

# 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 in Christ, The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 1st. I invite everyone to worship with us that evening, and every Wednesday evening throughout the season. Once again, beginning on March 8th, soup suppers will be offered from 6:00 to 7:00 pm with a brief worship service to follow. This is but a small token that indicates our desire to strengthen our faith in the Christ who saves us from sin and death. It is also a great opportunity to share in Christian fellowship and worship with our brothers and sisters in Christ from St. Andrew's.

In Matthew chapter 7, Jesus tells us that all who seek the Lord will find—that the door which leads to the presence of Christ and his saving grace will be opened for us. Fellowship with God in Christ is not something we can attain to through our own efforts. Only God can create fellowship with himself, whereby we receive the grace of forgiveness and new life. Communion with God comes through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is our access to God. Otherwise, God remains hidden and entirely unavailable. Jesus wants us to know that God will respond favorably to those seekers who are willing to ask and pray for the presence of Christ with an open heart. This is what the call to repentance during the Lenten season means “Return to the Lord your God” said the prophets.

Why would we do this? Why would we come before God, willing to let go of anything our hearts cling to in order to cling to Christ instead? The reason is simple. The desire for God is built into us. Our hearts will either seek the living God in Christ, or they will create idols. The desire to commune with God is evident in the so called “pursuit of happiness.” Because our souls are disconnected from God—their source and creator—they lack the very thing that gives peace, joy, hope, and everlasting life. Therefore, we are vulnerable to seeking these things in other ways. The story of the golden calf in Exodus 32 is a good biblical example of this. When the people lost the sense of God's presence with them through Moses, they created an idol for comfort, security, and hope. Today, we don't build golden calves. But we do

like the gold that calf was made of, and the things gold will buy us.

Pleasure seeking is another common substitute that masks our desire for the love of God in Christ. But this results in going from one thing to the next. Nothing gives unending pleasure. Like a child who receives a toy with joy one day and throws it into a box the next, we become bored and so need to find something else. This is a complete waste of one's life because at the end of the day, the only thing left is emptiness and dissatisfaction. It would not be difficult to list a multiplicity of other things the world offers as sources of ultimate meaning: as the objects or goals that lead to happiness and fulfillment.

“Our hearts are restless O Lord, until they rest in you,” said Saint Augustine in his spiritual autobiography, “The Confessions”. Why is fellowship with God the only source of unending joy, love, and new life? Because of who God is. God does not have goodness. God is goodness. God does not have love. God is love. God does not have life. God's being overflows with everlasting life. Therefore, only God, who makes himself available to us in Jesus Christ, the door to God, can give what our hearts seek.

The season of Lent is all about the call to return to the Lord. Jesus told his disciples to “enter through the narrow gate.” (Matthew 7:13) “...for the gate is wide, and the road is easy that leads to destruction...” The world offers a wide array of things with the offer of immediate joy and satisfaction. It's hard to fast when there is a buffet of delicious food in front of you. Because fellowship with Christ comes through faith, and because faith is like a “mustard seed” that starts out small but grows over time as it's nourished through spiritual discipline, it is necessary to return to God on a daily basis. Fellowship with God is not quick and easy like the consumption of those things offered in the market place. Therefore, in times of suffering and want, it can be tempting to turn to the buffet in front of us. This is a dead end for the simple reason that temporal goods are just that—temporal. They come to an end. They are blessings given by God for our temporary needs. They are not to become objects to which our hearts cling for dear life, as if our ultimate happiness depended on them. Only God can provide us with eternal blessings.

Pastor Dan

## Pastor Paul's Notes



“SINGLE SENIORS” will meet on Tuesday, March 7, in Nielsen Hall, 12:30 to 2pm. Bring a bag lunch and the program will be a guest speaker from the California Department of Aging and she will speak about “An Overview of Medicare and Coordination of Retiree Benefits”. Our speaker is Marla Seidman. She is a state-certified counselor and community educator. Any questions about Medicare will be most welcome. Everyone is invited.

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On Thursday, March 16 “SINGLE SENIORS” plan to have a lunch-outing to Nick’s Restaurant in Pacifica, at Rockaway Beach. We will car pool from church at 12:30. IT IS IMPORTANT to know who plans to go so we can coordinate transportation. PLEASE SIGN-UP in Nielsen Hall no later than Sunday, March 12.

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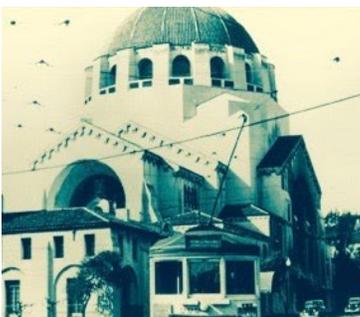
A group of sixteen (16) of us from Hope, St. Andrew’s and Holy Trinity went by bus on February 7 for a tour of Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco. We had a tour guide who took us through the

facilities, including the main, beautiful sanctuary. It is museum-like and one can learn about the early history of the city (depicting life in the mid to late 19th and early 20th centuries) as the Temple was developed. It is the third largest Jewish synagogue in California. It is “Reform” rather than “Orthodox” in its tenets, which means practically that it is more ‘relaxed’ in theology and customs. It is very community-oriented, and provides ample opportunities for people to be involved. There are two huge stained glass windows in the main sanctuary which seats 2000. One depicts “Wind” and the other “Fire.” This art work took 4 years to create, striking with great color.

Prior to our leaving we enjoyed a great “catered” lunch in Nielsen Hall, prepared by Pat Duvall. A great day!

Please enjoy these beautiful pictures taken on our trip...

 Photo credit to Maggie K Timeus



# Tour Temple Emanu El SF - Hope Single Seniors



## From our Council President



**H**ello to the Hope family,  
As I am sitting at my computer writing this message, I am waiting for the next storm to roll in and drop more rain on our already soaked state. It sure is a lot different than the past 5 years worrying about a drought, reducing water consumption, plants and lawns dying, etc. While it is great to have the drought over I still am hoping and praying that we do not receive more than we can handle and we don't see any more flooding, mud slides and Dam's breaking causing mass evacuations. But as the Lord has taken care of solving our drought issues I am sure our Lord will also take care us and not give us more challenges than we can handle.

Talking about droughts, I want to thank everyone for attending our semi-annual meeting. We definitely didn't have a drought of members and we were able to approve a Budget for 2017, and elect a nominating committee, so the meeting went smoothly and everyone was able to go over to Nielsen Hall to have some lunch and time together. Again, thank you to everyone for participating in this important activity of working together to manage our Hope business.

Now together we can look forward to the beginning of spring, Lent and Easter, and all of the celebrations

and times to worship together. While we are looking forward to this year, your Council is continuing to work on activities and opportunities for us to come together as a family as well as to reach out to our community and to share God's love with others. I encourage everyone to continue to be involved in our life at Hope and add your energy, ideas, hopes and desires to what we do at Hope. New ideas are always welcomed, just reach out to any Council member and let us know what you would like to see at Hope.

Finally, I know everyone is anxious to know when and who we will get as a called Pastor, and your Call Committee is working hard within the prescribed Synod process to find the right person for Hope. Right now the feeling is that it will take awhile longer to complete that process so the Council has worked with Pastor Dan on again extending his agreement to be our interim Pastor and we will have that completed in February. Please allow the Call Committee to continue their very confidential work and do not ask them for an update, they will tell all of us when they can who they recommend for a call. Until then continue to pray for the Committee and Hope that God will lead us to the right person and will also lead that person to us.

Council President  
Jack Coyne

## Evangelism

**E**aster Postcards: We will plan to distribute Easter Postcards to the immediate neighborhood on **Saturday, March 25 at 10:30am**. Please join us with your walking shoes!! We will also distribute cards on Sunday, March 26 (and subsequent Sundays) if you wish to take postcards for your friends or your own neighborhood,

**Recognition Sunday:** On April 2, the **Preschool** will be recognized at our service, and entertain us with a song. There will be crafts for children and families during Cafe Hope. Please plan to attend.

**Dawn Academy:** We met the leaders of Dawn Academy in the fall, and Pastor Dan was invited to

give a chapel talk to the entire school on Wednesday, February 8. It was very well received! We have invited the school to our Recognition Sunday, April 2 and we are waiting to hear if they can come and participate.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Valentine's Dinner. It was a very spirited event with attendance from the confirmation class and visiting churches. **We had over 70 people attending!** It was all about sharing God's love with each other, with awesome food, amazing decorations, and fun games, too.

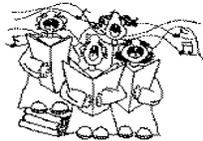
## from our Choirs Director



### Reformation Hymns for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

**W**e have used two "Reformation" hymns so far this year, one new one "The Only Son from Heaven" ELW # 309 and a familiar one "Lord, Now Let Your Servant" #313. In March we will be skipping forward to a 20th Century hymn by contemporary composer Marty Haugen, #641 "All Are Welcome", which is new to Hope's congregation. This hymn continues the Reformation philosophy that none are beyond the reach of forgiveness and acceptance; all are welcome.

Shirley Fitzgerald



## Preschool Corner



**O**ur prayers for rain have certainly come true. We now hope to have some sunshine days for plenty of outdoor time we have been missing.

Many celebrations continued in February. Valentine's Day, Groundhog Day, President's Day and Dental month all came and went with fun activities and learning moments. March is our silly month with crazy hair day, shoe/sock mix up day, sports day and the ever famous visit from those tricky leprechauns. So much fun to share with our little ones.

We are also preparing for our Easter sing and a special song for Recognition Sunday service. Thank you for honoring the children and families of the preschool with this blessing.

Happy Spring-Blessings, Jeanne



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME  
BEGINS on March 12,  
2017.**



## Celebrating birthdays in March

Richard Green  
Brandon Blundell  
Soren Voss  
Annika Dummler  
Patricia Lionberger  
Rachael Stucke  
Pauline Timm  
Jerilyn Struven  
Marsha Ackerman\*

Christopher Bravo  
Brenda Shields  
Pat Duvall  
Eric Grimsby  
Doris Childs  
Quinta Ekong  
Nancy Kehl  
Liisa Schroeder  
Marcia Coyne

Jason Jung  
Bengt Sandberg  
Carolyn Worthge  
Don Hermansen  
Ciera Dahl  
Susan Hoffheins  
Don Neumann  
Lisa Sallander  
Jeffery Struven

\* = Friend of Congregation



## Social Concerns

**Next hosting week is March 5-11, 2017.**



**Y**ou can help in a variety of ways. Are you a master chef? You can bring dinner for the guests. Do you enjoy meeting new people and sharing in conversation? Or maybe you have a gift for reaching out to children. Sign up to spend the evening with the families. Perhaps you would like the excitement and adventure of a sleep-over at church! You would be great at serving as an overnight host. Are you more of a behind-the-scenes person? You can help to set up or clean up the sleeping areas, or do laundry after the families' stay.

New volunteers are always welcome, and we love seeing seasoned helpers. Look for sign-up sheets on the Social Concerns bulletin board in Nielsen Hall. Talk to Hank Harper, Jerry and Kris Brooks or Helena Dummler if you have questions.

## Call Committee News:

**T**he Call Committee received the profiles of 5 pastors from the synod on December 23 and rigorously reviewed them during the Christmas Season. Skype interviews of the candidates began on December 29; the final meeting evaluating those selected for second interviews was held on February 7. While all were wonderful people and well suited to their current calls, for different reasons we did not think that any would meet our expectations for Hope. Accordingly, the Call Committee has asked the Synod to assemble an additional set of candidates for us. We've asked them to expedite this selection process.

Please continue to pray for Pr. Katy Grindberg at the Synod's office in her effort to select candidates for us to interview and for the Call Committee in their effort in discernment.

## 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

**Sarah Circle**  
3rd Tuesday of the month 10:00 am  
Location Varies  
Contact: Lois Nieman

**Mary Circle**  
3rd Tuesday of the month 10:00 am  
Location Varies  
Contact: Martha Welch



I'VE ALWAYS  
LOVED  
HOW JESUS  
FACES DOWN  
TEMPTATION.

YEAH-



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

HIS POWER  
IS IN THE  
WORD OF GOD.



I WISH I KNEW  
WHICH VERSE TO USE  
AGAINST ANOTHER  
PIECE OF  
CHOCOLATE CAKE.



MATTHEW 4:1-11

© WETZSTEIN 11-03-09



## 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 5	The First Sin	Genesis 3:1-24
March 12	Abram's Call	Genesis 12:1-9
March 19	Women at the Wall	John 4:5-42
March 26	Pool of Siloam	John 9:1-41

## Ministry Assistants

Date	Assisting Ministers	Communion Assistants	Readers	Spark Leaders
3/5	Eric Hoover	Jerry Brooks Bill Hroziencik	Don Hermansen	Hank Harper Ken Struven
3/12	Jack Coyne	Nancy Kehl Karen Reed	Kirsten Severson	Sandi Kane
3/19	Heidi Waters	David & Mary Phillips	Doris Childs	Judy Jeschke
3/26	Jerilyn Struven	Phil & Marilyn Gaal	Jerilyn Struven	Deb Stucke Rachael Stucke



January 11, 2017

Dear Hope Lutheran Church,

I was thrilled to see your gift come through because it means we can provide additional meals to struggling families. You're giving these families much more than meals this

holiday season though — you are also giving them hope.

Many of them come to Second Harvest in times of personal crisis, when they have nowhere else to turn for help. Because of you, they have the relief they desperately need.

One of the people you're helping, Cindy, recently reached out to Food Bank after her husband died suddenly at age 52. Her emotional and financial stability crumbled and she was left scrambling to provide food for her family.

You helped make the difference. With your support, Cindy is able to focus on recovering from her sudden loss, instead of worrying about how to tell her hungry daughter she has a to wait to eat.

She just visited her first food distribution and shared *"I got so much food and was really impressed. I'd never been to anything like it! We got fruit and vegetables and chicken and eggs and everything was useful... That's why I want to say thank you. If it wasn't for Second Harvest, my family would be going, 'where do we go?! What do we do?'"*

This holiday season, you've given a gift that really matters. Thank you for sharing strength with local families when they needed it most.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Jackson  
Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest Food Bank

P.S. We love hearing from you! Let us know why fighting local hunger is important to you by contacting our Donor Relations Team at 866-234-3663, [donor.relations@shfb.org](mailto:donor.relations@shfb.org), or on [Facebook.com/2ndharvest](https://www.facebook.com/2ndharvest).

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January 17, 2017

Thank you for your generous financial gift last year. It is encouraging to know your church is willing to help our unique bilingual congregation in Livingstone.

Your church exemplifies the Lutheran mantra

"God's Work. Our Hands" we feel very blessed to have such a caring church support our congregation!

Blessings,  
Melissa Standish, Council V.P.  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Livingstone, CA

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January 18, 2017

Dear Hope Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your gift to the ELCA World Hunger.

On Epiphany, God reveals Jesus to the nations by the leading of a star. We pray for God to lead us by faith to know God's presence in our lives. Your gift to the ELCA World Hunger is surely a manifestation of your faith in God's grace and mercy and a witness to the light that shines brightly through Christ to all the nations.

Thank you for accompanying companion churches and trusted partners as they work together to provide water and sanitation, education and training, agriculture and nutrition, income and savings, healthcare and prevention—whatever it takes until all are fed.

With gratefulness, and in the light and life of Christ,  
The Rev. Daniel Rift  
Director, ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal

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January 24, 2017

Dear Hope Lutheran,

Thank you! We received your gift to help make disciples in urban communities across America.

Thanks to your generosity, World Impact missionaries are able to pour out their lives in order to empower urban leaders. Many of our missionaries have been serving for years and have been serving for years and have seen God work through their faithfulness.

World Impact missionary Bob Lay shares how God has worked in his years of service amongst the urban poor:

*"During our first six years we have learned that*

*those called by God must recognize opportunities in the midst of challenge... Perhaps our greatest challenge has been learning to minister to those suffering upheaval in their lives. But this is precisely where we have seen God most powerfully at work."*

Thank you again for supporting World Impact missionaries as they serve in the inner cities throughout the United States. As each missionary seeks to empower leaders in urban communities, our prayer is that the Kingdom of God will expand in the darkest areas of the city. We have seen the Lord work in powerful ways to transform urban communities across America!

Blessings,  
Efrem Smith  
President, World Impact

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January 31, 2017

Rev. Severson and Members of Hope Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous and thoughtful donation in 2016 for the San Francisco Night Ministry. Your partnership with us provides care, support and encouragement to those who come to us in the middle of the night.

Night Ministry continues to be an effective agent of healing and hope for many people in the San Francisco Bay Area. Last year, our Crisis Line Counselors received over 6,800 calls and Night Ministers were engaged in over 22,000 significant conversations on the streets of San Francisco. In addition, 150 people gather each week at our Open Cathedrals in the Civic Center and Mission neighborhoods, for spiritual reflection, prayer, and lunch, followed by the same crisis intervention, counseling and referral service we provide at night.

As we continue into the New Year, please remember us in your prayers, and know that we are truly grateful to you for your support.

May God's peace be with you,  
The Rev. Lyle J Beckman  
Night Minister

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February 10, 2017

Dear Friends at Hope Lutheran Church Women,

Thank you for your generous gift of quilts and kits for LWR's distribution overseas. These gifts of your hearts and hands are beautiful expressions of God's grace and love to people all around the world.

Because of your support, LWR is able to share the tangible love of Christ with thousands of people through your quilts and kits. Last year, LWR and partners Children's Gift Ministry (CGM) and OLAM were busy distributing School Kits in Honduras, to children whose families are vulnerable due to lack of access to the most basic necessities. Parents of these families often have to choose between feeding their children and sending them to school. School Kits were distributed to more than 28,000 Honduran children to help them get back to or stay in school, increasing their chances of breaking the chains of chronic poverty and avoiding the very risk of gang involvement. In addition to being practical, these kits provide a source of comfort, security and hope to those who receive them.

Your quilts and kits provide important necessities to our neighbors around the world, and serve as reminders that they are not alone or forgotten. In the second part of 2016, we also shipped quilts and kits to Georgia, Angola, Thailand, Pakistan, Mali and Burkina Faso. On behalf of our neighbors in villages, schools, hospitals and refugee camps around the world, I extend deepest thanks for your contribution, and pray God's richest blessings on your life and work!

In Christ,  
Melanie W. Gibbons



A letter to the Congregation on the occasion of the service for Vera Feige on 1/28/17

- - - from Bonnie Allen and the family of Vera Feige.

*"My mother always enjoyed her Circle activities. She could not drive or move around well, the Circle came to her house for meetings, which was a big happiness for my mom. Thank you to those in her Circle!"*

*My parents enjoyed many years of inspiration and fellowship at Hope.*

*Thanks to the entire Hope community."*

# Upcoming Events



## ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS

Everyone is invited to join us for our annual Ash Wednesday Service on

Wednesday, March 1st at 7:00 pm.

The service includes both the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. For the five weeks of Lent following Ash Wednesday, we will have weekly soup suppers and Lenten Services together with the congregation of St. Andrews.

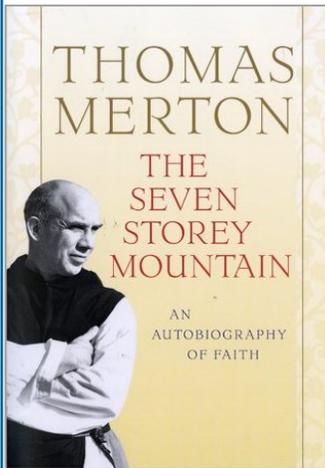
We will meet at Hope on Wednesday, March 8, 22, and April 5.

We will meet at St. Andrews on Wednesday, March 15, and 29.

Please join us for great soup, meaningful worship, and fellowship with our brothers and sisters from St. Andrews. Would appreciate help providing soup, salad, bread and cookies. A sheet will be available to sign up for March 8 & 22 or April 5.

### A NEW BOOK CLUB

Join our new book club at Hope. Will meet once per month in the church Library. The dates are Tuesday, March 2, April 6, May 4 and June 1. Meeting time 1:30-2:30 pm.



This group will focus on books that deal with the subject of Christian Spirituality. Our first book is entitled The Seven Storey Mountain by Thomas Merton. It's a spiritual autobiography written by Thomas Merton, and is available on Amazon. As far as future books are concerned, we are looking for suggestions

from the participants. Please join us for what looks to be a very valuable experience. If you have any questions, please call me at the church office.

## SAVE THE DATE

### OUR HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

**Palm Sunday, April 9 at 10 AM**

AN EASTER OF

**Maundy Thursday, April 13, at 7 PM**

**Good Friday, April 14, at 7 PM**

**Easter Sunday, April 16,  
8:30 AM & 10:30 AM**

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
*2017 Women's SPRING LUNCHEON*  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 29 at NOON**  
 Sign-ups begin on Sunday, April 9.

## ~ March 2017 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Feb. 26</b> 10am Worship 11am Café Hope 11:45 am Adult Bible Study	<b>27</b> 9:30am Aerobics  1pm Theological Study  7:30pm AA*	<b>28</b>   6:45pm Bells	<b>1 Ash Wednesday</b> 9:30am Aerobics  3:45pm Preschool Board Meeting  7pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:45pm Choir	<b>2</b>   1:30pm Christian Book Club  7pm Evangelism Committee Mtg.	<b>3</b> 9:30am Aerobics  8pm AA*	<b>4</b> 7:30am Men's Breakfast
<b>5 Home &amp; Hope</b> 10am Worship 11am Café Hope 11:45 am Adult Bible Study 2-7pm Dummler 5pm Confirmation Class @St. Andrews	<b>6 Home &amp; Hope</b> 9:30am Aerobics  1pm Theological Study  7:30pm AA*	<b>7 Home &amp; Hope</b>  12pm Staff Meeting 12:30pm Single Seniors  6:45pm Bells	<b>8 Home &amp; Hope</b> 9:30am Aerobics  2pm Worship Committee Meeting  6pm Soup Supper @Hope 7:45pm Choir	<b>9 Home &amp; Hope</b>   7pm Council Meeting	<b>10 Home &amp; Hope</b> 9:30am Aerobics  8pm AA*	<b>11 Home &amp; Hope</b>
<b>12 Daylight Savings Time begins</b> 10am Worship 11am Café Hope 11:45 am Adult Bible Study	<b>13</b> 9:30am Aerobics 10am Women's Bible Study Leaders 1pm Theological Study 7:30pm AA*	<b>14</b> 9am Quilters   6:45pm Bells	<b>15</b> 9:30am Aerobics   6pm Soup Supper @St. Andrews 7:45pm Choir	<b>16</b> 9am Peninsula Quilters* 11:15am Preschool Chapel  12:30pm Single Seniors Lunch Outing 3pm Preschool Chapel	<b>17</b> 9:30am Aerobics  8pm AA*	<b>18</b> 7:30am Men's Breakfast
<b>19</b> 10am Worship 11am Café Hope 11:45 am Adult Bible Study  5pm Confirmation Class @St. Andrews	<b>20</b> 9:30am Aerobics   7:30pm AA*	<b>21</b> 10am Mary Cir. 10am Sarah Cir. 12pm Staff Meeting  6:45pm Bells	<b>22</b> 9:30am Aerobics   6pm Soup Supper @Hope 7:45pm Choir	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:30am Aerobics  8pm AA*	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 10am Worship 11am Café Hope 11:45 am Adult Bible Study	<b>27</b> 9:30am Aerobics   7:30pm AA*	<b>28</b> 9am Quilters   6:45pm Bells	<b>29</b> 9:30am Aerobics   6pm Soup Supper @St. Andrews 7:45pm Choir	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:30am Aerobics  8pm AA*	<b>Apr. 1</b> 7:30am Men's Breakfast  * = Outside Organization