



HOPE, INDIANA

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

God's Acre is Unique

God's Acre, the historic section of the Hope Moravian Church has 1,070 graves. Burial is by the choir system where burials are by gender. There is a section for boys, unmarried men, married men, girls, unmarried women, married women, and paupers. This follows the early Moravian custom of burial as done in Herrnhut, Germany, the place in Saxony where Moravians found sanctuary from religious persecution on the estate of Count Nicholas Von Zinzendorf.

First grave: William Reich, 8 months old, died July 10, 1833

You needn't be a Moravian to be buried in God's Acre; this is a community cemetery. A plot was free to Moravians; to others it cost \$12. Gravestones are flat, a symbol of Moravian belief of equality in death.

Several gravestones have a flat slab with a footer area suitable for flower planting. This style of gravestone, a mix between a box tomb and cradle, is unique to Hope, Indiana.

Hope Moravian Church

**202 Main Street
Hope, Indiana 47246
(812) 546-4641**

**Church Office Hours:
9am to 1pm Mon.-Fri.**

**Sunday School - 9 am
Sunday Worship - 10 am**



Our Motto:

**In Essentials....Unity
In Non-essentials....Liberty
In All Things....Love**

Stories the Stones Tell

- ❖ *Rev. Edwin T. Senseman, the only Moravian Minister to die in Hope during his pastorate, is buried with his infant son, Transou.*
- ❖ *The unusual "backward" Bible gravestones.*
- ❖ *A scarlet fever epidemic claimed Henry, 8; Jeremiah, 7; Jacob, 5; Thomas, 4; sons of T. and C. Reed. The boys died within six days in May, 1848.*
- ❖ *Mary (Hauser) Houser, mother of town founder Martin Hauser, earliest born of any in God's Acre (born Dec. 26, 1761 in Stokes County, North Carolina).*
- ❖ *John Henry Kluge whose stone reads, "First white child born in Indiana."*
- ❖ *Berthold Menke, gardener for the Seminary for Young Ladies, a girls' school operated by the Moravian Church from 1866-1881.*

Easter Sunrise Service

Since the 1830's, Hope Moravians gather in God's Acre, weather permitting, for the Easter Sunrise Service. This custom originated in Herrnhut, Germany, in 1732 when young men greeted dawn in a burial place, as disciples did in Matthew 28.

At 4am, the Trombone Choir travels from street corner to street corner in Hope playing Moravian chorales and awaking sleepers for the Sunrise Service.

At 6am, we gather in the church where our pastor proclaims, "The Lord is Risen!" We respond, "The Lord is risen indeed!" Then, the Choir sings "The Earthquake," an anthem only sung in Hope. Organist Eugene Regannas composed this anthem in 1916. Next, our pastor and the Trombone Choir leads the congregation through the Avenue of Spruce to God's Acre. Singing, we face the East to greet a new dawn.



Who Are Moravians?

Moravians belong to the oldest Protestant Church in the world, established in 1457. Moravians are spiritual descendants of Bohemian priest, John Hus, martyred in 1415. The name Moravian comes from the place of origin for the church - Moravia - now a part of the Czech Republic.

In 1722, after years of persecution, Moravian refugees found refuge on the Saxony estate of Count Nicholas Ludwig Von Zinzendorf. There, they started the settlement of Herrnhut.

From Germany, in 1731, Moravian missionaries sailed to the West Indies to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the slaves.

Moravians first came to America in 1735 to Savannah, GA. Later, they established Bethlehem, PA and Winston-Salem, NC.

In 1829, Martin Hauser of Salem, NC, and several families migrated to Indiana and its promise of rich farm land. In 1830, Hauser founded Hope (originally called Goshen) and was the first pastor of the Hope Moravian Church.

Worldwide, Moravians have 600,000 members; 80% are people of color.