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Hope Clinton is a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

## An Important Message from Pastor Karis

Dear Hope Clinton Siblings,

Grace to you and peace. This past year so many of the things we took for granted became more limited or eliminated as we united and battled against the spread of the deadly COVID-19 and multiple pandemics of injustice and inequity. Yet, this period offered an opportunity to turn old wine into new wineskins. Hope Clinton pivoted quickly to meet the needs of so many hungering for a relationship with Jesus during a time of significant loss and grieving.

On behalf of the Hope Council and Ministry Team, I want to thank everyone for the overwhelming support as we offered outreach and ministry during the season of mask-wearing, social distancing, and stay-in-place mandates. Despite it all, Hope Clinton remained spiritually close and available to one another as we grew in every way. *As other communities of faith closed or teetered toward closing, Hope Clinton thrived during a very challenging year by:*

- Live streaming a weekly worship service on Facebook, YouTube, and at HopeClinton.org. You shared Hope Clinton worship services with friends and family. Hope Clinton now praises Jesus among 800 people each week.
- Adding to its ministry team to keep growing with this community of faith. The ministry team offered Bible studies, devotions, special spiritual classes, sing-a-longs, zoom check-ins, hosted community events to feed and clothe those in need of help, and added a creative approach to online ministry. Hope Clinton's prayer warriors remained fully operational while I provided pastoral guidance to those in crisis needing support.

The ministry outreach efforts that Hope Clinton laid last year will continue to expand as Hope Clinton continues to grow. Prayerfully, by late summer, Hope Clinton will transition to a hybrid worship ministry model (in-person and continued online outdoor destination location worship). This means refreshing and updating the sanctuary and installing technology to continue to make worship life-giving to a new generation of faithful followers of Jesus. Hope Clinton is consulting with an architect and technology professional to assist with this transition.

Hope Clinton has been able to provide a fantastic ministry experience, thanks to many of you. I need your help. Could you help save Hope Clinton? I strongly encourage you to review how you can best support this ministry. Because of you, so many lives have been changed by forming radical bonds to be God's unconditional love in a hurting world. This ministry is your ministry and can only happen with you. Thank you for increasing your donations or giving towards Hope Clinton's ministry for the first time on a monthly basis. Please text your contribution to (855) 934-3553, or go to [hopeclinton.org/give](https://hopeclinton.org/give) for various ways that you can help contribute to God's unconditional loving presence in a hurting world.

In Christ,  
Pastor Karis



Online Giving is safe, secure, and easy. Hope Clinton offers a number of ways to contribute financially to its mission and ministry.

- Text-to-Give at (855) 934-3553
- [Facebook Donate](#)
- [Paypal](#)
- [Other Options Here](#)



At its March congregation council meeting, Hope Clinton voted to become a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Hope Clinton now joins 900+ ELCA partners committed to being an inclusive community of faith that welcomes the full participation of LGBTQIA+ children of God and publicly condemns hatred in all its forms.

The following welcome statement was also adopted:

*Hope Clinton believes the church needs to move beyond welcome and begin to practice radical affirmation. We lament the church's long history of causing pain and rejection. We affirm the sacredness of LGBTQIA+ two-spirited, and other oppressed peoples who have suffered from the actions of the church. We commit to centering their voices and their lived experiences whenever possible and welcome their leadership. Our commitments means we are an anti-racist space. We are a faith community full of people who will make mistakes, but we gather to try to follow Jesus, as he originally intended. While there may be differences among us, we believe we can all move together in Jesus-like love. You're welcome here regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, physical or mental ability, political stance or theological perspective. Together we will come to know the Kingdom of God!*

### What is Reconciling in Christ?

Since 1983, the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program has been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran church. The RIC Program is made up of congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, outdoor ministries, and other Lutheran organizations.



The purpose of the RIC Program is to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work and support the national program.

### Hope Clinton Adopts Anti-Harassment Policy

In addition to adopting an inclusive welcome statement, the Congregation Council of Hope Clinton approved a new Anti-Harassment policy for all staff, members, guests, and visitors. The Anti-Harassment policy puts Hope Clinton in line with many other faith communities who have adopted similar policies in commitment to providing a safe space both virtually and in-person. You can view the policy document here: [Hope Clinton Anti-Harassment Policy](#).



Hope Clinton continues to assess the situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic to determine when it will be feasible to return to in-person worship. The top priority is to ensure everyone's health and safety by making sure the facility is fully prepared for in-person worship. Additional updates will be forthcoming.

Hope Clinton encourages everyone to get the COVID-19 vaccination as phases open to your group. Maryland residents can pre-register at [Maryland.GoVaxfor](https://Maryland.GoVaxfor) for mass vaccination sites or check with your local medical center and pharmacy.



Hope Clinton's Life Café series has been a holistically enriching experiencing and the entire faith community extends its appreciation to Gail Wathen for leading these gatherings. The Life Café series will be continuing and the Hope Clinton staff is working hard to plan future events around bringing wholeness to mind, body and spirit.

Based on feedback from the Present Hope group, Life Café will transition to once a month gatherings on Sunday mornings before worship. Over the coming days, Vicar Eric will be reaching out to the Present Hope group to discuss future themes and presenters. Life Café for the Legacy group will continue once a month on Thursdays at 2:00 p.m.

Life Café will re-launch in May!



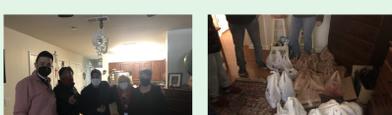
A fundraising activity is currently in the planning process to help support Hope Clinton's mission and ministry.

Everyone has been in awe of Miss Stormy's culinary endeavors as she prepares delicious and nutritious meals for our unhoused neighbors. Early planning has begun to host a Baked Good auction with proceeds supporting Hope Clinton's mission and ministry. Vicar Eric will be working with Miss Stormy and reaching out to other bakers in our faith community to help launch this sugary fundraiser. Stay tuned for more information.

### Gods Work. Our Hands!



Because of your generosity, Miss Stormy was able to prepare and serve Easter meals to our unhoused neighbors. Thank you, Miss Stormy and all those who contributed. #GodsWorkOurHands



Because of your generosity, Vicar Eric delivered over \$300 in groceries to Claudia and her neighbors in Annapolis, MD. Your financial contributions were added to donations received through our drop box at Giant in Camp Springs, MD (thank you, Jennifer). Claudia and her neighbors were able to distribute food throughout their neighborhoods to families in need. #GodsWorkOurHands

Thank you for your generosity!



Hope Clinton's online viewership of eWorship and other devotional productions continues to increase. **Since beginning online worship, Hope Clinton has received over 11,000 views of our videos and, this past month exceeded 700 views.**

The Hope Clinton team continues to reach out and connect with our online visitors. The community of faith at Hope Clinton is growing, but it cannot be left up to the staff to spread the message. Please invite your friends and family to join Hope Clinton by sharing our videos on your Facebook page and talking about all the great things happening! The Holy Spirit is at work within Hope Clinton!



Drew Parrish will be on vacation beginning April 5 through April 11, 2021.

Pastor Karis will be on vacation beginning April 12 through April 25, 2021.

During Pastor Karis's absence, please reach out to Vicar Eric for pastoral needs and emergencies. Vicar Eric can be reached by phone/text at (202) 998-2360 or by email at [vicar@erichthomasrandolph.com](mailto:vicar@erichthomasrandolph.com)

Vicar Eric will be on vacation May 2 through May 8, 2021.



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