

# 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



**D**ear Friends,

On March 27th, we gather to celebrate the single most important event in the church year. I use the word "single" intentionally. In science, an inexplicable event is called a "singularity" because it is the one thing that cannot be explained by any known theory or hypothesis. The "big bang" which astronomers propose as the beginning of the universe is a "singularity". It was one event that we are quite sure happened but don't know how or why.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is also a "singularity". It happened only once. (Lazarus was not a resurrection to eternal life but rather an event whereby his mortal body was healed and given more time) Moreover, it set in motion a cascade of events that turned a small sect of a few dozen people into a worldwide movement that shaped and continues to shape world history. This event, namely, Easter, created the Christian faith.

How did it do that? And why did the faith that arose out of the ashes of Good Friday become the most influential movement in world history? My humble opinion? Because Easter is the story of a victory that can and does give hope, new life, renewal, and joy in the midst of any and all circumstances, especially those that cause despair, victimization, depression, and where negative influences take the very life out of our hearts.

The reason the story of Jesus speaks powerfully to people the world over: people of every class, culture,

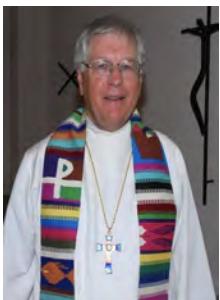
race, and national origin is that his is the story that sheds a ray of light in the midst of every form of darkness the human condition is familiar with. Because he rose victorious after having become a victim of injustice, violence, oppression, and evil intent, his life conveys hope to people no matter what they may be facing, no matter how they may have been victimized, and no matter how they may have become aware of the fact that there is nothing in this world that can save us from the hopelessness of death—except him. He is the singularity in all history where evil and death have been effectively overcome. In other words, if there is life and hope in him, then I want him in my life, for it is as certain as the fact that night gives way to the dawn of a new day that likewise, Jesus, having conquered the evil and death that tried to do him in, gives hope and new life to anyone who puts their faith in him.

It was, I believe, for this reason that the Christian faith spread so rapidly in the early centuries of the common era, despite outbreaks of persecution. My friend Wesley Smith, a medical ethicist, wrote a popular book some time ago entitled, "The Culture of Death". This would be a culture that despairs, gives up, and caves in to death in the face of intractable problems in life. Jesus' resurrection offers another option. Choose life. He makes it possible and therefore faith in him, as he said in the gospel of John, is the victory.

A blessed and life giving Easter to all.

Pastor Dan

## Pastor Paul's Notes



I attended the "Housing Crisis Summit" recently at the Congregational Church in San Mateo. Nearly 100 persons were there including the County's elected leaders (Don Horsley, Peggy Jensen, Assemblyman Kevin Mullin, Sen. Jerry Hill) and its faith community leaders. The goal was to "deepen relationships and to clarify potential action steps toward solving our housing crisis." A quick summary comes from a series of numbers:

55,000 – The number of new jobs in the County from 2010 to 2014

2,100 – The number of new housing units built in the same period

20,000,000 – Total square footage of commercial development in this period

\$2,800 -- The average asking rent for a 2 bedroom apartment (double of 10 years ago)

\$53 – The hourly wage required using 30% of gross income for that apartment

The vast majority of low income families spend more than 50% of income on rent.

### REALITIES:

- 1) Families have little money left for food, health care, other necessities.
- 2) The necessity of 2 full time jobs leaves little time for children and social life.
- 3) Workers spend hours commuting, clogging free ways and polluting the air.
- 4) There is movement into garages and other unsafe units.

### QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is happening to families that are forced to move away?
- 2) Is our society creating long-term health concerns and poor outcomes for families who live with high stress and less available income for anything other than housing?

### WHAT IS BEING DONE?

- The County has \$40 million dollars dedicated to housing; 13.5 million for non-profit development. The balanced can be loaned over time at 3%.
- Tenants' rights communication is ongoing.
- Homelessness prevention happens through special funding, 1st/last mo.'s rent

- Jobs/Housing Task Force(54members) meets monthly
- Assemblyman Mullin indicates the housing issue is a priority in the legislature

### CHALLENGES:

- 1) To elevate this issue as a moral/spiritual issue, not just economical/political.
- 2) To educate ourselves and ask: "What kind of community do we want?"

### NEXT STEPS:

We await results from a Town Hall meeting at St. Bart's on February 22.

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"SINGLE SENIORS" will meet on Tuesday, March 1, from 12:30 to 2 pm. For this session we will view a video, 'Being Mortal', based on the best -selling book of the same name by medical doctor, Atul Gawande. It "shines an unprecedented spotlight on how patients, families and doctors all experience the end stages of life. The film explores the art and science of palliative care with the key question, "What are your priorities if your time is limited?" Single Seniors invites the congregation to attend. Our session will take place in the Youth Room for best viewing. We will begin promptly at 12:30 and allow for conversations following. EVERYONE IS INVITED!!

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"SINGLE SENIORS" will have a lunch-outing on Thursday, March 17. Stay tuned for details.

## Preschool Corner



**B**usy, busy, busy!! Fun was had in February with so many exciting days and celebrations. March now begins and we await the tricky Leprechauns wrecking havoc at the school and surprising the children at every turn.

We are also gearing up for our Easter performances and looking forward to Spring Break. We had a very successful See's candy fundraiser at Christmas and purchased a large rug for our main classroom. We sold candy for Easter and will be purchasing three additional rugs to make the classroom clean and fresh with funds we hope to raise.

Happy Easter and Blessings,  
Jeanne



## from our Choirs Director



# H

YMNS

A hymn is a type of song, usually religious, specifically written for the purpose of adoration or prayer. The singing of hymns is called hymnody. Christian hymnody was originally modeled on the Psalms and other passages in the Scriptures. Since the earliest times, Christians have sung psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, both in private devotions and in corporate worship. Since there is a lack of musical notation in early writings, the actual musical forms in the early church can only be surmised. During the Middle Ages Gregorian chant of plainsong was developed. This was sung in unison. The Western church introduced four-part vocal harmony. This style came to be led by organ and choir. Today, many congregations sing in unison.

During the Protestant Reformation, two conflicting attitudes developed. One considered anything that was not directly authorized by the Bible was to be rejected. The other attitude produced a flurry of congregational hymns which were not direct paraphrases of Scripture. Martin Luther was the author of many hymns. The first Protestant hymnal was published in Bohemia in 1532. Isaac Watts is credited as having written the first English hymn which was not a direct paraphrase of Scripture. In today's congregations, a variety of styles may be used.....gospel and contemporary as well as traditional tunes.

### Hope's Hymns

Counting the hymns in the ELW and WOW, we have access to 1094 hymns, and of course we have other resources that we also use. How many of those do we actually use? Not very many. In the last few years, we have added to our numbers that we use, and have learned at least 14 new hymns. Once learned, we cycle them into services along with familiar hymns.

### Hymn Selection

Hymns at Hope are always selected for their appropriateness for the day/season. The other criteria are:

- Familiarity to the congregation
- Vocal range for the comfort of the congregation
- "Good old songs"
- Favorites of the congregation

There are other factors that come along from time to time, so if you're patient, you will eventually sing hymns that are your favorites. **You can also request ones that you'd like to have included. Just ask one of the Pastors or Shirley.**

Resource: [Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org)

Shirley Fitzgerald  
Choirs Director

IT'S FUNNY THAT  
SO MUCH ATTENTION  
IS GIVEN TO THE  
GRAVE LINENS.



THEY'RE EVIDENCE  
OF THE RESURRECTION.  
IT'S THE RIGHT TOMB  
AND THE BODY HASN'T  
BEEN STOLEN.



WOW! —  
THE SON OF GOD  
MAKES HIS BED  
EVEN IF HE'S NOT  
GOING TO SLEEP  
IN IT AGAIN!



## Call Committee Steering Group Status

The Committee thanks the congregation for completing the recent survey. About thirty completed questionnaires have been submitted and analyzed thus far and more may trickle in. We will combine this information with the results of our two forum meetings held on February 21st, after church service and on February 23rd at 7PM. Your input is an essential building block in our work.

Meanwhile we are completing portions of the comprehensive Congregational Profile that we will be providing to the Synod. The Profile will describe our community characteristics: economics, demographics, living costs, population, etc. Prospective pastors will also see Hope's description of its recent history, its desires for the future and the attributes it is seeking in a new pastor to lead us to realize our goals. We ask your continued support and prayers. If you have any questions or concerns please contact us.

George Armandos  
 Jerry Brooks  
 Helena Dummler  
 Karen Reed  
 Pastor Dan Severson  
 Deb Stucke

## A note from the Financial Secretary...

It was decided during the January Council meeting that we only need to send financial statements out bi-annually rather than quarterly as has been the current practice, thus saving postage for two mailings. The statements will now be sent in July and at year-end. However, if anyone would like an interim statement at any time, please contact me and I will be happy to provide one.

## Stewardship

### Faith Practices in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

#### Hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper

**“For as often as we eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26).**

“God gives the word and the sacraments to the church and by the power of the Spirit thereby creates and sustains the church among us.” (“The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament,” Principle 2, page 7)

We listen deeply as we hear, read and study God’s word. As God’s word speaks to us, it comes both as command and promise. We listen to see how the message challenges us and encourages us in our lives. We listen for God’s call and God’s guidance. And we listen to the words of the Lord’s Supper to remind us that the body of Christ was given for us and the blood of Christ was shed for us.

The Lord’s Supper stands at the center of our lives as Christians. In that meal, we receive Jesus’ presence into our very bodies. We receive God’s gifts of forgiveness of sin, new life and salvation. At the same time, as a community God makes us into the body of Christ, one with all in every time and place who share this holy meal. We become the body of Christ for the sake of the world. That is, we participate in God’s mission. Having been showed with God’s gifts, God sends us forth to take that love and compassion out into the world to the lonely, the oppressed, the poor, the hungry, the imprisoned, the angry, and those suffering in mind, body and spirit.

There are many ways we hear God’s word:

- The public reading of Scripture
- Preaching
- Bible study, devotional reading and retreats
- Sacraments
- Experiencing the Arts
- Forgiveness of sin
- All aspects of a congregation’s educational ministry
- Continue the fellowship of the Lord’s Supper through meal time prayer at the dinner table

## Opportunity to Help Beautify the Sanctuary

We are looking for someone to help change the large banners behind the altar. This task requires some physical strength as well as some flexibility (the floor of Nielsen Hall is the ironing board). The banner is usually changed on Saturday, but can be changed at anytime during the week. As the liturgical seasons change, so does the color of the banner.

The banner needs to be changed for the following dates:

**February 7** - White - Transfiguration

**February 10** - Purple - Ash Wednesday

**March 20** - Red - Palm Sunday

**March 24** - Maundy Thursday - the banner is removed at the end of the service

**April 3** - White - Easter  
(also putting up the large butterfly)

If you can help, please contact Jerilyn Struven



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS on March 13, 2016.**

## HLCW Circles

### Mary Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 10:00 am

Location Varies

Contact: Martha Welch

### Priscilla Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 9:30 am

Location Varies

Contact: Joan Cleven

### Sarah Circle

3rd Tuesday of the month 10 am

Location Varies

Contact: Lois Nieman

**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

## Easter Lilies



Donate Lilies for \$10 each to beautify our sanctuary during the Easter season. Forms are in the weekly bulletins as well as in the Narthex.



## Celebrating birthdays in March

Richard Green  
Brandon Blundell  
Soren Voss  
Patricia Lionberger  
Rachael Stucke  
Pauline Timm  
Jerilyn Struven  
Marsha Ackerman  
Christopher Bravo  
Brenda Shields\*

Pat Duvall  
Devra Dallman  
Eric Grimsby  
Sandra Barocio  
Doris Childs  
Quinta Ekong  
Nancy Kehl  
Liisa Schroeder  
Marcia Coyne  
Jason Jung

Erik Noecker  
Bengt Sanberg  
Carolyn Worthge  
Don Hermansen  
Ciera Dahl  
Susan Hoffheins  
Donald Neumann  
Lisa Sallander  
Jeffrey Struven



\* = Friend of Congregation

# Save the Date

## SCHEDULE OF SOUP SUPPERS AND LENTEN SERVICES

The following Wednesdays in the season of Lent will consist of soup suppers at 6:00pm and a short service at 7:00pm. This year, we are going to share our special Lenten suppers and services with the people of St. Andrews Lutheran Church located at 1501 South El Camino Real, San Mateo.

This month's schedule is as follows:

**Wednesday, March 2nd at St. Andrews.**

**Wednesday, March 9th at Hope.**

**Wednesday, March 16th at St. Andrews.**



At each service, we will use the Holden Evening Liturgy and a short homily will be included.

## OUR HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

**Palm Sunday, March 20 at 10 AM**

**Maundy Thursday, March 24, at 7 PM,**

We'll have a full communion service and will also be celebrating First Communion For the young people who will have instruction over the two weeks prior to Holy week.

**Good Friday, March 25, at 7 PM,** we will Have a service of darkness based on the seven last words of Christ on the cross.

**Easter Sunday, March 27, 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM**





January 28, 2016

Dear Pastor 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.

Sincerely,  
Tippy Irwin  
Executive Director  
Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County INC

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February 1, 2016

Dear Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church,

Your gift received on 1/24/15 to CORA (Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse) will provide life-saving crisis intervention and prevention services to over 11,000 individuals and their children living with domestic violence this year.

The quote below reflects the impact of your contribution and the hope the brave women—and men—caught in an abusive relationship gain from your support:

"we need more DV shelters like Lisa's House. This is the best place ever! Thank you so much. CORA staff have hearts like angles. My daughter and I will remember you forever."

On behalf of our volunteer board of Directors, our staff, and individuals who will create peace for themselves and their children as a result of your compassion and generosity, THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Sincerely,  
Melissa Lukin  
Executive Director  
CORA

February 1, 2016

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  
Financial Secretary  
The Rwanda School Project

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February 4, 2016

Dear Hope Family,

I'm finally able to show our Hope family what your generous parting gift has done for us. Our first experience with a Home Owners Association slowed down the project requiring a redesign of the roof for our 10'x12' Tuff Shed to bring the ridge line down to an acceptable height. But, as always, the Holy Spirit was at work through the process because the delay brought us into the "year end special" providing three very nice, free upgrades - ridge vent, skylight and premium floor. Basket making materials, gardening equipment and landscaping supplies are now neatly and accessibly stored away. We are looking forward to getting in our first Texas garden this Spring.



God Bless,  
Pastor Eric and Marsha Ackerman



## Spark Time Sunday School in March

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
March 6	The Prodigal Son	Luke 15:1-3, 11-32
March 13	Mary Anoints Jesus	John 12:1-8
March 20	Holy Week	Luke 19:28-40; 22:14-23:56
March 27	<b>Easter</b> <i>No Sparks or Sunday School</i>	

## Ministry Assistants

Date	Assisting Ministers	Communion Assistants	Readers	Spark Leaders
3/6	Margo Kannenberg	Jerry Brooks Skip Dahl	Don Neumann	Jessica Stucke Emma Worthge
3/13	Skip Dahl	Carole Setzer Kirsten Severson	Carole Setzer	Hank Harper George Studle
3/20	Sandi Kane	David & Mary Phillips	Martha Welch	Sandi Kane Heather Hoover
3/27 Easter 8:30AM	Jack Coyne	Phil & Marilyn Gaal	Skip Dahl	<b>Easter</b> <i>No Sparks or Sunday School</i>
10:30AM	Jerilyn Struven	Bob & Ruth Lillo	Skip Dahl	