

# 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,  
 Everyone has heard the old adage that it's best to avoid talking about either religion or politics with friends and family—much less with people you may come in contact with at some sort of gathering and who you have just met. The wisdom behind this, if you can call it that, is the fact that these two subjects, in ways more than others, are invested with too much potentially irrational passion. This being the case, when people hold conflicting positions, the result can lead to conflicts and hurt feelings between folks who otherwise “love” each other.

This is unfortunate from both a secular and a Christian point of view. What I mean by secular, is a point of view on virtuous behavior (a concept that is unfortunately out of fashion these days) that has nothing to do with faith in God. For example, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that mutual respect, and the ability to reason with one another without taking disagreements personally clearly leads to more harmonious, healthy, and peaceful relationships. Everyone benefits when we value one another as persons more than we value our own opinions, which are usually flawed to some degree and biased toward whatever cultural context from which we come. An honest awareness of our own limited point of view would go far in terms of promoting peaceful relationships, whether we are talking about families, friends, or even the whole body politic.

While I claim no great wisdom with respect to how best to deal with the political divisions that exist in our country at the present, I am distressed by the often rancorous, insulting, and downright demeaning political discourse that is taking place at both the federal and local level. The founders of this country were well aware of the addictive influence of power, and that the only reasonable way to deal with this was to create a system where political power was dispersed so that no person or group of persons could consoli-

date enough power to impose their will on everyone else without checks and balances. This is what the constitution is intended to avoid. So long as public servants abide by these rules, the system should work in such a way that injustices will eventually be dealt with. Of course, there is no such thing as the perfect system. The best we can do is create a process whereby injustices can be corrected over time.

However, what the founders could not control is the possibility of a loss of respect for our political institutions due to cultural warfare between competing groups. There will always be diversity in values and issues of policy because of differing interests and political philosophies. Moreover, we don't have just one culture informing these things in America. What is politically acceptable in one area is not in another. But when this results in discourse that reflects downright hatred for the opposition: a rejection of the legitimacy of those with whom you disagree, and political moves designed to create conflict and governmental paralysis, this becomes dangerous for many reasons. While both sides can make themselves sound perfectly reasonable, and while the media outlets can claim objectivity in their reporting, it seems to me that most Americans see through this to motives that are hidden behind a sense of self-righteousness.

From a Christian perspective, while issues of politics and justice in this world are important, and while some people are called to serve in this area for the sake of peace and justice, our allegiance to whatever state and culture we live in are not ultimate concerns.

These issues are important because we are called to be servants of our neighbor, and to be concerned for the well-being of everyone. God has provided richly for our needs. Jesus taught us to ask for our daily bread, which Luther interpreted to mean all our needs. Therefore issues of poverty and wealth, and the political policies that determine how well needs are met: these are clearly of concern to Christians. However, given the fact that there is no perfect way to do that, Christians can dif-

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### Pastor Paul's Notes



**W**e are in the midst of expanding our Seniors Ministry. A planning group has formed in brainstorming ideas and acting on programs to offer. The group overseeing it includes: Pat Duvall, Lynn Loveall, Lois Nieman Bill Hroziencik, and Dolores Roscoe. A special fund has been established, primarily the Memorial Fund for Pastor Dan's mother, and we want to communicate its availability to meet specific needs. The Single Seniors has made some suggestions, such as utilizing a Van or Bus service for outings, an outreach to people in care facilities (to provide visiting and /or informal worship and music), and possible additional programs at the church. If you would like to suggest ideas to consider, please contact any one on the planning group or Pastor Paul and Pastor Dan.

Special attempts will be made to make outreach to the community, inviting people to take part in Single Seniors events, Men's Breakfasts and other activities at the church.

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I want to thank so many of you for cards, well wishes and prayers during this time of Marilyn's illness. It is so appreciated!



Photos above from May 2nd, with guest speaker Roxanne Jen.



Photo credit to Maggie K Timeus

Pictures from 4/27/17 Single Seniors at JobCorp Culinary School on Treasure Island SF

## From our Council President



**H**ello Hope Family  
Every month I sit down to create a message for the Voice of Hope and try to come up with something new and interesting. Also I try to include something that provides a message about how wonderful I believe Hope is

and how many wonderful people there are at Hope sharing their time, talent the love of God with each other. But, to be honest at times I find it is very difficult to come up with a new article. There isn't a whole lot new going on at Hope however there is a whole lot of the great things we always do continuing. We are still in a period of transition, which is taking longer than I know anyone of us wants, but your call committee is working very hard and we continue to pray that we find the right person to come and share in our lives and spiritual growth at Hope. While that search continues, Pastor Dan and Pastor Paul continue to lead us in worship, education and spiritual growth while our staff and volunteers continue to keep everything running smoothly, our services are full or uplifting music, we continue to have events and activities for people of

all ages, and our preschool continues to touch the lives of children and brings to them the message of the love of God and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We really are a blessed congregation and I know that all of you reading this love being part of the family at Hope.

The one thing that worries me is can we as a congregation continue this wonderful family of Hope. I do believe we can, even as many Churches around us continue to fail and close, but it will take all of us working together to continue to build on the great things we do, and find areas where we can expand and hopefully help others find and join us at Hope. We need everyone to step out of his or her comfort zone and participate in making Hope great. That includes volunteering to serve on the Church Council, on committees, increasing financial donations, and participating in worship and social events.

I am asking everyone to prayerfully consider how you can help keep Hope healthy so we can all enjoy being part of the family of Hope and we can reach out to others so they too can be part of this wonderful family.

Thank you  
Council President  
Jack Coyne

## from our Choirs Director



### Summer Music

**T**he choirs will be taking a well deserved rest during the summer, and we will have the pleasure of having "special music" during their sabbatical. This is a time for people who don't have the opportunity to be

involved at other times, to gift us with your talent. Singers, instrumentalists, and other special talents are welcome and urged to sign up. Solos, duets, small ensembles are all welcome. There will be sign up sheets just outside the choir room door, and on a table in Nielsen Hall by June 4. Dates for summer music are from June 11—September 10, Accompaniment can be provided.

## Call Committee Update:

The Call Committee is proceeding with the review and evaluation of new candidates for Senior Pastor. These candidates were presented to the committee by the Synod in late May. We will speak to each candidate, possibly more than once, and prayerfully consider their gifts as they apply to the needs of Hope. Please continue to pray for our process of discernment.

# Women's Spring Luncheon on 4/29



Photo credit to Maggie K. Timeus



fer on specific policies. The same is true with respect to issues of keeping the peace.

At the same time, ultimate allegiance for followers of Jesus is the kingdom of God. The gospels make it abundantly clear that Jesus did not advocate for any particular political system. His ministry was designed to introduce the rule of God. Through faith in him, and by the power of the Spirit, this rule was and continues to break into our lives in the present while also continuing to remain in the future. He taught us to pray that God's kingdom would come, and that his will would be done on earth. This means that wherever the gospel is preached and received by faith through the power of the Spirit of God, said people will live in the love of God and neighbor, and in hope that God will establish his rule at a time that will have no end. And so, Christians live in what Luther called two kingdoms: the kingdom of this world, where the best we can do is create structures that minimize the effect of evil influences and self-destructive behavior as well as seeing to it that human need in all its forms is met. This is a serious concern but it is not our ultimate concern and therefore the state cannot claim our undivided allegiance. Should that happen, we would have made the state into another idol. Our ultimate allegiance is to God's kingdom. We can experience

the presence of this kingdom in a partial way through faith in the love of God as God has made his love present in Jesus Christ. However, in terms of its final coming, we live as yet in hope.

Do living in faith, hope, and love have an effect on how we involve ourselves in the kingdoms of this world? You bet it does. It excludes hatred of those with whom we disagree. It excludes demeaning, insulting, and dishonest political discourse. It excludes the kind of lust for power that results in disrespect for the law and the institutions that govern. On the other hand, it most certainly does mean advocating for policies that serve the interests of the voiceless and marginalized. It does mean engaging in reasonable debate with folks who we respect, whether we agree with them or not. It means that we pray for those who have been given the responsibility to govern, and it means hoping for the best in a fragmented and fallen world. It does all this and much more, not because we have put the faith of our hearts in any worldly state, but because in this way, we witness to the love of God in what we say and do and hope for at such time as God sees fit to bring salvation to the world God created and sustains in love.

Blessings,  
Pastor Dan

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## Celebrating birthdays in June

Eno Ekong  
Jerry Brooks  
Brittany Gaal  
Sandi Kane  
Sydney Prasad  
Gloria Paulus\*  
Nathan Dean  
Maxine Fisher

Wendy Hermansen  
Dustynne Mendes  
June Hendrickson  
Dolores Roscoe  
Rea Tucker  
Timothy Hanlon\*  
Esther Ekong  
Robert Lillo

Shannon McAuliffe  
Owen Sallander  
Penny Spike  
Shannon Wilson  
William Klemens  
Jason Reed



\* = Friend of Congregation



# Upcoming Events

## Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, June 25, 2017

After Worship

**Election of Church Officers**

### **BOOK CLUB**

Join our book club at Hope. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, June 1st at 1:30 pm in the Fireside Room. The book for this month is entitled Kisses From Katie by Katie Davis.

### **SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY**

Our study of Matthew will end in mid- June. After that, we will take a break, unless enough people want to keep going until August. Next fall, we will once again do a survey of the Bible as a whole, only this time, we will be focusing on how God has governed and revealed himself throughout history, and what it has meant to have faith in God's promises each step of the way. I hope you will join us.



### **Confirmation Sunday, June 4, 2017**

Congratulations to our Confirmands:  
Sam Jung and Owen Sallander.

**O**n Sunday, June 4th, we will be celebrating Pentecost, the day the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples and, as a result, they proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ in many languages.

It is a tradition that, on this day, the young people who have completed their confirmation instruction celebrate by publicly affirming their baptism. Sam Jung and Owen Sallander have completed two years of instruction in the Bible and Luther Small Catechism. Please join us as we welcome these two young people as confirmed members of Hope Lutheran Church. A reception will follow in Nielsen Hall during Café Hope.

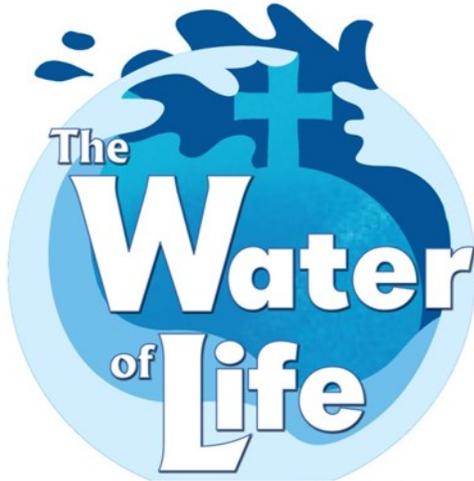
**Summer Class:** Please join us for an exciting new summer class on Luther and the Bible. We will examine some of the basic ways Luther interpreted scripture and how he used the wider orthodox tradition in his perspective on the Bible's message. This class, another in our commemoration's of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, will be helpful in terms of your use of scripture in devotions and prayer. The class will start Wednesday, June 21 and will meet at 1:00 pm in the Youth Room. Our last class will be on Wednesday, July 26th. Please feel free to come as you are able. Each class will take up a new topic. For example, "The Bible and the work of the Holy Spirit," "Law and Gospel," "The Bible and history," and "The Bible and Faith Formation."

# 2017 Vacation Bible School



HOSTED BY HOPE AND ST. ANDREW'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES  
RUN BY MOUNT CROSS DAY CAMP STAFF

*Kindergarten—6th Grade Students are invited to join our Vacation Bible School*



*When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you. Isaiah 43:2*



## Vacation Bible School at Hope Lutheran

Vacation Bible School returns to Hope for 2017. Join us for a week of faith-based fun, which includes group games, arts & crafts, worship, community building activities and Bible Encounters based on our summer theme. Our Day Camp is led by the Mt. Cross Summer Staff.

### When: July 24-28, 2017

Full Day: 9am—3pm M—Th, 9-2pm Friday

Half Day: 9am-12pm daily (Kindergarten only)

### Who:

Kids aged 5-12 Entering Kindergarten—6th grade.

### Cost:

**Full Day:** \$80/week for church members, \$90/week non-members, \$50 for additional siblings

**Half Day:** \$50/week for church members, \$60/week non-members

*Financial assistance available upon request.*

### Registration:

Complete a Registration and Camper Health form and return these with your payment to:

Hope Lutheran Church  
600 W. 42nd Avenue  
San Mateo, CA 94403

*Please note VBS and camper name on the memo line of your check.*

REGISTRATION AND HEALTH FORMS ARE  
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
[HOPELUTHERANSANMATEO.ORG](http://HOPELUTHERANSANMATEO.ORG)