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## Hope Notes: The ESV

By David Rowe

Since 1980, nearly all of the preaching and teaching at Hope Presbyterian Church has been done from the New International Version (NIV). Over the years, God has used the NIV greatly. Nevertheless, the session has decided to use the English Standard Version (ESV) as our primary pulpit translation.

As Pastor Mark Driscoll said recently, "The Scriptures exist for many reasons, and chief among them is the revelation of the person and work of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus taught that He was in fact the very thread that wove all of Scripture together... (therefore) if Jesus were to call us on our cell phone we would want to have the best possible signal...to hear Him most clearly. In some ways, a good Bible translation is akin to good cell phone coverage in that it facilitates the most effective communication."

How then do we decide what is the best translation for us? There are an embarrassing number of English translations available today. Part of the reason for this proliferation of translations is that the Bible is the best selling book in the world. Every publishing house wants to monetize God's word and reach an untapped audience with their translation.

Translation methods fall into four general categories: thought-for-thought translations, word-for-word translations, paraphrases, and corruptions. Paraphrases (The Message, The Living Bible) are used for devotional reading but are not appropriate for worship or study. A corruption would be something like the New World Translation, used by Jehovah's Witnesses use, who intentionally change the original languages to fit their theology. We will look at only the first two methods.

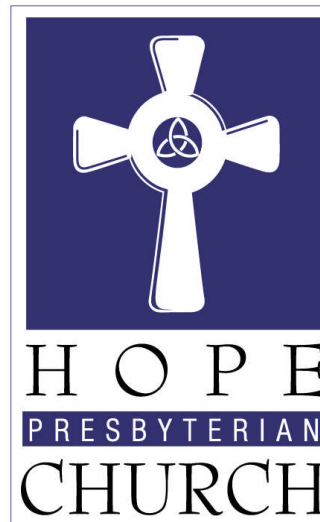
Thought-for-thought translations are also known as dynamic equivalence translations. Word order in Greek and Hebrew is often different from English word order. In addition, some words in Greek have only a single English referent. Thought-for-thought translations interpret the meaning of the passage and not the individual words. Very often, thought-for-thought translations include words that were not included in the original text. The finest thought-for-thought English translation is the New International Version (NIV). The ability of the reader to understand the passage is paramount to the translator trying to create a dynamic equivalence.

Word-for-word translations are literal translations, in which care is given to interpret each word from their original Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic. As Leland Ryken has pointed out, word-for-word translations emphasize God, the divine author of Scripture, over you and me as human readers of Scripture. The result is a striving for the precision of what the Bible says. These translations are excellent for self-study because of their accuracy.

Why are not all translations word-for-word? For one, when a translation is slavishly literal, a text can lose its poetry, and a great deal of the Bible is written in poetry (the Psalms are only one example). As Driscoll says, "Thankfully, the ESV has preserved the degree of accuracy...of translating the poetic parts of Scripture in a...fluid manner."

In the end, the session has chosen the ESV because God inspired not just the thoughts of scripture, but every "jot" and "tittle" (KJV), every "dot" and "iota" (ESV) (Matt. 5:18). "Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar." (Proverbs 30:5-6). Before you can know the meaning of what God has written, you must have the words correct. The meaning is in the words, and God has chosen the Word to convey Himself and His meaning. In addition, the ESV is in the public domain, preferable to the current situation with the NIV and other translations, whose publishers want to make change (e.g. gender neutrality) or add commentary (e.g. the new "Green Bible" has words about creation in green ink).

The ESV is the best translation available today. Two of the best study bibles ever produced have been released using the ESV translation: The ESV Study Bible and The Reformation Study Bible.



### Special articles of interest:

- All About Hope Youth
- Introducing Church Secretary Lynn Pietras
- Hope members Rev. and Mrs. Blake Altman and Family
- Angel Tree Outreach
- Hope Church's transition to the ESV translation



### In this issue:

Hope Youth Happenings	2
Introducing	2
Hope Faces	3
Hope Outreach	3
Hope Notes	4

# HOPE NEWSLETTER

*Whence comes a true and genuine humility, except from a sense of sin.*

-John Calvin

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## A New Year, A New Service

By Matthew Harmon



As our calendars and PDAs roll into 2009, many of us face new commitments and schedules. This year, Hope also will have something new: a second worship service on Sunday evenings. For some of us, a second service is an even bigger change than our loftiest New Year's resolutions, and may raise some questions. Why add a second service? Whom is it for? What will it be like? Let's consider each of these questions.

Why add a second service? An evening service is biblical, historical, and practical. Following Christ's resurrection on the first day of the week, Christians began observing the Old Testament Sabbath principles of rest and worship on "the Lord's day" (John 20:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2). Several passages testify that many Christians gathered daily for worship (Acts 2:46; 5:42). This weekly or daily worship usually followed the morning and evening pattern of temple services. When Peter is miraculously freed from prison in Acts 12, he knows right where to find fellow believers: at evening prayers.

Historically, our sixteenth-century Reformation predecessors purged a bloated church calendar of feasts, fasts, and saints' days that had obscured the unique significance of the Lord's Day and recovered the biblical rhythm of weekly congregational worship and rest. Some urban congregations even embraced morning and evening services each day. While impractical for most rural congregations, Protestant churches commonly observed Sunday morning and evening services. Only in recent decades has the explosion of leisure options rendered evening services so scarce. Until 1980, Hope church had a long history of evening worship.

Practically, a second service will supplement our morning worship, helping us grow spiritually both as individuals and a community. I often feel that morning worship splits my Sunday in two between God's time (morning) and my time (afternoon and evening). A morning and evening service would "bookend" the Lord's Day, encouraging us to use Sunday afternoon as a time of hospitality, service, or individual worship.

Whom is a second service for? You and your friends! Some churches add second services to appeal to vastly different groups of people, building entirely distinct "congregations." However, a second service at Hope is another chance to worship God, hear His Word, and fellowship together. While not an outreach service per se, we hope that a second service will provide more opportunities to invite friends and family members.

What will a second service be like? Many aspects of a second service will be very familiar: preaching, worship, music. Other aspects will be more familial. The evening service will likely be more relaxed. We hope to keep the "overhead" low to avoid over-taxing those that already serve so faithfully to support our morning worship. We expect to have some nursery volunteers, but also hope that children will feel especially comfortable in the evening service. The service will be no more than an hour, with a briefer sermon, an emphasis upon prayer, and a simple format that may aid individual or family worship during the week.

Each new year brings demands on our time at home, at work and at church. I pray that this second service will not be an extra burden, but rather a rich, blessed addition to our life of growing together in Christ Jesus.

## Hope Youth Happenings

By Matthew Harmon

Hope Youth is a developing part of our larger Hope Presbyterian Church family, which is focused upon serving our congregation's youth from approximately grades seven through twelve. Hope Youth is such a work in progress that our current name itself is only provisional. Even now, our participants are in the process of choosing a permanent name for the group. Look for that to be announced soon! Currently, Hope Youth consists of our Sunday morning classes and Second Saturday activities.

We had a great fall together studying the Apostles' Creed on Sunday mornings. Line-by-line, we examined the biblical foundations for each core affirmation of the faith. We explored echoes of Christian truth in popular songs, books, and movies, as well as the way biblical Christianity critiques our culture and speaks to our own lives, situations and feelings. Many thanks are due to Marc Choi for providing the curriculum on the Apostles' Creed. In December, we began studying the book of Romans.

This fall, we launched Second Saturday. Our monthly activities in the fall included a movie night, apple-picking, and ice skating. From January 9 to 11, we joined youth from other churches in our presbytery at a winter retreat in the Pocono Mountains. Second Saturdays have been a great time to get to know one another and build friendships. In the coming year, we look forward to more activities and to helping others in the church and community. Please notify us if you know of opportunities that would allow some energetic Hope Youth participants to help other members of our church family and wider community.

Finally, many thanks to Ray and Leaslie Carr for joining Marc Choi and me in serving through Hope Youth. Please keep us in prayer as we seek to serve and love each other and the youth. Also, keep our congregation's youth in prayer, as they navigate the process of maturing in their faith. If you are interested in joining us in working with our church's adolescents, just let one of the four of us know.

## Introducing

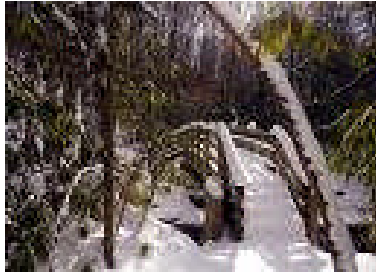
By Lynn Pietras

**Hope Church Secretary Lynn Pietras** – Lynn was born and raised in the Trenton area and had the privilege of being brought up in a God-fearing, Bible-believing home and church. She came to faith at an early age, although she admits that she is still growing in grace each and every day. Lynn worked at an international language-services company in Princeton for eight years as an executive assistant before taking a hiatus to have children. She also held a real estate license for twelve years before God led her down other paths. She feels blessed to be using her skills to serve God's church directly, not the least of which are her efforts as Hope Church's secretary.

Lynn and her husband, Bob, have been happily married for twenty years and have two sons, Jacob, fourteen, and Bryce, ten. For the past twenty years, they have been members of Westerly Road Church in Princeton, where Lynn and Bob together teach 2nd and 3rd graders.

Among Lynn's interests are biking, hiking, white-water rafting, riding roller coasters, roller skating, baking, cooking, and spending time with her family.

During the week, usually on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, you can find Lynn giving of her time and talents at the Hope Church office. She makes and receives calls, relays prayer requests from church members, and assembles the bulletin for the upcoming Sunday service.



*"I saw that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame of heart that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself, 'the same yesterday, today and forever.'"*  
— John Bunyan



## Hope Faces

By Joseph Beaumont

Hope Church is pleased to have in our fellowship the Altman family: Blake, Lauren, Andrew, and a little girl arriving in January.

Blake Altman grew up in Wichita Falls, Texas, near Dallas. He became a Christian at age nine through the Sunday School ministry of a Southern Baptist Church. Blake came to a fuller understanding of the Gospel at age thirteen and felt God's call to the ministry after traveling to India and Malaysia during his senior year at Texas A&M. He later earned a ThM in Historical Theology at Dallas Seminary. While in seminary, Blake met Lauren, a graduate of Baylor Nursing School. The two wed in October 2004.

After the Altmans moved to the Princeton area in 2006, Blake began serving as Chaplain of Manna Christian Fellowship at Princeton University. This campus fellowship is an interdenominational ministry dedicated to helping students develop a Gospel worldview. Manna emphasizes the importance of students' affiliating with a local church without, as Blake says, "beating the drum for a particular church."

Besides enjoying reading (Augustine, C.S. Lewis, and Philip Yancey to name a few), Blake is also an avid outdoorsman. He relishes camping and mountain climbing. In fact, during his lifetime he hopes to climb all of the 14,000-foot peaks (some fifty of them) in Colorado with his son Andrew.

The family loves Hope Church. While Lauren looks to continue leading the women's Bible study, Blake anticipates seeing more people transformed through Gospel preaching. He exhorts us that "Jesus wants the whole of your life so that you can use your gifts to God's glory."



*"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."*

*1 Peter 4:10*

## Hope Outreach – Angel Tree Ministries

By Debra Watson and Ray Carr

Hope Church is involved in ministering to prisoners and their children through our participation in Angel Tree, a program sponsored nationally by Chuck Colson's Prison Fellowship Ministry. Church members shared Christ's love during Christmas by purchasing and delivering gifts to prisoners' children in their parents' names. This year we served 6 families and provided gifts to 12 children. The goal of Angel Tree is a twofold ministry of reconciliation. Regarding the parent/child relationship, we want the children to know that they are loved and that their parents have not forgotten about them, despite the parents' absence. We also minister to the children by letting them know that their Heavenly Father loves them and sent His son Jesus to die for them. Because of this, Jesus, sent to be born in a manger, is the greatest gift of all. He is a gift far greater and far better than any earthly gift we may receive at Christmas time.

