

March 2026 Council President's Newsletter Article

You may have noticed that this month's newsletter is arriving a bit later than usual. This change is intentional. In the past, sending the newsletter before the monthly council meeting meant that news and updates were often already a month behind, or that an additional mailing was required. Moving forward, the newsletter will be sent mid-month so that we can share more timely and complete updates with the congregation.

At the most recent council meeting, the Deacons shared that the Endowment Fund has approved an increase to the Walk-around Offering match. The new match will be 3:1 up to \$750. If a particular Walk-around Offering has a different matching amount, that information will be shared for that specific month. For example, March is historically our largest Walk-around Offering of the year, and the matching cap is typically higher.

On March 1, 2026, a special congregational meeting was held for the second vote on the proposed constitutional amendment. The meeting was very well attended, with 80 people signing in, and we are grateful to everyone who took the time to participate. The meeting followed the agenda that had been previously distributed.

A total of 71 ballots were cast and counted, exceeding the required quorum of 50 voting members. The results were 26 YES votes and 45 NO votes, meaning the proposed constitutional amendment did not pass. The ballots were counted by the Trustee Committee—Jeff, Cory, Deb, and myself. The Executive Committee put significant thought and care into the format of the meeting, and all members reviewed and approved both the Special Meeting Notice and the proposed Agenda and Rules in advance. A brief email summarizing the results was sent on March 2, 2026. If you did not receive that message, please email hopelutheran87@gmail.com with your current contact information so we can update our records.

The Hope Together project with Rev. Peter Soli continues to move forward. We had a strong response to the questionnaires, with 18 youth responses and 48 congregational responses submitted. Rev. Soli will begin reviewing the results following a vacation and conference. Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete and return a questionnaire. I look forward to seeing the insights that emerge from Rev. Soli's review and discernment, and to the steps that will follow as we continue this process together.

At the March council meeting, the Deacons also announced that sharing the Sign of Peace will be reintroduced during our worship service. This is a meaningful part of the liturgy that encourages connection within the congregation, and we believe Hope Lutheran will be well served by its return.

Finally, arrangements have been made for Hope Lutheran to host both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship services this year. My understanding is that, after many years without it being observed here, the Stripping of the Altar will take place at the end of the Maundy Thursday service during Lent. This powerful and reflective tradition helps mark the transition into the solemn observance of Good Friday.

Thank you for your continued participation, engagement, and support of the life of Hope Lutheran Church.