

The Voice of Hope

The newsletter of Hope Lutheran Church, San Mateo, CA
 "Knowing and sharing the good news of Hope in Christ"

Ashes



Ash Wednesday, which we will observe on February 18 this year, is the beginning of Lent, the 40-day season of preparation for Holy Week and the celebration of Easter. Christian scholars date this tradition back to 325 A.D. even though there is no Biblical reference either to Ash Wednesday or Lent.

This penitential season reflects Jesus' own 40-day period of fasting, described in the book of Matthew. Now days many protestant congregations, including our own, have joined the practice of having ash in the shape of the cross drawn on the foreheads of Worshipers as the words from Genesis 3:19 are spoken: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return."

The ELCA web site (Worship Formation & Liturgical Resources: FAQ) says --

Using ashes as a sign of repentance is an ancient practice, often mentioned in the Bible (e.g., Jonah 3:5-9; Job 42:6; Jeremiah 6:26; Matthew 11:21). The early Christians adopted the use of ashes from Jewish practice as an external mark of penitence. Ashes symbolize several aspects of our human existence:

- Ashes remind us of God's condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, "Dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).
- Ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They were used anciently in the absence of soap. Even on Ash Wednesday, this most penitential day, we receive ashes in the form of the cross, the same symbol placed on our bodies with water in our baptism. Even in this ashen mark of death, we anticipate the new life of Easter.
- Ashes remind us of the shortness of human life, for it is said as we are buried into the ground or as ashes are placed in a columbarium "We commit this body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust" (*ELWorship*, p. 284).
- Ashes are a symbol of our need to repent, confess our sins, and return to God.

In the May 2014 issue of the *Voice*, I invited those of you who do take your Palm "Branches" home from the Palm Sunday Worship to save them and bring them with you to the Fat Tuesday celebration in 2015. And "suddenly" that day is soon upon us as we gather in Nielsen Hall for a special time of fellowship from 6-8 pm on February 17. During this feast on the day before the fasting time of Lent begins we celebrate another tradition of burning the Palm Branches from last year to become the Ashes we will use this year.

Even if you are not able to attend our Ash Wednesday worship, please bring or send your Palm branch to the Fat Tuesday celebration. We will share in a brief liturgy of burning the Palms out in the breezeway between the Sanctuary and Nielsen Hall.

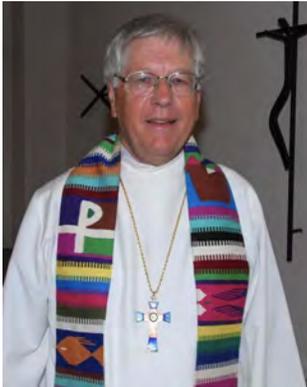
God Bless,
Pastor Eric



LEGACY GIVING

With the start of the New Year, now is an excellent time to plan your special giving for 2015. The first major challenge is just getting people to talk about estate planning or gifting. Next is determining to whom they should talk: an attorney, tax preparer, or other financial advisor. Pastor Paul and/or Lynn Loveall are available to provide general information and non-legal advice for planning purposes during 2015. Please contact them through the Hope Lutheran Church office. And, watch for more information in future editions of the Voice.

Pastor Paul's Notes



A recent issue of the journal, "Circulation," provides evidence that optimism and health are connected. Being an optimist has been associated with a healthier immune system and an ability to cope with physical pain. It also contributes to a quicker recovery from various surgeries. And it gives a person an ability to handle emotional stress in dealing with any life-threatening illnesses.

It has been said that most of us can identify ourselves as either an optimist or pessimist. The key is recognizing thought patterns that may be negative and learning new ways to think, replacing them with positive alternatives. Conclusion: Optimism is good for you!

The Bible is filled with references that can feed hope and optimism. Consider the following Psalms: 23, 42, 43; Isaiah 1, 26; I Corinthians 15, Philippians 4.....to cite a few. A verse that has always been a source of encouragement for me is from the Apostle Paul in the Philippians letter: "I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me."

The task force for an expanded Seniors Ministry into the community has been meeting at least once a month and we are establishing a good foundation. We have a new staff person. Margaret Baggerly is our "Seniors Outreach Coordinator" and she is helping us with program development, outreach and fund-raising. At this point we have a

small budget but are looking toward significant expansion as the year unfolds. The "survey form" that some have filled out will help us be specific in our program offerings. If you have not completed it, please do so. Forms are in the narthex but we will provide more opportunities for you to share. In this connection, we do have a need for a "volunteer co-ordinator". Please talk with me if you are interested in serving in that way.

I am offering a course on "Aging Gracefully" on Tuesdays at 11 to noon in February. The dates are February 10, 17 and 24. Please call the office if you would like to attend.

An Alzheimer's Support Group (for families) will begin at Hope the first Wednesday of February (2/4). It will continue for a minimum of six months. It is being led by Elizabeth Landsverk, M.D., of "Elder Consult Geriatric Medicine." The time will be 6 to 8 pm. All are welcome!

'SINGLE SENIORS' will meet on Tuesday, February 3 in Nielsen Hall, 12:30 to 2 pm. Our guest speaker will be Apryl Ryder (and staff) from the organization, "Care Indeed." Apryl will focus on a variety of pain management options and speak about dealing with chronic and joint issues. She will also present various volunteer opportunities. You will be impressed by this group that provides personal care and relevant resources. All are welcome!

SINGLE SENIORS plan to have a lunch-outing on Thursday, February 19, stay tuned for an announcement of the specific place and time.



January Seniors Savvy presentation with Curtis Golden

Youth Activities



The Rock goes Cardio as we get to the heart of things preparing for Valentine's Day. All 3rd through 6th graders are invited to gather in the Youth Room from 6-7:30pm on Sunday, February 8 for a heartfelt time of fellowship with heart related games and snacks.

As always, friends are welcome; the more the merrier!

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart: wait, I say, on the LORD. (Psalms 27:14)

Grades 7-12 Hope Event

A Day at the Boardwalk

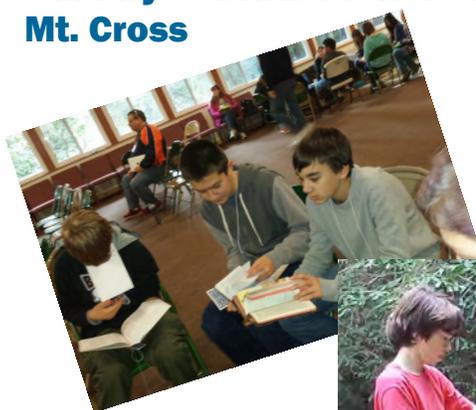
Saturday, February 7

We gather in Hope's parking lot at 9am to head to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk (yes, it is open including rides on the weekends). We start off with a round of their fun mini golf course followed by lunch and then burn off some calories in a Laser Tag session. If time permits you can get in line for a ride or two. We'll head back to church about 3pm and should arrive about 4:30pm.

Cost is \$5 each for Mini Golf and Laser Tag. So bring \$10 cash plus whatever you might want to spend on lunch and rides. You could also bring a sack lunch if you wish.

Let Pastor Eric know by Sunday, February 1st if you and any friends plan to attend.

January Confirmation Retreat Mt. Cross



Grades 7-12 Extravaganza Events

(With Immanuel, Los Altos and other churches)

Mark these dates on your calendar and watch for more information to come --
Sun. March 15: 5:30-7:30pm
Sun. April 26: 5:30-7:30pm
Sun. May 10: *time not set*

Grades 9 and older Servant Event

Aug. 2-8: Mexico Mission

Those who participated in this event last summer had an inspiring and fun-filled experience. This is a great opportunity to live our ELCA motto of "God's Work Our Hands."

What a joy it is to join together and help a family or families who indeed are not as fortunate as we are materially but who often are so filled spiritually that our time with them becomes a blessing to us.

More information will be coming about cost and schedule details. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Pastor Eric or Council Youth Chair, Tom Stucke. The sooner we have an idea of how many are interested the better.

Hold the date for VBS

July 20-24

----- stitches and ties x x x x x

The potluck soup chockful of vegies exceeded its heart-warming reputation. Served with freshly baked bread followed by a delectable dessert, the only fruit of the Spirit possibly missing during the first quilting session of 2015 was self-control. The quilters did manage to finish 6 quilts making 37 available.

Using part of the generous support from last September's quilt auction, a shiny new lightweight, computerized Brother sewing machine was purchased and put into use on January 13. As in previous years the quilts to be made include those for our community's non-profits and Lutheran World Relief. LWR may be including a double layer fleece blanket with tied, fringed edges in its assortment of kits and quilts for global distribution

Quilters who have had the pleasure of distributing their handiwork have received warm thank-yous and

occasionally been photographed. The official donor is always 'Hope Lutheran' Without your continuing support of fabrics and funds, Hope Quilters would be much less productive. Thank you forever!

Of course the door to Nielsen Hall is open to you and you and you on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 9 to 3, January through October. Drop in, stay for awhile or all day or come for lunch with brown bag in hand. The coffee pot is on, dessert is available and the fruits of the Spirit may surround you.



HLCW Circles

Priscilla Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 9:30am
Location Varies
Contact: Joan Cleven 650-593-9896

Mary Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 9:30am
Location Varies
Contact: Martha Welch 650-637-1475

Sarah Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 10am
Location Varies
Contact: Elis Nielsen 650-341-8144

Lydia Circle is open to women of all ages and stages; Evening or weekend meetings; Our schedule is flexible.

Location: Hope Youth Room
Contact: Heidi Waters heidiwaters@yahoo.com

Conversations for Lent

Does being the church matter? If it does, why and how do we as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make a difference in the world?

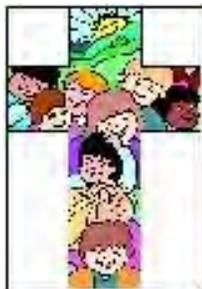
During the 5 Wednesdays of Lent we will gather for Soup Supper in Nielsen at 6pm and continue in the Sanctuary at 7pm with Worship including conversations inspired by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's emphases for our Church:

- We are church - Feb. 25

- We are Lutheran - Mar. 4
- We are church together - Mar. 11
- We are church for the sake of the world - Mar. 18
- We are church in ecumenical relationships - Mar. 25

These conversations on what the Church does and is will be bracketed before and after by what Jesus has done and who Jesus is:

- Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18 - Jesus gave us a new heart
- Maundy Thursday, Apr. 2 - Jesus showed us God
- Good Friday, Apr. 3 - Jesus is The Lamb of God



Preschool Corner

February 2015

The children returned from Christmas break bringing in their favorite Christmas present, they were descriptive and full of excitement sharing these prized gifts. We also came to school in

our PJ's and had such fun-hot chocolate and donuts were the highlight.

Tours have been ongoing for the fall and the numbers are hopeful. We have four new students that started in January and are pleased to welcome them to our Hope school family.

February will have us celebrating Valentine's Day, Chinese New Year and Presidents Day. Activities and art will be represented in these themes.

May you have a month of Love -
Happy Valentine's Day

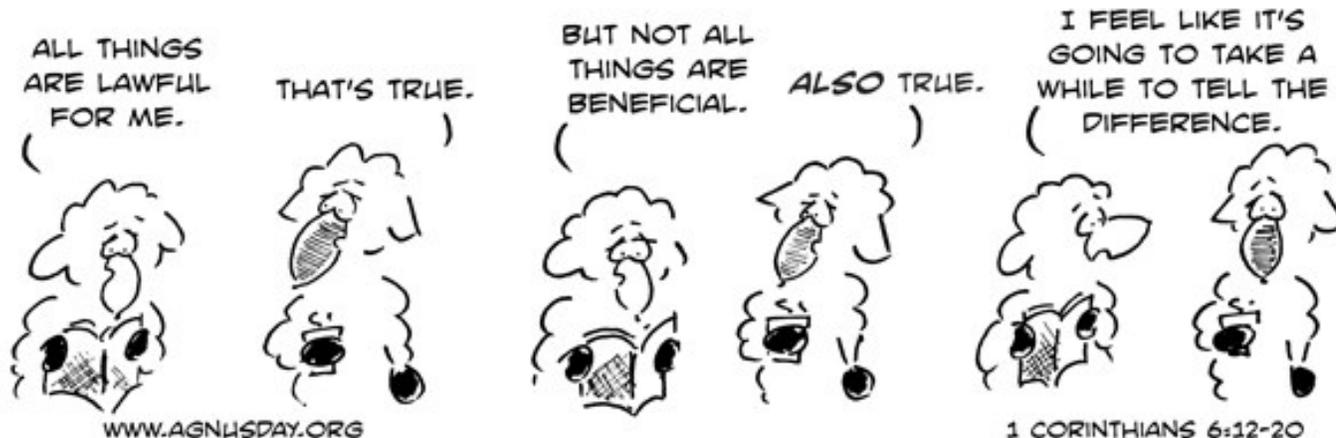
Blessings, Jeanne



Celebrating birthdays in February

Mark Dahl
Max Prasad
Tom Torgerson
Herta Von Rautenkrans
Judith Jeschke
Jeanne Helland
Scott McAuliffe
Helen Widdra
Karen Noecker
Jessica Stucke
Gerrie Rockafellar

Judy Neumann
David Phillips
Jordan Velasco
Elis Nielsen
Joanne Smith
Charlotte Hess
Lesley Johnson
Eric Hoover
Helina Jensen
Matthew Juul
Caroline Dallman



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20

February Fellowship Events

"Jesus LOVES Me"



**A Hope Valentines Dinner Celebration --
Sunday, Feb 15, 5:00pm, Nielsen Hall.**

You are most cordially invited to a LOVELY dinner hosted by the Evangelism Committee! Dinner reservations (that is, signups) will be taken after church, or you can directly email margo.kannenberq@gmail.com This dinner is for everyone! A dinner menu and activities for kids and adults!

We hope to see you there and would LOVE to see friends join, too!



Fat Tuesday

**Pancake Dinner and Fellowship
Tuesday, Feb 17, 2015
6pm-8pm
Nielsen Hall**

Fat Tuesday / Mardi Gras / Shrove Tuesday

They are all the same thing – a time after Epiphany and before the beginning of Lent.

Please join us in Nielsen Hall to celebrate our last night of feasting before the traditional fasting for Lent. We will enjoy pancakes and other goodies cooked by members of Hope's council.

Please look for sign-up sheets in Nielsen Hall.

(Please contact Sandi Kane for more information)



HEROES of the FAITH

Our popular Church History Class continues with more sessions on The "Heroes of the Faith." This is a great adult fellowship and faith gathering that meets in the Youth Room from 10am to Noon on the Second Thursday. No experience or preparation is necessary. Come join us and bring a friend.

- February 12: MARIAN ANDERSON
- March 12: RUDY
- April 9: OUR PEOPLE - The Salvation Army
- May 14: MEET THE ROBERTSONS (Duck Dynasty)



Dear Pastor Ackerman and Hope Lutheran Church:

On Behalf of Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, I want to thank the congregation for your donation to support our work in advocating on behalf of the

elderly and disabled adults in the long-term care facilities in our county. By maintaining a frequent, continual presence, we are able to have an impact on the quality of care and/or the quality of life of the residents of long-term facilities.

Thank you again for your gift. We wish you all a very joyous and healthy holiday season!

Sincerely,
Tippy Irwin
OMBUDSMAN SERVICES

P.S. So very grateful for your support.

Dear Pastor Ackerman,

Today, Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church helped ease the burdens of hunger, poverty, and homelessness for San Mateo County's most vulnerable residents. On behalf of the board and staff of Samaritan House, I'd like to thank you for Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church's gift. This year marks our 40th anniversary of supporting our neighbors with programs and services including temporary shelter, medical and dental clinics, food distribution, counseling and referrals. We simply couldn't do it without you. Because of generosity like yours, we are able to serve our 12,000 very low-income individuals each year. Our clients face many challenges each day and we are here to help to help them where we can, in whatever ways we can. Last year, we started our Financial Empowerment Program, and today our participating clients are learning the skills and tools they need to achieve greater financial stability. Your generosity eases the burden of poverty and makes opportunities like this possible. Thank you for partnering with us to provide support, care and hope to our neighbors in need.

Sincerely,
Bart A. Charlow
SAMARITAN HOUSE

P.S. Thanks to all our friends at Hope Evangelical Lutheran!

Dear Hope Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous donation to The Rwanda School Project. We are excited that our school recently earned the highest score in our district on a national test. Because of gifts such as yours, the school will continue to thrive and grow providing high level learning for Rwandan Children for years to come. As we work together on The Rwanda School Project, your support is deeply appreciated. We can change the world by offering quality education for a better tomorrow.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Ziegler
THE RWANDAN SCHOOL PROJECT

Dear Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your support of Home & Hope! We are blessed by your thoughtfulness during this holiday season. This gift will help us serve the most vulnerable members of this community as they struggle to get back on their feet. Your support is an integral part of the Home & Hope community. Thanks to you, we have provided 20 families just this year with a place to live, learn, and feel safe as they work to find a home. Home & Hope is more than just food and shelter. We are proud to say that our volunteers are intimately involved serving and connecting with guests. I cannot begin to thank you enough for your compassion and support of our families. On behalf of the families we serve, as well as the clergy, staff and board of directors of HOME & HOPE, please accept my sincere gratitude for your care and support.

Wishing you happy holidays,
Raj Rambob
HOME & HOPE

So many thanks to HELC. You all are incredible!
- Gratefully, Lisa Striebing Board President

~February 2015 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10am Worship 11am Cafe Hope	2 9:30am Aerobics 7:30pm AA*	3 12pm Staff Meeting 12:30pm Single Seniors	4 9:30am Aerobics 3:45pm Preschool Board Mtg 6:45pm Bells 7:45pm Choir	5 7pm Evangelism Committee	6 9:30am Aerobics 8pm AA*	7 7:30am Men's Breakfast
8 10am Worship 11am Cafe Hope	9 9:30am Aerobics 9:30am Women Leaders Bible Study 7:30pm AA*	10 9am Quilters 11:15am Preschool Chapel	11 9:30am Aerobics 3pm Preschool Chapel 6:45pm Bells 7:45pm Choir	12 10am Church History Class 7pm Council Mtg	13 9:30am Aerobics 8pm AA*	14
15 10am Worship 11am Café Hope 1pm Estonian Church*	16 9:30am Aerobics 7:30pm AA*	17 9:30am Mary Circle 9:30am Priscilla Circle 10am Sarah Circle 12pm Staff Meeting	18 9:30am Aerobics 6:45pm Bells 7:45pm Choir	19	20 9:30am Aerobics 8pm AA*	21 7:30am Men's Breakfast
22 10am Worship 11am Cafe Hope	23 9:30am Aerobics 7:30pm AA*	24 9am Quilters	25 9:30am Aerobics 6:45pm Bells 7:45pm Choir	26	27 9:30am Aerobics 8pm AA*	28