

hope in the midst

An Evening Worship Service with Holy Communion and Contemporary Forms—

Hope Lutheran Church
35 Ridge Avenue, Homer City, PA
(724) 479-9431

Pastor Stephen C. Bond
Hope in the Midst is held on 4th Saturdays at 7:00pm
Weekly Sunday Worship with Holy Communion: 11:00am

a word of welcome

You are welcome here—period. We are glad to have you join us for worship and pray that this time of worship is a blessing for you as God is glorified in the midst of us. Tonight you are invited to risk—risk singing a new song, risk hearing God’s Word with new ears, risk meeting new faces or inviting a friend. And ultimately, the living Jesus dares us and sends us, once fed at his Table, to risk living as God’s people of hope right here and right now. If you have any questions about the congregation or this worship service, feel free to ask.

a word of invitation

From the earliest days of the church, the followers of Jesus have shared the meal of Holy Communion. At this Meal, Jesus is the true host, and we find ourselves all his guests—strangers and familiar faces, old friends and newcomers, *all* are drawn close. By his own promise, Christ Jesus offers us his own body and blood in ordinary bread and wine at his Table. These gifts are given, as Jesus says, *for you* for the forgiveness of sin. And by the Spirit of God, we come simply with trust in that promise—that Jesus means what he says. Every baptized follower of Jesus, young or old, is welcome at this Table where Jesus is truly present in the midst of us. For those desiring to be baptized or communion instruction, please speak with the pastor.

a word of practice

When we share the Meal of Holy Communion at this service, we will do so with a common cup of wine for *intinction* (dipping) of the bread. You are invited to come forward, receive the bread, dip it in the cup, and return to your place. Those who do not commune are invited to come forward with hands folded to receive a blessing. Anyone who is unable to come forward to receive is asked to let the pastor or assisting minister know so that the Meal may be brought to you in the midst of the congregation.

a word of definition

The word “contemporary” means *with or in the midst of time*. Contemporary worship, then, is worship that makes use of forms and styles that speak to a given time and place. In a sense, then, Christian worship has always had a contemporary dimension, since Christians have been using the melodies, instruments, and language of their times to praise the living God from the beginning, even as we still hold to ancient forms, too. Our use of contemporary forms tonight reminds us that we are always called to “sing a new song” and that we are sent from worship back into our lives to serve and love—right in the midst of God’s broken but beloved world.