIV

Answer: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"



This Update Printed Wednesday, December 26, 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Every Sunday: Worship at 8:15, 9:30 & 11:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. – Sunday School for all ages</p>		<p>1 New Year's Day Office Closed</p>	<p>2 9:30 AM Staff Mtg (L) 7:00 PM 930 Reh (S) 7:00 PM Trustees (Cem) 7:00 PM Bel's of Hope (104)</p>	<p>3 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir (216) 7:30 PM Fuzzy Slippers Girls Bbl Stdy (6) 7:30 PM Muddy Boots Young Men's BS (L)</p>	<p>4 9:00 AM Library open 6:30 PM Couple's Fellowship (Ealys')</p>	<p>5 10:00 AM Confirmation Parent mtg (L)</p>
	MHCC Closed					
<p>6 Communion Epiphany Blood Pressure Screening (HH) No YF 9:15 AM - 10 a.m. Library open</p>	<p>7 1:00 PM Bbl Stdy (Longhurst) 7:15 PM Ark BS (Owsley)</p>	<p>8 9:00 AM Library Open 4:00 PM WOH Dedication (Ofe) 7:00 PM Ad Bd (HH) 7:00 PM Kelli Girls BS (home)</p>	<p>9 9:15 AM MHCC Moms' Prayer group (213) 9:30 AM Staff Mtg (L) 6:15 PM Genes & Bells (104) 6:30 PM Devo Dessert (HH) 6:30 PM Education (L) 7:00 PM 930 Reh (S) 7:00 PM Bel's of Hope (104)</p>	<p>10 11:00 AM Busy Beavers (Kit) 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir (216)</p>	<p>11 9:00 AM Library open</p>	<p>12 9:00 AM Confirmation Class (L)</p>
<p>13 YF Mid-Winter Madness 9:15 AM - 10 a.m. Library open</p>	<p>14 7:00 PM Men's Felwshp (L)</p>	<p>15 9:00 AM Library Open 11:00 AM Prayer (L)</p>	<p>16 9:15 AM MHCC Moms' Prayer group (213) 9:30 AM Staff Mtg (L) 6:15 PM Genes & Bells (104) 6:30 PM Devo Dessert (HH) 7:00 PM 930 Reh (S) 7:00 PM Bel's of Hope (104) 7:15 PM J.O.Y. Singers Reh (103)</p>	<p>17 8:30 AM WOH Mailing (HH) 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir (216) 7:30 PM Fuzzy Slippers Girls Bbl Stdy (6) 7:30 PM Muddy Boots Young Men's BS (L)</p>	<p>18 9:00 AM Library open</p>	<p>19 9:00 AM Confirmation Class (L)</p>
Bishop's MidWinter Retreat (OCMD)			6:00 PM YF Jr/Sr Hi Retreat			Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
<p>20 Human Relations Day 9:15 AM - 10 a.m. Library open 6:30 PM KFCCJrs (FH) 6:30 PM YF (S, 2, 6, HH)</p>	<p>21 Martin Luther King Office Closed 1:00 PM Bbl Stdy (Longhurst) 7:15 PM Ark BS (Owsley)</p>	<p>22 9:00 AM Library Open 11:00 AM Prayer (L) 7:00 PM Kelli Girls BS (home) 7:00 PM Worship Com (L)</p>	<p>23 9:15 AM MHCC Moms' Prayer group (213) 9:30 AM Staff Mtg (L) 6:15 PM Genes & Bells (104) 6:30 PM Devo Dessert (HH) 7:00 PM 930 Reh (S) 7:00 PM Finance (L) 7:00 PM Bel's of Hope (104)</p>	<p>24 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir (216)</p>	<p>25 9:00 AM Library open</p>	<p>26 9:00 AM Confirmation Class (L)</p>
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity			6:00 PM YF Jr/Sr Hi Retreat			
<p>27 9:15 AM - 10 a.m. Library open 6:30 PM KFCCJrs (FH) 6:30 PM YF (S, 2, 6, HH)</p>	<p>28 7:00 PM Men's Felwshp (L)</p>	<p>29 9:00 AM Library Open 11:00 AM Prayer (L)</p>	<p>30 9:15 AM MHCC Moms' Prayer group (213) 9:30 AM Staff Mtg (L) 6:15 PM Genes & Bells (104) 6:30 PM Devo Dessert (HH) 7:00 PM 930 Reh (S) 7:00 PM Bel's of Hope (104)</p>	<p>31 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir (216) 7:30 PM Fuzzy Slippers Girls Bbl Stdy (6) 7:30 PM Muddy Boots Young Men's BS (L)</p>	<p>Community Events: Sundays - 6:00 p.m. Cub Den 1 (101) Alt. Mondays— 6:00 pm Cub Den 2 (FH) Tuesdays – 7:00 p.m. Daisy Troop (101) 8:30 pm Alcoholics Anonymous (FH) First Wednesday – 7:00 p.m. Barix Support (FH) Thursdays – 6:00 pm AA (FH) 6:30 p.m. Tiger Den 3 (103) Alt Thurs.— 6:45 pm Brownie Trp 53312 (101) 3rd Friday – 6:30 pm Pack 77 meetings (FH)</p>	



2007: 200 Years of Hope

As I think back over this past year of celebrating 200 years of ministry here at Mount Hope, I have been blessed! I hope you feel the same. This year has truly been a year of celebration—thanks be to God!

I am thankful for the leadership of Jan Duryea as chair of the Anniversary Committee and the many persons who worked and supported the events of this year. It was good to gather

with past pastors of Mount Hope and fellowship with them and the Church Family at Kings' Mills. There was the good food, fellowship and fun at the church picnic.

To top it off, there was the celebration on October 14 of our 200th Anniversary Sunday with Bishop Marcus Matthews as our guest speaker for this special service. The recognition of our 25 and 50 year or more members

is always a treat to me. Praise God the sanctuary was packed for worship.

This is only to mention a few of the blessings of the past year. I have been blessed to be your Senior Pastor and a part of these historical events in the life of Mount Hope Church along with you, the Church Family, and Pastors Ealy and Rigby.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor McGill



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
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