



August 2026 Newsletter

Mission Statement: At Hope Palm Desert our vision is to share the free and unmerited love of God in Christ Jesus.

“A WONDERFUL NEIGHBORHOOD,” PASTOR TONY

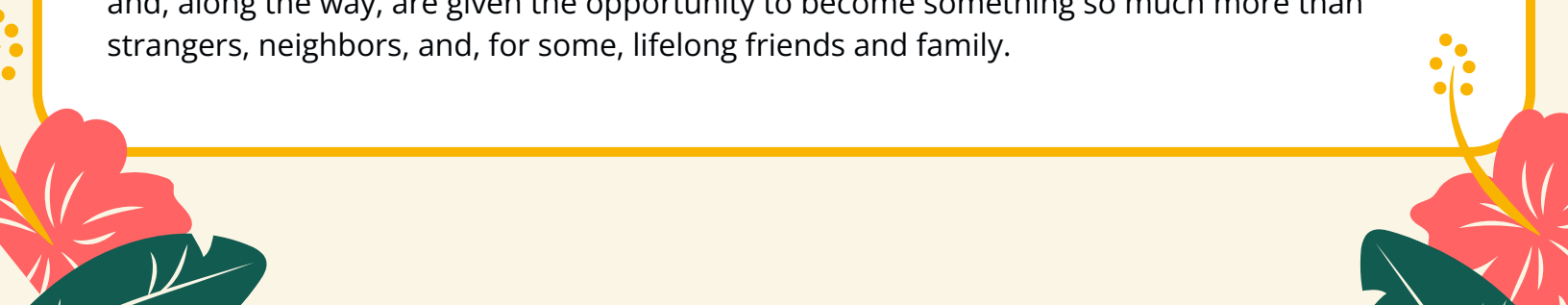


It is an honor to join you in the neighboring work God's Spirit has been doing in the greater Coachella Valley. So many things had to happen for us to join you beyond just the very important action of congregational discernment you completed at the end of May with me as your pastoral candidate.

I had a pastoral care journey with a wonderful church in Marin County that I had to conclude. We had to sell our home in the Sacramento area and complete the process of establishing a residence for our family in the greater Palm Desert area so we could be fully present with the Hope church family in August. That also involved school registration for our son, Liam, who is in his second year of high school, and registration for our daughter, Cali, who had already enrolled in college classes in the Sacramento area. My wife, Jessica, had a coordination meeting with her employer to ensure all her flights could be routed through Palm Springs International Airport.

We are so glad that we will be able to join you! Even though I had two visits with you during the discernment journey, which allowed me to meet most of the church staff and Council, as well as many of you in the congregation. There is only so much of a place you can take in during short visits. Like many of you who have moved to the Coachella Valley, I knew about Palm Springs and Indio, but did not fully appreciate how different Palm Springs, Cat City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, La Quinta, and Indio are from one another. You truly live in a collection of 'Wonderful Neighborhoods'.

That phrase may sound familiar to some of you. I am alluding to Mr. Rogers' beautiful television series, "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood." In grad school, I lived in Philadelphia and visited Pittsburgh a few times. Of course, I had to drive over to Latrobe to see the neighborhood where Fred Rogers grew up, which inspired his Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood. The thing about neighborhoods is that they are diverse by nature, made up of people from many different places and with varied family histories who gather to create community with one another. They all begin as strangers and, along the way, are given the opportunity to become something so much more than strangers, neighbors, and, for some, lifelong friends and family.



“A WONDERFUL NEIGHBORHOOD,” PASTOR TONY (CONTINUED) ✨

Hope Palm Desert (ELCA), as a church, is itself a microcosm of “A Wonderful Neighborhood,” made up of many different people with varied life and church experiences. Each of us is hoping to create a community together and, along the way, become not just neighbors but friends. I look forward to being a vital, important part of the beautiful, shared life and story you have been weaving together through the grace and love God has extended to each of you. The ‘neighborhood’ is incomplete without each of you, my friends. You are irreplaceable, there is only one of you in all the world, and there will never be someone like you again! I look forward to listening to your stories, holding space with those of you who are processing emotional or mental health needs or facing challenges, and dreaming about what God will do at Hope Palm Desert and in the Coachella Valley.

In these first months together, you will occasionally hear me talk about improving ‘First Step Practices’ at Hope so that all our guests meeting us for the first time can be seen and helped. You will also hear me ask you what your ‘Next Step’ is because all of us are on a journey, and one universal truth about faith journeys is that they involve real movement. I, the Pastors, and your gifted church staff and Council will be working to clarify ‘Next Step’ for everyone, wherever they are on the journey of faith, while building and supporting volunteer teams to help everyone have great ‘First Step’ experiences. Finally, you will also see me working with your leadership to offer ‘Deeper Steps’ for those of you who have called Hope home for a long time and have been hungry for empowering spiritual formation opportunities. In my experience, churches spend a lot of time on First Steps and Next Steps but can sometimes miss offering meaningful opportunities for Deeper Steps to those who have been faithfully part of the church community. Let’s make sure everyone at Hope has an opportunity to walk in step with God’s Spirit.

Thank you for allowing my family and me to join your ‘Wonderful Neighborhood’. As we get to know each other as neighbors, friends, and in time as family, I hope you and I will take Mr. Rogers’ advice to heart. ***“The best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers.”*** Let’s ask good questions together in this next season of life for Hope, and trust God for simple, clear answers for the church’s future across the Coachella Valley.

Your new neighbor,
Pastor Tony



Hope
Palm Desert

A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS
**WELCOME
PASTOR
TONY STIFF**

FIRST SUNDAY AS SENIOR PASTOR
AUGUST 16

Be part of this special day as we gather
to welcome Pastor Tony to Hope.

Join us on Sunday, August 16, as we welcome Pastor Tony Stiff on his first Sunday serving as Hope Palm Desert's Senior Pastor. This is a significant milestone in the life of our church, and we'd love for you to be part of this special day as we gather together in worship and celebrate what God has in store for Hope's future. Whether Hope is your church home or you're looking for a place to connect, we'd love to welcome you.

We can't wait to worship with you!



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING
PASTOR GERALD
Sunday, August 9

His final message as Hope's Bridge Pastor

 Cake will be available after each service and pizza will be served after the 10:30am service.

*Thank you, Pastor Gerald,
for your faithful ministry at Hope!*

PRAYER REQUEST



If you have a loved one or friend in need of prayer, or need to make a change to a name on the prayer list, please send that information to michael@hopepd.org.

Remember in Prayer:

Anita Allingham, Marilyn Atchue-Zuill, Chanel Atchue, Robert Barranco, Vida Besel, Carl Caddies, Scott Fasano, Pearl Den Hartog, Marilyn Dichsen, Bonnie Dixon, Susan Dubbs, Jo Engel, Jerry Fragasso, Kylie Gahagan, Richard Gormley, Kit Hickerson, Jerry Lincoln, Daniel Mongillo, Pam Ramirez, Manuel Silva, Redford Sergeant, Sara Sergeant, Svenja Stodiek, Vera Wall, Annie Whittlesey, Dana Zahler

Please resubmit names by email to michael@hopepd.org by the 1st of the month; otherwise Hope will assume the person is feeling better and the name will be removed from the list. Any questions please contact gabe@hopepd.org

HOPE LEGACY COMMITTEE

**"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree today."
Martin Luther**



Have you updated your will?

Don't forget to include Hope Lutheran Church Palm Desert!

For further information please contact the Hope office at gabe@hopepd.org.

I believe most of us would like to leave a legacy. Legacy giving necessarily involves leaving a charitable donation to a non-profit organization. Please consider Hope Lutheran as a means to establish your legacy. Please call Pastor Gerald or Gary Eilefson, Legacy committee chair at 651-238-2578. You may choose to have your conversations and charitable plan remain anonymous.



FAMILY Ministry



Hope Children Center provides a faith-based environment for children to enjoy before and after school. Contact our Director, Virginia at virginia@hopepd.org for more info.

CHILDREN CENTER

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS! WE
NEED YOUR HELP WITH HOPE KIDS!



For Modern Service 10:30am

Nursery Ages – Infants – 2 yrs
Early Childhood – 3yrs – 5 yrs
Elementary – 1st grade – 5th grade

TO GET INVOLVED:
CONTACT CARLOS@HOPEPD.ORG
PHONE : (760)485-3328

BEACH DAY

HOPE STUDENTS
BEACH BUS

AUGUST 22ND

 OCEANSIDE PIER
\$10 PER STUDENT
REGISTER TODAY!

Register at hopepd.org



Student Ministry

Middle & High School online at hopepd.org

Sunday SERVICES

Middle School Ministry service is from 10:30am - 11:30am. Students will meet in the Hope Center for worship, then move to Meeting Room 5.

High School Ministry Sunday service is from 10:30am - 11:30am. Students will meet in the Hope Center for worship, then go to Meeting Room 4.

The logo for Student Impact, featuring the word "Student" in black and "Impact" in orange, with a small pencil icon above the "t" in "Impact".

Student
Impact

This is an event where students are the hands and feet of Jesus in our very own community. Less than a mile up the road from the church on Portola, students go into a community that needs food.

Our high school students go door-to-door handing out food to the families. On top of that, they're reaching out and asking if the families have any concerns that they could pray about together. This is an amazing opportunity for students to impact the lives of others.

Third Saturday of every month we gather in the Hope Center @ 7:30am.

Every month third Saturday, August 15th, 2026
Every student High School
Adults can volunteer too, contact nick@hopepd.org

PM

IN HOPE CENTER SUNDAYS FROM 11:30AM-1:30PM
(HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)



@hopechurchmsm
@hopechurchhsm



@hopechurchmsm
@hopechurchhsm



@hopeyouthministry

WHERE MIDDLE
SCHOOL STUDENTS

HAVE FUN WITH
FRIENDS AND
DISCOVER
THEIR FAITH.

Wednesday Nights
6:00pm to 8:00pm
Meeting Room 5



Stand Firm

is a Middle School Ministry and will meet every Wednesday from 6-8pm in Meeting Room 5.



theLanding™
CelebrateRecovery® for Students

**A SAFE PLACE FOR STUDENTS
TO PROCESS LIFE AND THE
STRUGGLES THAT ACCOMPANY IT.**

THE LANDING FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

EVERY
THURSDAY

7PM

Hope Center

hopepd.org



QUILTERS OF HOPE



We continue to give thanks for donations of fabric. Since last October we've completed 88 quilts and 12 Fleece Blankets. All the fleece blankets have been donated to Bridges2Hope along with 13 quilts.

Quilters of Hope is taking a summer break and we will not meet during the month of August. Mark your calendars as we will return on Wednesday, September 2nd at 9:30 am in the Hope Center.

**For more information, please call or text
Ruth Fikes at 714-642-3773 or
candrfikes@gmail.com**

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



We continue to give thanks for donations of yarn. We have a large stash of yarn waiting for volunteers who need an indoor knitting or crocheting project to beat the summer heat.

Our Prayer Shawl Closet has beautiful shawls just waiting to be shared. If you know of anyone who could use a comforting hug you can contact any of the Pastors, Deacon John, Stephen's Ministries, or myself and we can get a prayer shawl delivered.

For additional information please reach out to:

Mary Ellen Peterson at (801) 598-7733 or marymelon50@hotmail.com

GRIEF SHARE AT HOPE

Are you interested in helping walk with people through their grief? Do you have a heart of care for people experiencing loss? If so, would you consider leading a GriefShare group?

GriefShare is a program for people experiencing grief of any kind led by people who have also experienced grief themselves. All materials will be provided, you just need to bring a willing heart.

Please contact Deacon John (johnb@hopepd.org) if you are interested.



MUSIC AT HOPE... CONGRATULATIONS MICHAEL & WELCOME TO HOPE, CALIFORNIA DESERT CHORALE!

California Desert Chorale Names Michael Kirk Cundari Artistic Director for 2026–2027 Season (article from CV Weekly June 2026)

Award-winning conductor to lead the California Desert Chorale into a new era of artistic excellence. The California Desert Chorale will also find its new home at Hope Lutheran Church, Palm Desert.

The California Desert Chorale has appointed award-winning conductor and educator Michael Kirk Cundari as its new Artistic Director, ushering in a new chapter for the Coachella Valley's premier mixed-voice choral ensemble. Cundari will make his debut leading the Chorale during the 2026–2027 season, beginning with the annual holiday concert.

The appointment follows an extensive search process and comes as the organization builds on more than three decades of artistic achievement while expanding its reach throughout the Coachella Valley. A conductor, educator, and arts leader with more than 25 years of experience, Cundari has directed award-winning choral programs, conducted major masterworks, and led performances at Carnegie Hall. He currently serves as Choir Director and Assistant Organist at Hope Lutheran Church in Palm Desert.

A NEW ERA FOR THE CHORALE

"Michael Kirk Cundari brings an exceptional combination of artistry, leadership, and experience to the California Desert Chorale," said California Desert Chorale President Rick Eisenhart. "Throughout our search process, we were impressed not only by his musical accomplishments, but also by his thoughtful vision for the organization and its role in the community. Michael has a remarkable ability to inspire singers, engage audiences, and shape performances that are both moving and memorable.

"Michael's perspective encourages us to embrace new possibilities while honoring the tradition that has made the California Desert Chorale a treasured choral institution for more than thirty years. We are confident his leadership will strengthen our impact throughout the Coachella Valley for years to come."

MUSIC AT HOPE... (CONTINUED)

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S VISION

"When I first heard the California Desert Chorale perform, I was immediately struck by its musicianship and shared sense of purpose," Cundari said. "It is a privilege to join a choir with such a rich tradition and singers dedicated to creating meaningful musical experiences. "I am excited to begin a new chapter together, exploring inspiring repertoire and creating performances that move and unite audiences. Choral singing is about far more than music; it is about human connection. It brings people together, fosters understanding, and creates a shared sense of purpose between singers and audiences alike. When those connections happen, the impact of the music extends far beyond the concert stage." Cundari becomes only the third Artistic Director in the Chorale's 33-year history. Michael will also continue in his role here at Hope Church.

2026 ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT: Let There Be Light!

Cundari's inaugural season will begin with the annual holiday concert, a festive program that blends cherished seasonal favorites with music from around the world. The concert will feature Morten Lauridsen's acclaimed *Lux Aeterna*, alongside traditional carols, international repertoire, and a festive audience sing-along. The program reflects Cundari's vision of pairing powerful choral performances with themes of hope, light, and connection.

LOOKING AHEAD

Beyond the concert stage, Cundari plans to expand community partnerships, outreach initiatives, and artistic collaborations throughout the Coachella Valley. Concert information and tickets are available at CaliforniaDesertChorale.org.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!!!

Hope Choir Recruiting

*If You Have A Spirit Of Praise, And A Song In Your Heart
The Hope Choir IS LOOKING FOR YOU!*

Rehearsals are at 6:30pm every Thursday
First Rehearsal is Thursday, October 1st at 6:30PM.
Contact Director Michael Cundari at michael@hopepd.org for more info.





Hope's Stephen Ministry team serves the community with:

***One on One confidential relationships** for people who need someone to “come along side” during a personal or family crisis

***Prayer** – offered after Hope's services

***Communion** for those who are home-bound. Stephen Ministers are trained to offer communion in your home if you cannot make it to church. Your team continues to learn and grow in their faith with the study/discussion of the book, Do Your Best and Trust God with the Rest.

If you or someone you know might benefit by having a care giver, please contact Deacon John, or Laurie Cribari.

Stephen Ministers show Christ's love through their caring, listening, comforting and of course, confidentiality. We all face crises in our lives from time to time. A Stephen Minister is your brother or sister in Christ who is there for you – to feel your pain, listen without judging, and share God's love. Give Pastor Tony or Deacon John a call to have them find the right Stephen Minister to add a positive dimension to your daily life.

If you or someone you know is struggling right now and might benefit from a Stephen Minister, please contact Deacon John or Laurie Marvin.

hope

OUTREACH

Giving Hope to the Unhoused

Free Services & Support for Our Community
Aug 3rd, Sept 7th | 9am - 12pm

Showers 	Hygiene Kits 	Food 	Prayer 	Narcan
Medical 	Foot Massage 	Recovery Support 	Haircuts 	Mobile Phones

45900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260.
All are welcome. Come receive support, care, and hope.
More information contact carlos@hopepd.org.



Celebrate Recovery

A CHRIST CENTERED Recovery Program

If you've been wondering what Celebrate Recovery is all about, just show up one Thursday night and see what God might do in your heart. Our slogan is "You're worth it!" because you are!

Celebrate Recovery meets every Thursday night from 7:00pm – 9:00pm in the Hope Center. If you have any questions, would like more information, or just talk or email with someone, contact Gesa Sharon at gesa@hopepd.org or (949)689-9681.



Every second Thursday of the month we have dinner night at Celebrate Recovery. In July we had a Summer Barbecue. Thank you to our barbecue team for braving the heat and grilling up some delicious burgers and hot dogs.



Women of HOPE

 THE BRIDGES 2 HOPE
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO COMMUNITY AND RESOURCES

BAGS OF HOPE

≡ Assembly Event ≡

 **THURSDAY,
AUGUST 13TH
AT 10:30AM
ROOM 3**

CONTACT [GESA@HOPEPD.ORG](mailto:gesa@hopepd.org)

Thank you to everyone who participated in our summer hygiene item collection for our neighbors experiencing homelessness in the Coachella Valley! In June, we assembled an incredible 340 Bags of Hope. Thanks to your continued generosity, we're ready for another round of sorting and bag assembly.

We hope you'll join us on Thursday, August 13, at 10:30 a.m. in Room 3 as we work together to prepare more Bags of Hope for distribution. Whether you helped collect items or are joining us for the first time, we'd love to have you be part of this meaningful morning of service. If you have any questions contact gesa@hopepd.org.



**Women of Hope
Summer Studies
“I am worthy,” by the
Rev. Sara Olson Smith
Saturday, August 8th
10:00am to 11:30am | Hope
Center Room 4**

August: “I am because you are: We need one another.”

Our individual identities are always bound up in community. Jesus describes this vision using a vine and branches. Paul talks about a body with many parts. The prophets describe communities of liberative interdependence. Archbishop Desmond Tutu describes this way of mutual interconnectedness as “Ubuntu,” where “my humanity is caught up and bound up inextricably with yours. I can only be fully me if you are fully you.” In delving into Scripture, we learn how no one can flourish unless everyone does, and how our lives are bound up with one another and the planet.

See the information on the image above and you can go ahead at hopepd.org
Looking forward to seeing you at one or two or all these events!

Love and blessings,
Pastor Gesa



You're invited to join Hope for All Ministry for a special Movie Series exploring stories of faith, identity, courage, and God's love for all people.

Trembling Before God (August 16), Pray Away (September 13), and 1946 (October 18), followed by opportunities for thoughtful conversation and reflection. All movies begin at 11:45 AM in Room 2. Bring your own sack lunch and enjoy a welcoming space for learning, sharing, and community. For more information and registration, contact Amanda at hopeforall@hopepd.org.

HOPE PALM DESERT

2026 TRANSITION PERIOD INCOME / EXPENSE SUMMARY

CATEGORY	JAN-JUN ACTUAL	JAN-JUN BUDGET
INCOME:		
OFFERINGS/CONTRIBUTIONS	881950	916937
CHILDREN'S CENTER	217249	212280
INCOME (CASH)	1099199	1129217
INTEREST ACCOUNTS	7038	3970
MORTGAGE (DESIGNATED)	61428	21875
BANK CLEARING ACCOUNT	48746	-1945
OTHER INCOME	117212	23900
TOTAL INCOME	1216411	1153117
EXPENSES:		
#1 STAFFING	660346	752421
#2 FACILITIES	113553	86142
#3 ADMINISTRATION	63112	65719
#4A CHILDREN'S CENTER	15211	19427
#4B KIDS MINISTRY	7652	20863
#4C STUDENT MINISTRY	6600	42603
#4D WOMEN'S MINISTRY	5743	4461
#4E CELEBRATE RECOVERY	5340	5178
#4F HOPE FOR ALL	2803	762
#4G OTHER MINISTRY PROGRAMS	13126	8051
#5 MISSIONS & OUTREACH	70000	62047
#6 TECH & COMMUNICATIONS	4350	20578
#7 RESERVES	15700	12500
TOTAL EXPENSES	983536	1100752
NET INCOME	232875	52365

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 John Goldthorpe Jim Haase MaryLee Ilminen Lori Schafer Natalie Allison Suri Cao
2 Cameron Williams Paula Marvin Toni Knorr Desiree Aguirre Mavis Salaam	3 Debbie Althouse Viviana McLaughlin George Marx Tatum Nyman-Sanders TONI and GLENN KNORR	4 Carole Johnson Kaleesi Lillaird Raymond Luke Vida Besel John Nurmi Judee Warling Jeffrey Richardson	5 Jefferson West Theodore West Richard Carlson CHERYL and RANDY TROUT	6 Guillermo Moya Julie Jervis Audrey Mulligan	7 Linda Lennon Michael Villanueva Wendy Bess ERNA and ARNE NELSON JOHN and KAY MASELTER	8 Kaiden Kistler Ashley Bucklin Ashton Holmes Blake Cashion
9 Ashley Kelly Emma Lawrence Tom Becker Mary Fay Pinnow Leonardo Olvera	10 Darlicia Mendina	11 John Delfino John Maselter Willow Burdick Nyesha Shepherd	12 Claire Tully Danica Stjerne Sandra Sapa Alisa Lytle Helena Cicalese Cynthia Teasley Marilyn Reitz Harper Draper Jim Pollard ANGEL and JON BJERKE	13 Audrey Steepleton Jeff Laws John F Donnelly Richard Osborne Torianne Bailey Nico Shnayderman Noah Vega	14 Larry Cook Nathan Summers Pat Maccabee	15 Jackson Heckmann Susie Keenan Victoria Marvin Kate DiMeno Retha Keenan Jeremiah Pillimue
16 Alden Stevko Joaquin Aguilar	17 Alexis Vela Cathy Odegaard Charlotte Rusin Oliver Schorr Andrew Russell Cassidy Russell Cathy Curtis Ella Kirsh Mandy Morales Jaxon Conway	18 Adriana Polhemus Dana Zahler VICKI and KURT MARTENSON	19 Cindy McCune Ryan Boylan Orlando Hernandez Lance Riebsomer Noah Holschen	20 Michael Calhoun Kinley Thomas Kai Conway	21 Cullen Zarzycki Judith Komora Marina Solano Pete Silva Savanna Plunkett	22 Amelia Clark Jenna Pace Seth Process Jacob Sklar
23 Stephanie Streiff-Process Alyssa Thackrah Bradley Tanner Alaan Ahmad	24 Ethan McLachlan Jon Dunn Michael Hanson Scott Hanson Sara D'Amico Allison Azzu	25 Bryce Hill Ricardo Merced Scott Bartholomaeus Michelle Scarcella Jeremiah Pillimue	26 Anita Allingham-Thompson Claire Foster Delilah Tohlchinsky KAREN and MICHAEL SMITH	27 Ruth Ann Smith John Carmona Kerry Manthey Bradley Williamson CHERYL and CARL WITT	28 Gene Frink Sandra Hardin Victor Neri Ruth Fikes Brighton Waltman Sandra Wick	29 Kathryn McKenzie Phillip Torres Craig Martens Gina Malloy Debbie Holmerud Andrea Hernandez Amber Tanner Miguel Mendoza
30 George Le Cornu Barbara Oeding Roger Kaplan Ivan Alvarado Audry Purdy Roger Kaplan	31 Jerry Fragasso Glenn Knorr Keshann Edwards					

AUGUST 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:00am/9:30am Traditional Worship 9:30/10:30am Hope Kids 10:30am Modern Worship	3 9:00am HOPE OUTREACH	4	5 6pm Stand Firm	6 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	7 Office Closed	8 10:00am Women of Hope Summer Study
9 8:00am/9:30am Traditional Worship 9:30/10:30am Hope Kids 10:30am Modern Worship	10	11	12 6pm Stand Firm	13 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	14 Office Closed	15 7:00am Student Impact
16 8:00am/9:30am Traditional Worship 9:30/10:30am Hope Kids 10:30am Modern Worship	17 5:00pm Stephen Ministers Mtg.	18	19 2:00pm Stephen Ministry Training 6pm Stand Firm	20 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	21 Office Closed	22 10:00am Stephen Ministry Training
23 8:00am/9:30am Traditional Worship 9:30/10:30am Hope Kids 10:30am Modern Worship	24	25	26 2:00pm Stephen Ministry Training 6pm Stand Firm	27 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	28 Office Closed	29 10:00am Stephen Ministry Training
30 8:00am/9:30am Traditional Worship 9:30/10:30am Hope Kids 10:30am Modern Worship	31					

ALTAR FLOWERS/NEEDY PERSONS FUND (\$60 DONATION)

Altar Flowers Given By		Needy Persons Fund Given By
Given by: Lourdes Raval In Memory of Bonifacio & Consolacion Garcia & The Hoffmans In Memory of Irene Berry	August 2	Given by: Jan & Brian Harnik To the Glory of God
Given by: Reynold Worch In Memory of Brother Ronald	August 9	Given by: Janice Barnes To the Glory of God
Given by: Jim Eaton In Memory of Lori Eaton	August 16	Given by: Reynold Worch To the Glory of God
Given by: The McLachlan Family In Celebration of Ethan's Birthday! & Debbi & Mark Holmerud In Memory of Marilyn Lammers	August 23	Given by: Susie Keenan To the Glory of God
Given by: Pastor Carl & Cheryl Witt In Celebration of Their 60 th Wedding Anniversary	August 30	(Available!)

Sign-up sheets available at the Information Center or call the office at 760.346.1273.

"Sharing the Gifts of God"	June 2026
Average Weekly Attendance (including online)	226
Offering	\$86,468
Miscellaneous Income	\$491
Total	\$86,959
Average Weekly Income	\$21,739

ONLINE AND ONCAMPUS WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Traditional Services	Sundays 8:00am & 9:30am	On Campus
Modern Services	Sundays 10:30am	On Campus
Online Service	Available Saturday evenings	hopepd.org
Hope Kids	Sundays 9:30am & 10:30am	On Campus
Women's Gather Study	See calendar for special event	On Campus
Men's Bible Study	Does not meet in the summer.	Conference Room
Stand Firm	Wednesdays, 6:00pm - 8:00pm	On Campus
Hope Book Club	Does not meet in the summer.	Conference Room
Esther Circle	Does not meet in the summer.	On Campus
Quilters of Hope	Does not meet in the summer.	Hope Center
Hope Choir	Does not meet in the summer.	Choir Room
Celebrate Recovery	Thursdays 7:00pm	Hope Center
CR - Men's Open Share	Thursdays 8:00pm	On Campus
CR - Women's Open Share	Thursdays 8:00pm	On Campus



STAFF

John Baynton
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johnb@hopepd.org

Michael Cundari
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michael@hopepd.org

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Carlos Vega
Children's Ministry Director
carlos@hopepd.org

Douglas C. Wilson
Director of Music
doug@hopepd.org

John Wilson
Multimedia Producer
john@hopepd.org

Council (Leadership Team)

Mary Fay Pinnow
President

Vice President/HR

Secretary

Marge Guentzler
Treasurer

Kim Buchanan
Stewardship

David Shelep
Property Management

John Stevko
Youth Ministry

John Donnelly
Human Resources



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

760.346.1273 | HOPE PALM DESERT 45900 PORTOLA AVENUE PALM DESERT, CA 92260

OFFICE HOURS:

9:00AM - 5:00PM MONDAY - THURSDAY

FRIDAYS CLOSED

COFFEE WITH PASTOR GERALD

August 8, 2025. I was enjoying a cup of coffee with a cherished friend. Then my phone rang. Life has a way of surprising us, even over coffee. I looked at my phone, it was the Bishop. I'd been retired for a year. But even in retirement, when the Bishop calls...you answer. He asked if I would consider returning to Hope Lutheran as the Bridge Pastor, serving until a new settled Senior Pastor was called.

That moment, sitting with my friend, a cup of coffee in my hand, and the Bishop on the phone was an unexpected moment. I wasn't planning to come out of retirement. I also had no idea that conversation would shape the next year of my life.

But this past year, with 3 months of discernment and preparation followed by 9 months as your pastor, has reminded me that some of life's greatest blessings begin as interruptions, especially to OUR PLANS. And sometimes...sometimes...those unexpected interruptions become some of life's greatest gifts.

I've joked about learning to not take calls from the Bishop during retirement. But, I'm so thankful I did. These months I've spent with you at Hope Lutheran have been some of my most meaningful ones in my now 45+ years of ministry. None of the moments from this past year were on my calendar that August morning. But they enriched my soul and were simply waiting on the other side of my "yes."

Exactly one year after that unexpected phone call, August 9 will be my final Sunday as the Bridge Pastor at Hope. What a joyful journey this has been for me. King Solomon reminds us of this truth: We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps. (Proverbs 16:9 NLT) That's an invitation for us to hold our plans with open hands. Because sometimes the unexpected moment can become the unforgettable blessing. My friends...

Know you are loved,
Pastor Gerald

Thank you!

Pastor Gerald