



HOPE CHURCH MINNEAPOLIS

Love God, Love People, Make Disciples of Christ



Christ-MÁS: Discovering the MORE of Christmas

BY PASTOR BEN SOLLIE

This Christmas season my family and I will be traveling to Ecuador, South America, where I lived until I was eighteen. To say that we are excited about this trip is an understatement. It's been twenty-four years since I last visited and I'm really grateful that my family gets to see and experience where I grew up.

As we prepare for our trip, we've tried to be more intentional at speaking Spanish in our home. A Spanish word many are familiar with is "más". Más is the word for more. The Christmas season is filled with more:

- More money spent.
- More busyness.
- More eggnog.
- More stress.
- More travel.
- More family gatherings and expectations.

For many, this season becomes a season of excess—and sadly, a season where our hearts feel empty. Yet as followers of Jesus, the very heart of what we celebrate this season is Christ-MÁS. Christ-MÁS invites us to discover the "more" of Christ. It's a better and deeper kind of more than what culture throws at us. While culture calls us to consume more, Jesus calls us to receive more.

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace". -Isaiah 9:6

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CHRIST MÁS

AT HOPE CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
10:30 AM & 4:30 PM
DECEMBER 24TH

IGNITE KIDS



Wednesday night kids program is off to a great start! God has answered our prayers for more male leaders. We have 5 young men helping out this year and a total of 12 leaders. Our leaders are energetic and full of love for the kids. What a blessing! We have had 20 kids attend so far, and look forward to welcoming more as the year progresses.



Our theme this year is Our Identity in Christ. We will learn how God can change our hearts and make us new. *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."*

2 Corinthians 5:17



Trunk or Treat

I would say Trunk or Treat was a complete success! It was so fun to see some familiar faces of kids I have the privilege of teaching on Wednesdays. It was even more exciting to see some new faces and to be able to come to the church for an event that the Lord can work through to reach them. It was so encouraging to see all different generations of the church coming together to serve as the hands and feet of Christ and serve the community through the volunteers and their kindness and love towards the families coming through. What a blessing it is to be at a church that has so many people willing to serve and spread the light and love of Jesus. ~Norabelle Kozicky



YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATE

Back in August, Hope Church hired me as new youth director! I want to tell you a bit about myself. My name is Andrew Carlson and I married, Miri, the most amazing woman almost two years ago, and about two months ago, God blessed us with our wonderful daughter, Timea. My little family of three is the greatest blessing yet. I am so thankful that God would bestow on me the honor of being a husband and a father.

When I was in high school and college — I didn't think I was worthy of receiving all these wonderful blessings. I struggled a lot with questions about my identity and my purpose. During high school, I tried to find my identity in many different things: basketball, social status, relationships, school, and even being a believer. Guess what? I failed at all of them — all because I was making it all about me. But the whole time, God still loved me and was guiding me, even though I was fighting Him. Eventually, I surrendered to His will in my life and followed where He led which ended up being the Free Lutheran Bible College, where God completely changed my heart. He changed my identity — from someone who focused on himself more than anything else — into someone who knows that he is a child of God. I am loved and noticed by the God who made this world, placed every atom into existence, and who formed me in my mother's womb. Through this identity shift, I was able to become a functioning member of the Church. When I was hired as Youth Director, I knew exactly what I wanted to focus on. So many young people today are struggling with their identity and are wrapped up in what others think of them. But God desires for us to care more about what He thinks of us than what other broken people in this world do. Our identity is the foundation for intimacy with the Father. But the devil comes to steal your identity, kill your intimacy, and destroy your destiny. Because the devil throws so many things at our students to make them question who they are and whose they are, I have desired to make Ignite Youth a place where they can grow in their intimacy with God. A place where they can learn from and hear others who have faced trials and experienced the snare of the fowler. A place to grow together as the body of Christ, to lean on one another and to trust one another.

A few weeks ago our Youth Group had the opportunity to go up north to Camp Patmos. The students enjoyed their time there and shared with me that they left feeling fulfilled and encouraged. As their leader, I loved watching them each night pour their hearts out to God in worship and listen attentively to the speakers- it was one of the greatest blessings I've experienced in youth ministry. Seeing them love other campers and live out what God calls us to be was truly powerful. One night at camp, we played a game called Red America. This game simulates America as a communist country where being a Christian is illegal. All the leaders were police/guards trying to stop the growth of the Church by any means necessary — we were supposed to be mean and abrasive. The students' goal was to find the hidden church, bring Bibles to it, and spread the Gospel to the guards. I encountered many students who tried to run, lie about not being Christians, or manipulate their way through. But our youth — Ignite Youth — blew my mind. They were some of the boldest Christians I've ever seen in that game. They shared the Gospel with me fearlessly, loved me despite my role, and stood firm in what they believed. I challenged them and didn't make it easy for them, but they genuinely love Christ and are passionate about Him.

I share this as an encouragement: God is moving in our youth. He deeply desires a relationship with them, and they desire Him too! I am so excited for what God is doing in our youth ministry. I feel blessed and overjoyed to help them and to see them run to the Father. I cannot wait to see what God continues to do!

Blessings,
Andrew Carlson
Youth Director



MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

Community, bonfires, and pumpkin carving, oh my!

This fall has been filled with lots of fun fall activities. We have had such a great turn out of around 40 young adults who are attending Hope and it has been such an encouraging season to see our Young adults hungry for serving and for God's word on Sunday mornings. It has been so cool to see how the Lord is working in each of our YA's lives.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please be in prayer for our YA missionaries (Ellen Dalager and Joey Richardson) as they are continuing to serve in Ukraine and Paraguay, respectfully.

Please also be in prayer for our YA community, that we can find a place for every person between the age groups and different seasons of life while also coming together and growing together as a group.

Lastly, please pray that our YA's will continue to long to be in community with one another and with the Lord.



YOUNG



ADULTS



Missions-Paraguay Update

It's been 3 weeks in Paraguay! Not even a full month and God has shown me so much already, revealing the things he has shown me through his provision and faithfulness.

I came to Paraguay to help serve alongside the missionary family, Mafu and Ednay Abel, doing outreach in the community, teaching in schools, helping them and sharing the love of God with everyone I come into contact with. God has shown me provision already through the place I get to stay at with the Abel's, the wonderful food Ednay makes for us, and the people I get to call friends here already. God reminds me that no matter where He leads me he provides for my everyday needs just how he says he will in Luke 12.

God has been extremely faithful in providing ways for me to do outreach. One of the biggest ways I wanted to do that here was sports, so as often as I can, I make my way over to the basketball courts in different parks of town and play basketball with the local guys here. It's a great way to build relationships and have a great time while also sharing Christ in the way you play the game and speak with others. So the first time I went we got to play with so many guys and immediately made some friends here that we consistently play with. And we keep meeting new people and making new friends every time we go too. I'm super excited because it's people who I get to share the love of Christ with as we play and I get to pray for them after we're done playing as well. The real goal here is to build these relationships and friendships over the next nine months to bring them into the Kingdom of God and for hearts to be softened. Please be praying for these guys! That God would be doing a new thing in the hearts of the guys here!

I've also landed a volunteer job teaching English at a college alongside a professor on Monday nights. The mission there is to help college students learn English but to also reach people and invite them over to the house to play games and have fun but the end goal is to share Jesus with them and invite them into a Christian Community. So God has blessed me with another opportunity there as well.

I'm praying for more opportunities to build relationships and rub shoulders with people here and for the friends and people I've already met. I'm also praying for health, endurance, and strength for the next nine months. I would really appreciate it if you guys could be praying for that too! And thank you for praying and giving financially, I can't stress it enough that this isn't at all possible without you guys! Super, super thankful.

God bless, Joey Richardson



(Continued from page 1)

This Christmas I pray we would contemplate and consider the “more” of what Jesus offers us:

More peace. More hope. More joy. More love.

More presence, not presents.

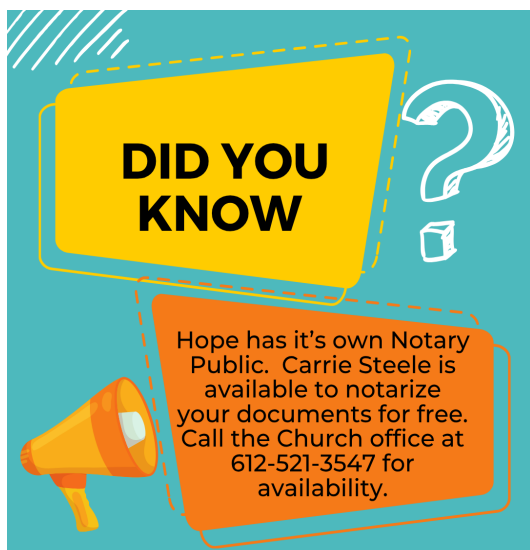
More wonder, not more worry.

More simplicity, not more things.

More of Christ.

I invite you to join us at Hope Church this season
as together we discover the “more” of Christ-MÁS.

In Christ,
-Pastor Ben



DID YOU KNOW

Hope has it's own Notary Public. Carrie Steele is available to notarize your documents for free. Call the Church office at 612-521-3547 for availability.



DO YOU NEED PRAYER?

DO YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST OR AN ANSWER TO PRAYER THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR PRAYER TEAM?

WE WOULD LOVE TO PRAY FOR YOUR CONCERNS AND CELEBRATE ANSWERED PRAYERS! SCAN QR CODE, EMAIL OFFICE@HOPECHURCHMN.COM, OR CALL 612-521-3547 X2001.

THANK YOU FOR ENTRUSTING US
WITH YOUR REQUESTS AND PRAISES!



Belonging-Sam Monseth

Belonging to Christ isn't about how well we perform or how spiritual we feel on any given day. It's not a checklist. It's not a mood. When we belong to something, it starts to shape how we move, think, and breathe. That's what it means to belong to Christ. It's not performance; it's presence. We're joined to Him by faith. His death and resurrection didn't just change the story—they *became* our story. Through that union, our old self was nailed to the cross with Him. The striving, the guilt, the fear—they lose their grip. And what takes their place? Rest. Real, soul-deep rest. Rest in His presence. Rest in His finished work. But let's be honest—we forget this all the time. We step into worship, and before the first song even starts, our minds are flooded with every reason we think God shouldn't want us. We start listing failures, rehearsing regret. This mindset isn't humility; it's unbelief and shouldn't be entertained. It isn't prideful to accept and agree with what He says about you.

Where's our focus? Is it on *self*, or is it *selfless*? Too often, we stand like deer in headlights—frozen by our own unworthiness—when the whole time, Jesus is calling us to look up. Worship was never meant to be an exercise in self-examination. It's meant to be a celebration of reconciliation. The good news is that Christ already did everything needed to bridge the gap. He tore down the great wall of enmity between us and God. As Paul wrote, "You who were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (*Ephesians 2:13*). There's no reproach before His throne.

No condemnation. No accusation that can stand.

We've been washed. Covered. Made clean—for all eternity. Our Father isn't scowling over our flaws. He's smiling. Rejoicing. *Dancing* over us. (*Zephaniah 3:17 says that, by the way—He actually dances over His people.*) This is who we are—not broken orphans performing for a glimpse of the Father's approval, but beloved sons and daughters, fully adopted and deeply known. There's no performance; it's being born again. It's a new nature, and new identity, and a new mind. There's no more striving, it's enjoying. He went through unthinkable lengths to make us His own, tearing down every barrier of sin and shame just to bring us home. And when that truth finally sinks in, something changes. Worship becomes wonder. Guilt turns to gratitude. Duty becomes delight. We can't help but freak out—in the best possible way—over grace that's been ours all along. So maybe that's what belonging really looks like: Looking away from self. Fixing our gaze entirely on Him—the One who calls us clean, covered, and complete.

Winter Events

MONDAY NIGHT
COMMUNITY NIGHTS



6PM | WEEKLY

✧ OPE ✧
**WE ARE BRINGING BACK
THE SMORGASBORD
AND VARIETY SHOW**
Tuesday, December 9 | 6:00pm
Please bring a dish according to your last name
A-H: Side Dish I-N: Appetizer O-Z: Salad
We also ask that **EVERYONE** brings 6 cookies or bars.

WTF DA YOU BETCHAH!



YOUNG ADULTS

GAMES
PRIZES
GIFTS
COMMUNITY
SNACKS



CHRISTMAS PARTY

THE PARTY STARTS AT **6PM**

Y/A

SIGN UP



Ignite Youth Fundraiser

SUNDAY BRUNCH



**December 14th
8-10:30AM**

Hope Lutheran Church

christmas
PARTY
INVITATION

Come celebrate Christmas with us!
Call the Office 612-521-3547 or scan QR code to RSVP!
Enjoy lunch and fun! Bring a \$10 gift to exchange.



DECEMBER
TUESDAY | 16 | AT NOON

JOY - Just Older Youth
(Ages 60 and up!)



CRU

NEIGHBORHOOD
OUTREACH

JANUARY 4TH 2026



LADIES' EVENT

*Mugs and
Muffins*

Saturday, January 10
9am



**WINTER
YOUTH
RETREATS** 2026

February 6 - 8 | The Arc