

Hopelines



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A quarterly publication presenting news and stories of Living Hope Native Ministries, a partnership dedicated to serving the First Nations of Ontario.

Notable

Nick Backlund has been accepted as a missionary candidate and is working to prepare for his assignment in Pikangikum. He will be serving in ministry alongside Colleen Estes.

If you are also interested in serving with LHNM alongside long-term staff and learning from them, please contact office@lhn.org or complete the application on the website.



We are praying for more young people to join us!

Our Vision

That in every First Nations context the local church would reach its full potential—worshiping in full devotion, attracting the seekers mobilizing believers, restoring families, changing communities affecting the world.



Hospitality in Church

by Lila Graber



What does it look like to show hospitality at church? Life experiences are good teachers. Jesus' words come to mind:

“Do unto others as you would have them do to you.”

I've appreciated warm welcomes when I've been a visitor. Less often, I've had those awkward, uncomfortable feelings of being an outsider when others either didn't know how to engage or didn't want to. Those experiences are important, too.

Years ago, when my sister was in the hospital being treated for cancer, I went to be with her for a week. On Sunday, I looked online for a church to attend. Since I was in a completely unfamiliar community, I chose one that was on the route to the hospital. I'm sure it was a good service, but the most distinct memory is that afterward, people gathered in clusters to visit. It was not a large church, but no one spoke to me or greeted me. At the time, it seemed most comfortable to leave.

Another memory is the kindness of strangers who invited our family to their home for a meal after the service on the first visit to their church.

At The Lighthouse, our goal is to be friendly, welcoming and truly interested in the people that come. A smile and warm “Good morning!” are not hard. If there is an opportunity to visit with a first-time guest before the service, we like to let them know about Sunday School or anything else they might have questions about. We don't want



The Lighthouse Feast

anyone to leave without at least being greeted with a sincere, “I'm glad you could be here”, or some other statement acknowledging their presence.

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Our monthly barbecues or lunches after church are a way of giving more and providing a place to form stronger bonds of friendship.

It's encouraging to know that whenever we reach out in love, seeking the comfort of others above our own, we honour the One who reached out to us and loved us first.

-Lila Graber



Great food and fellowship at the Lighthouse feast

Love Through Hospitality



Mother's Day at New Hope Fellowship in Thunder Bay



by Andrew Lang

In thinking about hospitality, I was reminded of the story in Acts 16:30-34:

Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.

I love how this jailer, upon the moment of his conversion, was so moved by the love of God that he immediately wanted to share all that he had with his fellow believers. He threw a dinner party because his life had been spared, and he had found a new life in Jesus Christ.

How does the love shown towards you affect your living out of the Gospel of Jesus in practical ways? Is God urging you to trust him more and invite others into your home?



Love of Strangers

by Rodney Martin

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

(Leviticus 19:33,34)

I grew up in the 70's and 80's camp meeting era. Camp meeting services would normally run for six days in the First Nation communities - Tuesday evening to Sunday evening. Two special guest speakers preaching three nights each, and guests traveling from miles around. There would be a feast every night at the end of each service and there never seemed to be a shortage of help.

I remember every summer it felt more like a huge family gathering, and people were excited to see each other.

Hospitality was always abundant as each church member would provide accommodations for the guests. It seemed that each member was excited to see who was going to stay at their house. It certainly was an exciting time. As a kid, this was especially exciting because the adults would bring their children along so we were always meeting and making new friends. We would show them around and show them what we do for fun.

The thing is everyone felt welcomed and were always looking forward to attending the next event.



New Hope Fellowship's monthly feast

In the New Testament, the Greek word for "hospitality" literally meant "love of strangers". And it was a quality God looked for and required of His people in both the Old and New Testament. God told the people in Leviticus to treat the strangers who are not of your land as one of your own, and do them no wrong. During Jesus' earthly ministry, He depended and relied on the hospitality of strangers as He traveled from town to town and from home to home teaching.

A lesson He taught His followers:

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

And in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus discusses the hospitable behaviour of those who will inherit the kingdom.

Even though nowadays we may not often think much about entertaining strangers, hospitality is still a big part of the Christian ministry. By serving others we serve Christ and build in the Kingdom of God here on earth.



The New Hope kitchen is busy on feast Sundays