

# The Connection

## Messages of Hope



**HOPE**  
CHURCH | RALEIGH  
WORSHIP . GROW . SERVE .

A Weekly Online Newsletter: Edition 756

November 08, 2023

## “The Empty Chair”

**Psalm 6:9** “The Lord has heard my supplication, The Lord receives my prayer.”

**Psalm 25:1** To “You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.”

**Psalm 141:1** “O Lord, I call upon You; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You!”

**Psalm 143:1** “Hear my prayer, O Lord, Give ear to my supplications! Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness!”

**Luke 18:1** “Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart...”

**Philippians 4:6** “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

**1 Peter 4:7** “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.”

Leslie Weatherhead, an English Christian Theologian, tells the story of an old Scot who was quite ill, and the family called for their pastor to come and see their loved one. As the pastor entered the sick man’s room and sat down, he noticed another chair on the opposite side of the bed, a chair which had also been drawn close to the bed. The pastor said, “Well, Donald, I see I’m not your first visitor for the day.”

The old man looked up and was puzzled for a moment, then recognized from the nod of the head that the pastor had noticed the empty chair. “Well, Pastor, I’ll tell you about that chair. Many years ago I found it quite difficult to pray, so one day I shared this problem with my former pastor. He told me not to worry about kneeling or about placing myself in some pious posture. Instead, he said, ‘Just sit down, put a chair opposite you, and imagine Jesus sitting in it, then talk with Him as you would a friend.’” The aged Scot then added, “I’ve been doing that ever since.” The pastor visited him for a while and left.

A short time later the daughter of the Scot called the pastor. When he answered, she informed him that her father had died very suddenly after he had left and that she was quite shaken for she had no idea death was so near. Then she continued, “I had just gone to lie down for an hour or two, for he seemed to be sleeping so comfortably. When I went

back to his room he was dead.” Then she added thoughtfully, “Except now his hand was on the empty chair at the side of the bed. Isn’t that strange?” The pastor responded, “No, it’s not so strange. I understand.”

I love this story. I found this story early on in my ministry, probably at least 25+ years ago. It has reminded me several times, there is no one position of prayer and when I pray, to talk to Jesus as a friend.

During my years as a Christian I have found myself laying face down on the floor praying to the Lord. I have knelt on my knees, laid on my back, stood, been in a tree in a deer stand, sitting in my car in a parking lot, driving down the road, praying when someone else is driving, that has happened a lot. I have prayed holding the hand of a person taking their last breath and my wife as she gave birth to our daughter. I have prayed placing my hands over a bride and grooms hands and held the hands of men and women who are ending their marriages. I have prayed with none believers, believers, friends and strangers, men and women, and even over my pet dog Sadie as she was dying.

God has not said to only pray one way or in one manner or with only a certain group of people. NO! He has called us to pray. So let’s pray!

One more verse to share. **Matthew 21:22** “**And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.**” This verse is not saying you give God a wish list and He gives it all to you. This is a verse about faith and prayer, us submitting to God’s will and purpose and watch what He does as we walk with Him believing.

The old Scot placed the empty chair next to his bed and imagined Jesus sitting in it as he talked to Him. Maybe we could picture that empty chair and imagine Jesus coming and sitting down to talk to us. He is willing! Are we? Are we praying? Are we talking to Him? Are we?

Blessings my friends,

Pastor Marty Duffell - HOPE Church Raleigh

Worship . Grow . Serve

# HOPE Calendar

## Wednesday, November 8

Wednesday Night Supper, Study & Prayer @ 6:15 p.m.

## Thursday, November 9

EPC Pastors Breakfast @ 7:30 a.m.  
NO Worship Team Practice

## Saturday, November 11

The Computer Lab @ 9:00 a.m.  
Women of HOPE @ 1:00 p.m.

## Sunday, November 12

Worship Team Practice @ 8:00 a.m.  
Worship @ 9:30 a.m.  
Fellowship @ 10:50 a.m.  
Session Meeting @ 12 p.m.

## Wednesday, November 15

Wednesday Night Supper, Study & Prayer @ 6:15 p.m.

## Helping Hands Ministries

**Fellowship - November 12**  
*Church is Providing*

**ProPresenter - November 12**  
*Bill Joyner*

**Soundboard - November 12**  
*Ben Pierce*

**Live Streaming - November 12**  
*Al Floyd*

**Communion - November**  
*Sandra Pierce*

**Greeter - November 12**  
*Joan Rollinson*

**Nursery Volunteer - November 12**  
*Volunteer Needed*

Scripture Text and Sermon  
This Sunday  
The Parables of Jesus

Matthew 13:24 - 30; 36 - 43  
"The Parable of  
the Tares and Wheat"

### Daily Devotions

#### For This Coming Week

Nov 12	Ezekiel 18
Nov 13	Ezekiel 19
Nov 14	Ezekiel 20
Nov 15	Ezekiel 21
Nov 16	Ezekiel 22
Nov 17	Ezekiel 23
Nov 18	Ezekiel 24



## Outreach Ministries

### "Food of the Month"

for the Raleigh Dream Center  
Food Pantry

### Pop Top Soups

We have a collection bin in the foyer

### HOPE Meal Ministry

Take a meal from the freezer if  
needed for you or someone else.

### The Computer Lab

Saturday, November 11  
@ 9:00 a.m.

### TLC Devotion

NO TLC Devotion held in  
November

## Spiritual Growth Ministries

### Women of HOPE

Saturday, November 11  
@ 1:00 p.m.

### Men of HOPE

Men of the church, be praying about  
whether God is calling you to lead this  
Men's group at HOPE.

### Last Wednesday Night Supper until January

Nov. 15th will be our last Wed. Night  
supper until January. We will have a  
Devotional and Prayer Time begin 11/29  
through 12/20. Wed. Night Supper,  
Study, and Prayer resumes 1/3

## Quote of the Week

"Though He slay me,  
yet will I trust Him"

Job

(Job 13:15)

## Prayer Requests:

Revill & Mary Lane Mallory, Jamie Baldwin, Donna Williams, Diane Williams, Carol & Colin (Kathy Herriman's Sister & Brother-in-law), Loretta (Sandi Underwood's daughter), Joan Summers, Shelley, Diane Mack's Sister-in-law, Jordan & Cinnamon (son and daughter of Lynn Joyner's family members), Tommy and Billy Lanphere (Lynn Joyner's brothers), Gene & Becky Hale, Dave & Dot Geil, Carlyle and Cynthia Franklin (Sandra Pierce's dad and stepmom), Brian Adam's dad, our Military, our Missionaries, our Nation, and the world. If you have those you would like added to our prayer concerns, please email me those names.

## Wednesday Night Ministries

Wednesday Night Supper,  
Study, & Prayer  
November 8  
@ 6:15 p.m.

Study of Exodus

### Bring your Bibles

A Zoom Link will be available for  
those who cannot meet in person.

### Menu:

BBQ Chicken, Mashed Potatoes,  
Green Beans, Rolls & Dessert

### Upcoming Dates

#### Session Meeting

November 12 @ 12 p.m.

#### Annual Meeting of the HOPE Congregation

Sunday, November 19 @ 11:00 a.m.

#### Hanging of the Greens

Saturday, December 2 @ 10:00 a.m.

#### Advent Season Begins

Sunday, December 3

**HOPE Church Raleigh**  
An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

4911 Green Rd

Raleigh, NC 27616

919-508-6827

**Worship Time: 9:30 AM**

[www.HopeChurchRaleigh.org](http://www.HopeChurchRaleigh.org)

[www.facebook.com/HOPEChurchRaleigh](https://www.facebook.com/HOPEChurchRaleigh)

Twitter: @HopeChRaleigh

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in the search box)