

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,
 My latest reading adventure has been a large and very detailed biography of the German Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I have always admired him as a true martyr for the Christian faith in the 20th century. Many of you perhaps know of his story. When the Nazi's tried to completely revise the church's message to conform to their anti-Semitic ideology, even to the point of excluding the Old Testament because it was Jewish, he stood firm against them and helped start what was called at the time "The Confessing Church." As the war dragged on, and most of the seminarians he had trained to be pastors were drafted into the German army, and killed in action, he became involved in a plot to assassinate Hitler. Unfortunately, he was found out, imprisoned, and hanged one day before the allies liberated the prison where he was kept. Fortunately for us, he left behind many writings, the best of which is a book entitled, "The Cost of Discipleship." He was well aware of that cost for himself, and he went to his death fully convinced that for whatever reason, he was being obedient to the will of God.

One of the most important things I learned from this book about his life was how he daily sought to discern the will of God for him in good times and in very dangerous times. Every day during the last years of his life, he would read from the psalms with the conviction that God would speak to him through these prayers and hymns. Jesus had quoted from the psalms many times during his life, even when he hung on the cross. This being the case, he reasoned, Jesus would speak to him during his life as well. And he did. Eventually, he published a short book on the psalms and as a result, the Nazi's forbid anyone from publishing his writings anymore. After all, the Psalter was a Jewish book of worship and anything having to do with such things had to be eliminated.

There is a very important lesson here for all Christians as to how we should read and use our bibles. The Bible is the word of God to us. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit dictated every word such

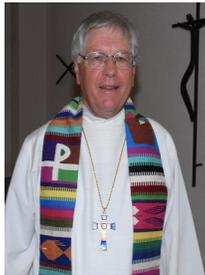
that the prophets and apostles simply wrote what they were told. Rather, it means, and this is what Luther stressed in a book concerning the work of the Holy Spirit, that through the witness of the biblical books, the Spirit of God speaks to us directly and personally. The Spirit has no new messages. Through the witness of scripture, God has already said and done all that is necessary to live a Christian life in the assurance of his grace and love. The Christian life is a journey to eternal life, and the Bible is the guide on that journey. For this reason, it is so important to read scripture as God's word to you: as the way in which we discern God's will for our lives so that we can be obedient to God as God gives us the grace to walk through what Jesus called "the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction..." (Matthew 7:13-14)

Before writing this article, I decided to open the Bible and read the first psalm I reached at random. I wondered, "What does God wish to say to me today? What do I need to hear from Him?" When I got to the psalms, before me were the last verses of psalm 84. "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; he bestows favor and honor. No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you." These words need no commentary. They speak for themselves, and they were exactly what I needed to hear.

I encourage everyone to read your bibles daily, and to pray for the Spirit to speak deep within your hearts. In fact, I got the idea from reading about Bonhoeffer that it would be good to have a class or group, or whatever you want to call it, on how to read the Bible as the word of God, addressed personally to each of us. And, for good measure, to add prayer time wherein we not only ask, but listen for God to speak. God willing, more of that in the weeks to come. In the meantime, pray for Hope, that you as a congregation will be able to discern God's will for this community of faith as you meet at the special meeting on pastoral leadership on September 10th. I, as always, will keep this congregation in my prayers.

Blessings,
 Pastor Dan

Pastor Paul's Notes



This fall we are expanding Single Seniors to include all seniors. Please be invited to consider and participate:

Tuesday, September 5, 3 pm – a different format with a guest speaker Ms. Alie Sobczak,

Community Outreach Specialist, from HIPhousing in San Mateo will discuss the two types of the Home Sharing Program. The meeting will begin at 3:00 p.m. at Wendy's in Belmont (698 Ralston Avenue). Come early for lunch, or stay later for a snack or dinner. It will be interesting to see others attend.

Thursday, September 21, 12:30 car pool to lunch -outing at Luceti's on 25th Ave.

The Men's breakfast will be held this month at Sterling Ct., in San Mateo, the time will be 9:30 -11 am. Please note the different time. We hope to interest additional men from there. The date will be Saturday, September 16.

I did a presentation at "The Elms", San Carlos, on "Celebrating Life Stories"(8/22) and will be doing it again at Sterling Ct. on September 12; it will be repeated at the Senior Center in San Carlos on October 2, with more to follow.

While responding to a request for a visit to a neighbor, I learned that the adult son is GM for the radio station in Half Moon Bay. In subsequent conversations, he has invited me to do certain tasks there, utilizing my avocation.

I am repeating my request for a volunteer or two (perhaps a couple) to assist in developing Seniors Ministries. Please let me know if you are interested, or can nominate others!

Also, here is a question: "Where would be the best place for me to hang out for 2 hours on a week-day morning, serving in the manner of Night Ministry, talking with and/or praying with people?" (A Starbucks, etc.)

Remember to talk with at least one new person each day and then evaluate how you felt about it (at the end of the day).

Do you know the difference between a thermometer and a thermostat?

A thermometer reports a condition; a thermostat changes the condition. It is similar to the difference between management and leadership, or the former is to make the best of the situation and the latter is make the situation better.

The church is in the thermostat business. We seek to change any situation that needs transformation and new life! Join the effort.....Pastor Paul

From our Choirs Director



We're Growing! You didn't think you would ever see that did you? In the last year we have actually grown by two additional groups. We have added a Handbell quartet and a Men's Ensemble. Does that mean we don't need any more people? ABSOLUTELY NOT!!! There is always room for more.

I KNOW who you in the congregation are. I Know those of you who can ring and sing, and I know those of you who have done so before. Is it easy to add one more thing to your schedule? No, most of us already have a plateful, but being in one of our music groups is such a rewarding thing to do. We serve the congregation, we enrich our own lives, and **WE ALSO HAVE FUN DOING IT.**

Yes, it's hard to come out for rehearsals, yes we'd like to stay home on Sunday morning for a second cup of coffee. **BUT** we reap benefits for ourselves as well as enrich the life on the congregation.

Do we have any professional singers and ringers? Not many, but we do have lots of people who can and do enrich our musical lives. The only requirement is to like music, be willing to learn, and be willing to have fun while you do it.

Both Handbells and the chancel choir start on Wednesday, Sept. 13: Bells at 6:45 in the Sanctuary, and Choir in the choir room downstairs at 7:45 – 9:15. Join us and see for yourselves why we love making music together.

Shirley



Vacation Bible School July 24-28, 2017

Our 2017 VBS with St. Andrews and the Mt. Cross Staff was a success!! This year we had 18 students attend, with 9 middle and high school volunteers to assist the Mount Cross Staff. The children enjoyed a cool t-shirt decorating project, volleyball and other outdoor games, a family ice-cream social, and water day! Thanks to all the Hope members who helped out to make this a successful week. A special thank-you to Marsha and Jack Coyne for hosting the VBS staff, and Helena Dummler, Marlys Jungroth, Shirley Klemens, Sandi Kane, Jerilyn Struven, Marilyn Johnson, and Margo and Bill Kannenberg for keeping our children and staff well fed! Also, thank-you Annie for keeping us organized!

Judy Jeschke, 2017 VBS Coordinator



Photo credit to Maggie K Timeus



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



Reformation 500

50 things you may not know about Luther *continued from the last Voice of Hope*

By Timothy J. Wengert

(posted in the June 2017 *LivingLutheran Magazine*)

27. By defining “church” as the assembly of believers where the gospel is proclaimed and the sacraments rightly administered, Luther (sometimes) included Anabaptist preachers among those sharing the gospel, and Roman Catholics as also having the markings of the true church.

28. The Peasant’s War (1524-1525) ravaged central Europe. Luther and several other important leaders of the Reformation wrote against the uprising—not only as a breach of fealty by those in revolt but also a misuse of God’s word for selfish ends. Luther was one of the few who, at least initially, also blamed the rulers for exploiting their subjects.

29. Katharina von Bora (<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2015/10/women-reformation/>), Luther’s wife, was 16 years younger than Luther. She bore six children (and suffered at least one miscarriage), ran the household—which included not only immediate family members and servants but also students, refugees and other relatives—purchased land for growing crops to provide for them and brewed her own beer.

30. Luther often showed his emotions. He wept when his infant daughter, Elizabeth died in 1528 and when his 13-year-old daughter, Magdalena, died in his arms.

31. Medieval tradition believed that the parents of the Antichrist would be a monk and a nun, but Luther’s adult children disproved that myth. Only one of Luther’s sons, Martin (1531-1565), studied theology; none became a professor. His son Hans (1526-1575) became a lawyer; his son Paul (1533-1593) was a physician; and his daughter, Margarete (1534-1570) married a nobleman, Georg von Kunheim, and died in East Prussia.

32. Luther and his colleagues, especially Phillip Melancthon, often collaborated on projects. In the preface to the 1529 German translation of Melancthon’s commentary on Colossians, Luther described himself as the rough woodsman, clearing the forest so that Melancthon could follow as the happy farmer, planting crops.

33. In 1529, when asked in a debate over the Lord’s Supper to explain *how* Christ could be truly present at God’s right hand in heaven and in the bread and wine, Luther responded that people should not argue about mathematical concepts concerning “place” but simply believe Christ’s promise to be truly present in his supper.

34. According to an eyewitness, when Luther received news of his father’s death in 1530, while at the Castle Coburg awaiting news regarding the Diet of Augsburg, he locked himself in his room with his Psalter and was heard praying and crying.

35. The chief Lutheran confession of faith, the Augsburg Confession, was presented on June 25, 1530, to Emperor Charles V. Luther compliments its main drafter, Melancthon, by insisting that Luther could not have treaded so lightly. He also saw it as a fulfillment of Psalm 119:46: “I will also speak of your decrees before kings, and shall not be put to shame.”

36. The Luther Bible, completed in 1534, always included the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha (books written after books of the Hebrew Scriptures but before the New Testament).

37. That Luther’s translation of the Bible was the product of a team of scholars from Wittenberg made in unique—in addition to the fact that it included marginal notes and extensive introductions to many books and to each Testament, as well as illustrations of many of the stories in the Old Testament and of the visions in Revelation but virtually none of the gospels of Acts.

38. Luther lectured at the University of Wittenberg on one book of the Bible (Genesis) for ten years (1535-1545). The resulting commentary takes up the first eight volumes in the “American Edition” of *Luther’s Works*.

39. In the 16th century, Lutherans accorded special authority to three of Luther’s writings (Small and Large Catechisms and Smalcald Articles) and placed them in their collection of confessions of faith, *The Book of Concord*, because these writings especially witnessed to the Christian faith.

40. One of Luther’s chief contributions to German society in the 16th century was his consistent concern for the poor. He refused to glorify self-chosen poverty and thought it was a citizen’s duty to help those who were living in poverty, especially through the establishment of the “Community Chest.”

To be continued in the next Voice of Hope



Why I Am a Lutheran?

In preparing for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, it has been suggested that we, individually, write a statement about "Why I Am a Lutheran." Share your story with us, may be your parents raised you as a Lutheran? Or may be you have another meaningful reason? We'd like to share your story in our Newsletter with why being a Lutheran is special to you. Please submit your statement before the next Voice deadline, date is on pg. 8.

Here is our first statement...

"I was born into a Lutheran family. My parents, the children of Norwegian immigrants, grew up in the Lutheran church, my mother in Brooklyn and my father in Eureka. Their friends were all people they knew from church. Our family moved from San Francisco to San Mateo in 1955 and immediately became involved in Hope, starting from the time it was in one and then two storefronts on 41st Avenue. I attended Sunday school, sang in the junior choir, was confirmed, and participated in Luther League.

Along with several others from Hope, I attended California Lutheran College (now University) in its early days, graduating in 1969. I took and enjoyed three required theology classes, even briefly considering the ministry (my two sophomore roommates both attended seminary after graduation). I helped form a

devotional group that became my circle of friends. I still remember my New Testament term paper on transubstantiation and consubstantiation, two different approaches to defining communion. I like the Lutheran definition (consubstantiation) in which the elements, simply put, are Christ's body and blood while still being bread and wine.

Three of my children, along with my sisters and other family members, are graduates of Cal Lutheran. I was honored to be invited several years ago to represent the Sierra Pacific Synod as one of 80 Convocators for Cal Lutheran. We are all ELCA members, both lay and clergy. I look forward to our meetings on campus for two days every October. We had a discussion one year to consider renaming the school, but we voted emphatically to keep its middle name (Lutheran). I love staying involved with my alma mater.

I love Lutheran worship, especially the structure that the liturgy provides, with its rich tradition of music. I especially like organ accompaniment to the many hymns that I've known for so long. I have attended Hope regularly over the years and have been involved in a variety of ways. Hope is like family to me."

Don



Celebrating birthdays in September

Alex Hoover
Owen Hoover
Jillian Coyne
Jackie Fischer*
Judy Grimsby
Lynn Loveall

Stephanie Westphal*
Niels Nielsen
Melissa Hastings
Nancy Jung
Shirley Rohe
John Dummmler

Dorothy Stienstra
Deb Stucke
Phyllis Kilgore
Mary Phillips
Ashley Pedro*

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

* = Friend of Congregation



Upcoming Events

BOOK CLUB

Join the book club at Hope. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, September 7 at 1:30 pm in the Fireside Room.

Celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation!

Saturday, September 23, 5 to 8 pm
Learning, Food, and Fun!!!

At St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
(1501 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo, CA 94402)

Our time will begin with some education about Luther and the Reformation with speakers: Pastor Connie Winter-Eulberg and Pastor Dan Severson. We will then have a game centered around the information that we learn followed by a dinner that features German food and beer. Please join us for this combined event of fascinating learning, fun, and food! If you'd like to volunteer, we need Cake makers, Potato Salad bringers, Coolers with ice, and people for set up and clean up!
RSVP to: anniehelc@pacbell.net or pastorconniewe@gmail.com

Men's Breakfast

The Men's breakfast will be held this month at Sterling Ct., in San Mateo, the time will be 9:30 -11 am. Please note the different time. We hope to interest additional men from there. The date will be **Saturday, September 16**. Thereafter, will meet on the first and third Saturday of the each month in Nielsen Hall. Breakfast is served at 7:30 am and the study begins at around 8:00 am.

God's Work. Our Hands. Saturday, September 9, 4 to 6pm

God's work. We will host a barbecue for Samaritan House's Safe Harbor Shelter!!
Our hands. Donations in excess of the food will be given to Samaritan House for use at

Safe Harbor.

We would also like to bring assorted home-baked cookies to Safe Harbor for dessert as part of our God's Work. We'll need help from 8-10 people who can bring 2 dozen or more cookies. If you're able to help us with this, please sign up in Nielsen Hall and bring your cookies no later than Saturday, September 9 at 2pm. Please contact Margo Kannenberg, if there are further questions.



We are gearing up to welcome Home & Hope back to Hope from **September 10-16** staffed by **LDS Volunteers and September 17-23 with Team Hope volunteers.** Will

you help make the stay for these homeless families just a little cozier with your special touch? Sign-up sheets are posted in Nielsen Hall for cooking dinner, evening hosts, overnight hosts, set-up and take-down. Thank you!



**Save the Date!! Save the Date!!
Save the Date!!!**

We will create a new picture directory for Hope Lutheran Church this year. Lifetouch Photography will be at Hope from **Oct 12 through Oct 15** to take member and family pictures for a new updated directory.

Members and families will receive a free 8x10 photograph and additional pictures ordered will be ready in time for Christmas.

Details will be sent out later.

Lifetouch

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Sunday, September 24

Due to the scheduling of the Congregational meeting on Sunday, September 10th, and the Council meeting on Sunday, September 17th, the next session of our Bible study class will begin on Sunday, September 24th. As usual, we will meet after Café Hope in the educational building.

The topic selected by the class is the book of Revelation, the last book in the New Testament. This book, which is actually a letter written to the seven churches of Asia Minor (Turkey) at around the turn of the first century A.D., has aroused intense interest through the years mostly because many people have taken it to be predictive of when the world will come to an end, and the Kingdom of God will be ushered in. Because its language is highly symbolic, containing words and images descriptive of a great battle between God and the devil, and because this therefore requires detailed interpretation of what these symbols mean, it has been tempting to see in this divine drama events that are contemporaneous with any given generation. However, the expectations of all who thought they were living in the times described here have come to grief. History has forged on and the second coming of Christ remains an expectation, not yet a reality.

This book has been controversial as well for other reasons. Some of the early church fathers did not want to include it in the canon of apostolic books that make up the New Testament. Luther did not think the book was helpful because of its obscurity. In any case, it will be an interesting challenge to wade through this book, and to try and discern its message to us. If it's not to be understood as predictive, then how should we understand it? Why did the author of this book, an elder in the church who had been banished to the island of Patmos during a time of persecution, use these obscure images to convey his message, making it so difficult to understand?

Hopefully, we will bring some clarity to all of this in a way that may give us some assurance of the fulfillment of God's promises of redemption. Everyone is invited to join us for this study. In the meantime, you might want to read through this book so as to familiarize yourself with its contents and formulate any questions you may want to have addressed in advance. See you all there. - *Pastor Dan*



August 1, 2017

Thank you to everyone who donated for the Samaritan House "Back to School Drive." Here is a message from them...

"Oh my gosh, You are superstars!!! Thanks to everyone in your so generous congregation for helping us reach our goal of sending more than 800 kids back to school with new backpacks filled with supplies. Many, many, many thanks."

Carol Laughlin, Samaritan House

August 14, 2017

I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, cards and notes you so kindly sent my way during my recent medical procedure for my heart. My heart is now pacing normally and being safeguarded by a defibrillator, which is all one unit called CRT-D (made by Medtronic)! It's an amazing piece of equipment that is implanted securely in my left chest with three wires into my heart! It will even go through an MRI safely. I'm back to my normal, busy routine and am feeling great!!!! Thank you again for your kind thoughts and notes!!

Charlotte Hess

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

Mary Circle

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

Sarah Circle

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