

Happy
Thanksgiving

The Voice of Hope

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

Pastor Daniel Severson



Dear Friends of Hope,
 I had the opportunity to meet with the Bible study leaders for the women's circle meetings this week so as to go over their lesson for October. The study is based on Psalm 13, a

short but meaningful psalm where David asks some questions that are very common in human experience. One is, "How long will you hide your face from me?" (Psalm 13:1) At the moment in which he wrote this, David felt as if God had abandoned him. His experience was that of God's absence. This could have been due to fear over what was happening in his kingdom. It could have been because of suffering or grief of some kind. Or it could have been due to some other overwhelming experience: something so intense that any sense of Divine presence had been entirely eclipsed.

There is no one who has not or will not go through an experience such as this. Emotional and spiritual trauma are a part of life no matter who you are. Even should we be so fortunate as to have achieved health, wealth and wisdom, there will be times when we question whether or not God has become an elusive presence. So, the question is not, "How can we avoid this?" Rather, the question is, "What can we do to regain our experience of Divine presence?"

Jesus assures us that he will be present for us in a number of ways. Primarily, this happens through the means of grace—which is why we call them "the means of grace." They are the "means" through which God becomes present for us and in us. These are both the word and the sacraments.

Through the word, and by the power of the Spirit, God not only reveals his presence, but he also reveals who he is for us. He is love. He is forgiveness. He is peace. He is strength. He is our guide. He is all these things and more. So perhaps

God is not so elusive as we may think at times. Bibles are not difficult to get hold of. Neither are services of worship, where one whole section of the service focuses on the word. We need this. For in our grief and struggles, forgetfulness sets in and we may feel alone. The word breaks through this darkness as a beam of light and enables us to "see" the presence of God in our lives once again.

The sacraments are likewise a means through which God opens our hearts so as to receive him into our lives. "This is my body given for you." "This is my blood shed for you." Luther counseled that it is important for us to emphasize the "for you" words in this promise. Jesus did not give himself for some abstraction such as "humanity in general." He gave himself "for you." So once again, it seems as if God is not so elusive after all. He has clearly identified where he may be found. Therefore, seek and you shall find.

However, God does not restrict himself to the means of grace. He can choose to reveal himself to you in other ways as well. Through prayer, through the compassion of others like you, or through what some folks refer to as "serendipity" (events that open our eyes to an unseen providence); these are common ways in which a person may experience a renewed sense of the presence of God.

Therefore, in my humble opinion, it does no good to allow worry, self-pity, or dejection to gain a strong foothold in our lives. We know where to go to find God. Moreover, there are times when God will surprise us. So long as we are open to receive, periods when we feel abandoned need not become overwhelming. Read the last verse in Psalm 13. It seems as if David's cry for help was heard. Likewise, so will yours.

Pastor Dan

More from Pastor Dan on page 2

A NEW ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS

While I am here as your Interim Pastor, I would like to offer a course on "The Bible As A Whole." What this involves is a survey of scripture and how to interpret various sections from a contemporary point of view. For example, we will examine the different types of literature represented in the bible (law, history, wisdom literature, letters) and how this guides us in terms of discerning the message being conveyed. I would also like to address some of the controversial questions raised by those who believe that other forms of knowledge, such as science and history, contradict the message of scripture. We will also look at how certain interpretive methods found in Lutheran Tradition (such as law and gospel) can be very helpful with respect to determining how scripture speaks personally to each of us.

In order to do this in a timely fashion, we will focus on some sections in detail. For example, in the book of Genesis, the two creation stories, and the narratives concerning the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph) are foundational and very instructive with respect to the story of the Bible as a whole. On the other hand, the Major Prophets, (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) need not be studied

in detail with the exception of a number of passages quoted in the Gospels of the New Testament. The class will meet on Sunday mornings starting at 11:30 am and will last for no more than one hour. The start date is Sunday, November 1st. We will not meet on December 20th, 27th and January 3rd. We should be able to finish by the end of March. One of the crowning achievements of the Reformation was the translation of the Bible into the language of the people. Previously, the Bible existed only in either the original languages of Hebrew and Greek, or in Latin translation. Luther, as we all know, wanted scripture to be available to everyone.

Obviously, no one can come every week so please feel free to come as you are able. The only book you need is your Bible and the only preparation required is an interest and questions, all of which are important and needful of discussion. There will be as much discussion time as is desired and needed for clarification. Also, various perspectives on a given text are welcome. Not everyone will interpret things in the same way. A variety of views enriches the discussion. If you have any questions about the class, please don't hesitate to ask. I think you will find this to be a very rewarding experience and I look forward to seeing you in class.

Interim Pastor Dan Severson

From the Council President



Please join me in welcoming Pastor Daniel Severson as our interim pastor.

Hope continues its transition. I will continue my discussion of a good transition based on five characteristics that are summarized by five letters T-R-U-T-H.

T - Transparency. R - Reality. U- Unity. Rather than making unilateral decisions, wise leaders use data that has been gathered to develop true authentic unity. Leaders must refuse to take a major step forward without making every effort to win the genuine support of the congregation. Our first step is in place. Pastor Daniel Severson, our Interim Pastor, began working with us in early September. One of his tasks is to guide us through the Call Process and keep us on track. So, now the work of developing our church profile begins. The Steering Committee will begin updating our existing profile which was completed in 2006. The committee will be gathering data and seeking direction from the

congregation. Developing a good and accurate profile will help us find a pastoral leader that fits our needs. The congregation must be united.

What is essential to unity? Prayer. Prayer provides an avenue for calling out to God for humility, discernment, wisdom and a clarity of direction that results in decisions that everyone can support. Unity may also require personal peacemaking. Unresolved misunderstandings, differences, and hidden agendas must be laid to rest. Only when all the members of the congregation are sincerely reconciled can we effectively work together to make major decisions and/or changes. We need to resist the temptation to make a quick decision and allow time for prayer and time to re-examine the data gathered. This takes time and effort, and basing crucial decisions on reality rather than fantasy is far more likely to end in success. Ask questions, share your ideas and pray.

Dear God, help the members of Hope to look for the Light of your Son, Jesus the Christ, that the Way may become clear, and your will may be done. Amen.

Jerilyn Struven, Council President

Pastor Paul's Notes



Centuries ago Sir Isaac Newton discovered one of the fundamental principles of the physical universe, which could be paraphrased as: "A body at rest tends to stay at rest unless acted upon by another force." As a physicist rather than a church leader, Newton could not possibly have realized that this physical law is also applicable to the body of Christ. Congregations "at rest" tend to stay at rest unless acted upon by an outside force.

At Hope Lutheran Church right now that "outside force" is called Interim Ministry! Such effort is to be an "active" review of the direction and vision of the congregation's ministry. There is underway an attempt to secure a group of people that could guide and stimulate such review and perhaps re-direction or re-vision. Pastor Dan is doing what he can to also bring that about and your response is very much needed. Please pray that this can happen.

Peter referred to the prophet Joel's words in explaining Pentecost, the Power of God's presence, and it happened through the visions and dreams of people. What could be a dream or a vision for Hope's mission in the coming days? We do need to imagine, brainstorm, share with each other and then develop the specifics of an idea, dream or vision.

Sometimes our "expectations" get in the way of the Spirit's power among us. We may expect something or another to happen and when it doesn't occur, we are disappointed. It is good, then to remember an old spiritual saying, "When God closes a door, He opens a window."

Be open to UNEXPECTED POSSIBILITIES!

"Single Seniors" will meet on Tuesday, November 3, 12:30 to 2 pm in Nielsen Hall. This time everyone is invited to come and hear our guest speaker, Roxanne Jen. She is an attorney with Rodnunsky & Associates with an office in San Mateo. Roxanne was a delightful speaker at our IGS (Intergenerational Services) Forum in May. Her specialty is all areas of Estate Planning, particularly understanding and adapting to people's changing needs. Even if we have a Living Trust or a Will, it is always a good idea to review such document to make it remain current. Roxanne is also providing our lunch, so it will be included! Please let us know if you plan to attend by calling the church office at 349-0100.

"Single Seniors" will have a lunch outing on Thursday, November 19. The place is yet to be determined-----stay tuned to the announcements on Sundays.

Hope provides the space for the Dementia Support Group for families and care-givers. It meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 6:30 to 7:45 pm. It is led by the staff of "Elder Consult Geriatric Medicine." It meets this month on November 4----in the Youth Room.

A Chinese proverb:

"Tell me and I'll forget;
Show me and I may remember;
Involve me and I'll understand.



HARK! The Advent/Christmas Season is fast approaching with Advent beginning on November 29th. In preparation for this joyous season, an Advent event is being planned for Café Hope on Sunday, December 6th, with a craft project geared for all ages. More about this happy event later.



from our Choirs Director



We've talked about where Church Choirs come from, why we have church choirs, music and the brain, and other "serious" topics. We may have mentioned why people sing or play in a choir. There's always our objective of singing or playing on behalf of the congregation, but we also have a lot of fun. Below are some light hearted reasons for being in the choir.

Sopranos: The rest of the choir exists just to make you look good; How many world-famous altos can you name?

Altos: You have lots of time to chat during soprano solos; If the choir rally sucks, it's unlikely the altos will be blamed.

Tenors: Tenors get high - without drugs; You can entertain your friends by impersonating Julia Child.

Basses: You don't have to tighten your shorts to reach your note; If you belch while you're singing, everyone just thinks it's part of the score.

Those are ridiculous of course, but we do have fun... often at our own expense... but we also enjoy what we do in our ministry. You can join us for an occasional good laugh as well as being a part of our music ministry.

Shirley Fitzgerald, Choirs Director
Mowglill@aol.com



Social Concerns



We have a lot of upcoming social concerns events as we head into the holidays. Take note and mark your calendars!

November 8: The Journey Home - Home and Hope's 3rd annual 5K walk/10K run fundraiser. This fun event will take place at 1 PM at Seal Point Park (1901 J. Hart Clinton Drive, at the east end of 3rd Avenue in San Mateo). See <http://journeyhome.homeandhope.net/> for more details, and go to

<http://journeyhome.homeandhope.net/HopeLutheran> to donate to our team! (Check donations may also be made payable to Home and Hope and placed in the offering plate or sent to the church office.)

November 8-14: Home and Hope hosting. Volunteers are welcome to participate in set up and take down,

bring dinner, serve as evening hosts, or stay overnight. Sign up sheets are in Nielsen Hall, and will be in the breezeway on Sundays after church.

Mid-November: watch for more information about our Christmas Family to Family programs this year. As in past years, we will participate in CALL Primrose's Fill-A-Box-Feed-A Family program to donate grocery boxes to families in the area, and we will adopt several families through the Samaritan House. New this year, we will also do a New Toy and Coat Drive with the Samaritan House! Starting in mid-November, there will be barrels in the narthex to collect new and unwrapped toys and coats for children, from infants to teenagers. There will be more details about all these activities, including a grocery list for CALL Primrose and a toy suggestion list for the toy drive, later in the month.



Celebrating birthdays in November

Ron Henderson

Bryan Kane

Martha Welch

Maralyn Struven

Neville Saner

Sig Hartnett

Nancy Appling

Marlene Pitt*

Emma Worthge

Sandra Polster

Carol Torgerson

Rev. Michael Harvey

Kevin Mesa

Robert Castronovo*

Matthew Stucke

Joella Mesa

Robert Myrdal

Ortwine Dockter

Noah Lin

Monika Hastings

Andrea Hayes

Anne Wilson

Maxwell Jung

Thomas Stucke

Scott Worthge

Jennifer Mendes*

Alice Hogben

* = Friend of Congregation

**Names in bold = our brothers/
sisters turning 90-90+ years!**



----- **Stiches and Ties x x x x x**

MANY THANKS to Helena and John Dummler who delivered 48 LWR quilts to Advent Lutheran on October 17th.

Continuing gratitude to Joan and Ruben Cleven for storing 45-yard bolts of batting and each year's accumulation of LWR quilts. Ruben also helped Joan and Doris to assemble and fill the 9 boxes of quilts.

Hope is providing quilts, which may be improvised into baby carriers, ground covers, sunshades and space partitions as well as clean and cozy bed covers. Every item is a reminder that persons far away care a lot.

In addition to quilts, fleece tied blankets, kits for personal care, school kits, fabric kits, baby care kits and boxes of bars of soap were brought to Morgan Hill, Redding and Antioch on October 17.

Learn more about Lutheran World Relief online at LWR.org/quiltsandkits. Also check out twitter.com/LuthWorldRelief; facebook.com/LuthWorldRelief; blog.lwr.org and youtube.com/LutheranWorldRelief. Get excited about assembling fleece blankets or a kit or any of the countless opportunities to help a neighbor abroad or here in America. You need not sew a stitch!!

Thankoffering Sunday is November 22, 2015

*In gratitude for all God has given us, we will give
for relief of hunger in our community*

Please prayerfully consider your 2015 annual gift. This year our Thankoffering will be distributed by Lutheran Church Women (HLCW) to these three organizations for relief of hunger in our community:

- CALL Primrose: The Christian Action Life Line
- Home and Hope: Interfaith Community Support for Homeless Families
- Second Harvest Food Bank

Envelopes will be available in church on Sunday, November 15th. Please make checks payable to "HLCW Thankoffering". You may bring your Thankoffering to worship on Sunday, November 22, 2015, or mail it to church office to the attention of HLCW Thankoffering.

Thank you for helping to provide for those in need in our community!



HLCW Circles

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 heidewaters@yahoo.com

Mary Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 10 am

Location Varies

Contact: Martha Welch 650-637-1475

Priscilla Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 9:30 am

Location Varies

Contact: Joan Cleven 650-593-9896

Sarah Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 10 am

Location Varies

Contact: Elis Nielsen 650-341-8144

Save the date!

The Women's Christmas Potluck will be on Tuesday, December 8th at 6 pm. Look for more information in our Sunday bulletins.

Stewardship

Stewardship is about money, but it is not ONLY about money

The depth and breadth of stewardship theology – by the Rev. Michael Meier

Continued from October voice...

Again, the model of Jesus St. Paul was engaged in raising money to help the church in Jerusalem. In 2 Corinthians 8, he writes about the generosity of the people in Macedonia and he invites the Corinthians to do even better. He appeals to their pride and their tradition of excelling in every endeavor. He invites them to “excel also in this generous undertaking” (verse 7). He then goes on to say that he is not commanding them to be generous, but rather, he is appealing to them to model their lives on the example of Jesus.

In verse 9 he says, “For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” He concludes this part of his appeal in verse 24 when he says, “Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.”

St. Paul’s basic argument is that the Corinthians ought to generously contribute their money because in so doing they will follow the example of Jesus who generously gave his life. Sometimes we hear people refer to “sacrificial” giving. This is an example. Jesus sacrificed his life for the salvation of all humankind. St. Paul says that the Corinthians can at least sacrifice their money to follow the example of Jesus.

As we search for practices which help people live lives of meaning and purpose, let us not overlook this appeal to the sacrificial act of Jesus. Granted, this language is not currently in favor in the church, but it is part of our heritage, part of the scripture of our faith. What would be wrong with living someone to give

generously in response to the model and example of Jesus?

Trusting in the promises of God’s blessings

Many of us tend to be uncomfortable promising that God will bless their faithfulness in ministry, their faithfulness in giving and generosity. Look again at the words from St. Paul from the section dealing with the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. In 2 Corinthians 9, he continues his appeal to the Corinthians. He asks them to give generously because, he says, God promises to provide them “with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work” (verses 8ff).

Perhaps we have been so “turned off” by preachers of a “prosperity gospel” that we can’t imagine telling people that God indeed promise to bless their generosity with God’s continued abundance. But St. Paul claims that this is indeed what God is up to. Are we only able to affirm God’s mighty acts as long as they are internal, invisible and intangible?

Certainly, the context makes it clear that the gifts of abundance will continue to be given so that they can continue to be given away, but the promise is clear that the God of abundance intends to provide enough of everything so that you may share abundantly in every good work.

Notice the emphasis on sharing. The whole context is one of Christian community, the organism we call the Body of Christ, the congregation of believers. Should it surprise us that the God of generosity has a plan which renews the generous giving of those who worship God and serve God’s people?

A life of meaning and purpose is a life which is a conduit of abundance of God.



ELCA.org
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Living in God's amazing grace

Stewardship
Sunday,
November 1st





Honoring our Veterans

Veterans in the Church Triumphant

*Fritz Brauen
Bill Drieslien
Lois Drieslein
Don Everson
Rolf Hermansen
Eric Johnson
John Keil
Wallace Kigore
Jim Martin (Former Member)
Herb Nieman
Cal Pitt
Fred Rothermund
Don Welch
Ed Willers*

Veterans in the Church Militant

*Jerry Brooks
Roger Childs
Ruben Clevon
Bill Fischer
Bill Fong*

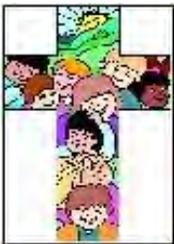
*Phil Gaal
Eric Grimsby
Tim Hanlon
Ron Henderson
Ann Hermansen
Carl Kistner
Bob Lillo
Lynn Loveall
Ray Looze (Associate member)
Niels Nielsen
Roger Pickard
Gill Schroder
Clark Speetzen
Warren Struven
George Studle*

Family Members currently in the Service

*Marc Arrington
Christopher Awes
Brian Lionberger
Allison Ratto
Elise Robinson
Sean Sheridan*

Veterans Day November 11, 2015

Preschool Corner



Our Lemos Farm Day was a big hit. It is amazing watching the children navigate from one adventure to the other. Their expressions tell all. It is also a wonderful time to connect with the parents as they all brought their little ones. Communication is so important and we had the opportunity to pass on information and answer concerns and questions.

We participated once again in the Great California Shakeout and held safety drills required by

the State. It is the only time our little ones get to go under tables and they took advantage of it.

As we begin November we keep in mind what we are truly thankful for and I look around our classroom and there is an abundance of love and kindness shared. Thankful beyond belief for these gifts. May you all have these gifts and Happy Thanksgiving.

Blessings, Jeanne



October 7, 2015

To my dear friends of Hope Lutheran Church,
Thank you to all who wished me a Happy Birthday, for the lovely cards and flowers. It really meant a lot and I feel very blessed to

be part of Hope. Also, a HUGE thank you to Lois Nieman, Claire Owens and Marlys Jungroth for covering the phones & office so that I could take some time off.

God bless you all,
Annie Martinez

Don't forget to fall back!



Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 am on Sunday, November 1st. Be sure and turn your clocks back.



Spark Time Sunday School in November

Children from Kindergarten thru Grade 6

dismissed to Sunday School during Sending Hymn and

join parents in Café Hope after approximately 30 minutes of study and activity.

Date	Theme	Scripture
November 1	A Message from God	Deuteronomy 6:1-9
November 8	The Window's Offering	Mark 12:38-44
November 15	Be Ready	Mark 13:1-8
November 22	Christ the King	John 18:33-37
November 29	A Good Ruler	Jeremiah 33:14-17

Ministry Assistants

Date	Assisting Ministers	Communion Assistants	Readers	Spark Leaders
11/1	Don Hermansen	Linda Harvey Don Hermansen	George Amarandos	Jessica Stucke Emma Worthge
11/8	Jerilyn Struven	Phil & Marilyn Gaal	Pat Duvall	Hank Harper Ken Struven
11/15	Skip Dahl	Bill & Margo Kannenberg	David Phillips	Sandi Kane Heather Hoover
11/22	Jack Coyne	Bob & Ruth Lillo	Bill Hroziencik	Judy Jeschke Kailen Sallander
11/29	Bill Kannenberg	David & Mary Phillips	Carole Setzer	Deb Stucke Rachael Stucke