

# keeping HOPE alive

## BIBLE READING PLAN

Join us in reading the Bible together. Look for readings that correspond to our message series, *Keeping Hope Alive* on the back of the program each week. Missed a week? You can find it at [westwoodcc.org/readingplan](http://westwoodcc.org/readingplan)

- Matthew 18:21–35
- Psalm 103:8–14
- Ephesians 4:30–32
- Colossians 3:12–17
- Psalm 52:8–9

Memorize this year's theme verse with us. Cut out the cover and put it where you'll see it. →

But I am like an olive tree  
flourishing in the house  
of God;  
I trust  
in God's  
unfailing love  
for ever and ever. For what  
you have done I will always praise you  
in the presence of your faithful people. And  
I will HOPE  
in your name,  
for your name  
is good.

Psalm 52:8–9



[westwoodcc.org](http://westwoodcc.org)

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# WELCOME TO WESTWOOD

## IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME HERE? SO GLAD YOU CAME!

Welcome to Westwood! If you are unfamiliar with the flow of our service, here's the scoop: we begin with a few worship songs. The lyrics are found on the big screens. The songs are followed by a couple announcements, a time of prayer and offering. You'll find teaching notes on the right side of the program so you can follow along during the message. We typically conclude our time by singing together.

Stop by the Info Spot before or after the service. We'd love to meet you, answer any questions you have, and give you some handy information. For kids and students, we offer great programs specially tailored to their ages. Our Westwood Kids desk would be glad to help you.



### SUPPORT FOR DIFFICULT TIMES

There are times when hope skips a beat and our grasp on God's promises falters. If you find yourself facing circumstances where you need support, Westwood has a one-to-one care ministry. Care Partners are trained to offer encouragement, prayer and a compassionate listening ear. Find out more at the Info Spot or on our website.



### DO LIFE WITH OTHERS!

Small groups are a great way to grow in faith and connect with others. If you are on the Chanhassen campus, join us for Group Connect Saturday, January 27, 9:00–11:30am. You can register online. At the Minnetonka campus, contact Kim Hanson, 952.224.7318, [kim.hanson@westwoodcc.org](mailto:kim.hanson@westwoodcc.org),

## KEEPING HOPE ALIVE

01.21.18 · Joel K. Johnson  
Hope for a Good Future by Forgiving a Bad Past

**Hope:** The ongoing feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen

**Hopeful people adjust old hopes to new realities**

**Hopeful people forgive**

**The Five 'M's' of Forgiveness**

**Matthew 18:21–35**

• The M \_\_\_\_\_ of forgiveness

A final, but important reflection: Can I forgive myself?

### CAMPUS EVENTS

For campus-specific events, small groups and other ways to connect, visit [westwoodcc.org](http://westwoodcc.org)

Keeping Hope Alive #3  
*Hope for a Good Future by Forgiving a Bad Past*  
January 21, 2017

1. Hope is the ongoing expectation or desire for a thing to happen. Have a little fun and talk about the DNA of Hope in terms of the Minnesota Vikings win over New Orleans. Where were you when they won and how did you experience the 'wishing', 'imagining', and 'believing'?
2. On a more serious note, hopeful people do two things well. First, hopeful people adjust old hopes to new realities. Share such a time when hope got sick or died because of the loss of a dream, or someone or something you lost. How did you move on from your old dream and begin to dream new dreams that awakened hope in your journey?
3. Second, hopeful people forgive. *Hope for a Good Future by Forgiving a Bad Past* was the title of Pastor Joel's message. The reality is that life is hard, and it's filled with deep hurt. Sometimes it's the pain you experience when you are hurt by others, and other times it's the pain you inflict when you hurt others. Read Matthew 18: 21-35 and then answer the following questions related to the five 'M's' of hope.
  - a. The Measure of forgiveness: What does Jesus mean we are to forgive 70x7 times? Why don't we like that idea when we first hear it? Does it mean you just let people continue in their abuse? What does it mean to limit a person's behavior but not limit our forgiveness?
  - b. The Meaning of forgiveness: Forgiveness in the OT and NT as different shades of meaning and includes – "to release or let go or to set free; to cancel a debt; to carry away." What specifically are you letting go of?
  - c. The Myth's of forgiveness:
    - Does forgiveness mean there are no consequences, that we immediately go back to the way things were before the offense? Yes or no? Why?
    - Does forgiveness mean you have to reconcile? Yes, or no? Why?
    - Does forgiveness mean you forget? Yes or no? Why?
  - d. The Method of forgiveness: When you forgive, what is the actual process you go through. Why is this process important?
  - e. The Motive of forgiveness? Why is it essential that Christians forgive? What happens if we don't forgive?
4. Can you forgive yourself? How does understanding that you are accepted by God allow you to keep hope alive when you are the one who hurts another person?