

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,

As I mentioned in the sermon for the healing service on January 16th, the New Testament uses various metaphors to describe who Jesus is, and what his life, death, and resurrection

accomplishes for us. These metaphors help us understand the person in whom we place our trust for redemption from the existential threats of sin, evil, and death without resorting to a theological treatise, and the highly abstract concepts used by academic theologians. Like the parables Jesus used to teach the “common people”, as opposed to the educated scribes and Pharisees who wanted formal explanations to justify what he said, these metaphors are taken from everyday life experiences and so do not require an education that was inaccessible to the people living in the villages of Galilee. The metaphor most appropriate for the season of Epiphany, which means “the manifestation of God,” is “light.” Matthew records the story of an unspecified number of “wise men” who were guided to Jesus by the light of a star. Matthew’s point here is that Jesus is the light that enables us to “see” the presence of God with us (Emmanuel) in a human being. In John’s account, Jesus is clear and direct when he cries out to a crowd in Jerusalem that he is “The Light of the World.”

This metaphor is particularly important in a time when the culture we live in is becoming more and more secular, and when faith in God is not taken as seriously as it once was. All we have to do in this regard is think about what light does for us. Light gives us the ability to see the world around us. Without light, everything is shrouded in darkness, and anyone who tries to navigate in the dark is likely to stumble and fall. Moreover, if we could not see the world as it is, we would have to use our imagination to try and picture in our minds what we could not see.

Is this not a metaphorical depiction of what amounts to a secular world view? Are not secular understandings of what is and is not real based on a willful denial of, and therefore blinded view of a world without God’s presence and grace? The light of God’s presence in Jesus Christ is perceived through faith. Faith is the “eye” of the human heart. If this “eye” is closed, we will end up relying on our own reason and imagination to construct what we believe to be real concerning who we are, and what kind of world we live in. It is no accident that prominent atheists have concluded that life is ultimately meaningless, and that human suffering and death are clear evidence of this. Living in denial-- refusing to see what you don’t want to see—will result in erroneous conclusions.

Jesus Christ is the “light” of God’s presence and love. Faith “sees” this. Secular world views believe that faith is a blind desire to see what is not there. The truth is that faith is the exact opposite. Faith is the “eye” opened by the light of God’s presence in Jesus Christ and therefore “sees” what would otherwise be shrouded in darkness. It is the lack of faith that is blind. Moreover, because God reveals himself to us in a human being who steps into our shoes, who lays aside his glory and takes upon himself the human condition with all its uncertainty, all its worries, all its suffering, and its sinful denial of God: and because as a consequence, he endures a miserable death, the “eye” of faith does not see life as meaningless due to human suffering and death. Rather, what faith sees is a God whose love is so outrageous that he takes responsibility for our redemption by suffering and dying for us. Atheism does not “see” this, and the ultimate consequence of living in denial is misery, an inability to see anything reliable to hold onto in our helplessness, and therefore no reason to hope for anything better than this; “If that’s all there is my friend, then let’s keep dancing. Let’s break out the booze and have a ball.” This is a great line. When misery and meaninglessness descends upon a person who has relied on the failure of a dead idol, the only relief is to

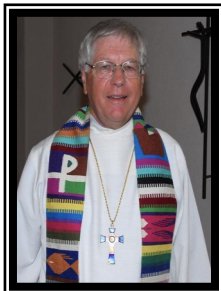
deaden the pain by using any means available to not feel anymore.

Jesus Christ is the light that opens the eye of our hearts to the God whose love and grace is so amazing that it drove him to go into the wilderness of the human condition and there to face the temptations of evil, the deprivations of hunger, thirst, and worse yet: the hatred and rejection of all of us who don't want to see our desperate need for God. This he did in order to open our eyes to the fact that, by so doing, he came into our presence in order to bring us back into his presence. Salvation is staring us straight in the face through the face of Jesus Christ. No need to bring out the booze in order to deaden our senses to the pain of life. Jesus invites us to come, and live in the light. Thanks be to God.

Blessings,

Pastor Dan

Pastor Paul's Notes



We are now in the season of "Epiphany".

This year the Sundays in Epiphany are longer as March 6 is Ash Wednesday, beginning Lent.

The word means 'manifestation', and so we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles, that is, to all nations. The season of manifestations begins with the Baptism of our Lord and continues with the beginning events of Jesus' ministry. The season concludes with the Transfiguration of Our Lord, that demonstrates God being revealed to the world amid its realities and for its transformation. The eternal Word, proclaimed on Christmas Day through John 1, continues to be revealed today through word and sacrament, service and consolation.

Two events are scheduled in February in our Seniors ministry.

On **Tuesday, February 5**, we have guest speakers from the American Red Cross. It will be an opportunity to hear first-hand about all their efforts in connection with the recent fires, as well as additional services they provide. And we can extend to them our thanks! Also, for those interested, there will be invitations to volunteer in various ways.

Bring a bag lunch and beverages will be provided. The time: 12:30 – 2 pm The place: Nielsen Hall All are welcome.

The second event is a lunch-outing on **Thursday, February 21**, the restaurant to be determined. Stay tuned for a bulletin announcement on the Sundays prior.

"Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love".

- Dr. Martin Luther King , Jr.



From our Council President



I saw a post online recently that really stopped me in my tracks. The person announced in a Lutheran Facebook group that his mother had passed away. He listed all sorts of activities she had involved herself in (such as volunteering in church-sponsored activities, teaching Sunday school, and things along that line). He then said that she was “his best translation of the Bible.” Wow! Isn’t that a marvelous thought and a wonderful legacy to leave? Many of the comments on his post were in awe of his phrase, and there was a lot of love expressed. Perhaps you have or have had someone in your life who influenced you in your Christian growth by setting an example or paying extra attention to you. It would be a nice exercise to remember people such as these and then appreciating their influence.

My first teacher was my mother. I still remember sitting in the kitchen of our house on 31st Avenue in San Francisco eating an apple when I was about four or five years old. It must have been a good apple because I ate it all the way down to the core. Several seeds fell onto the hard table top, and I started playing with them, flicking them around like tiddly winks. I enjoyed doing this as much as it annoyed my mother. She collected the seeds and asked me if there were any seeds left, and I said “No.” However, I held a couple in reserve, and she found them. The lesson I learned that day was that it was not OK to lie. (In all honesty, I’d like to think this was an uncharacteristic exception to my true character.) Lutherans are accustomed to confessing their sins at least weekly, and I think this was my first confession of sin. My mother helped me ask Jesus in prayer for forgiveness. A lesson learned long ago, and it has stayed with me all these years.

With traffic as it is, I spend as much time as anyone else waiting at red lights. I end up reading what is in front of me: bumper stickers, license plates and frames. Recently, I saw a frame that read: “Heaven Better Be ... A Golf Course.” I’m sure there are several members of Hope who might agree. It made me start wondering (again, for the nth time) what Heaven is like. I think it is natural to wonder what is in store for us after we leave this

earthly life. We have all heard about near-death experiences where people, for instance, see a very bright light or some other apparition. Movies often portray this in dramatic fashion, often very memorably. But we do not know exactly what Heaven will be like, only that Jesus has said that he has prepared a wonderful place for us.

What is your image of Heaven? Have you thought much about this? Mine is ... I don’t know yet. It’s something I need to give more thought to. I’ll try to do that between now and next month.

Blessings,

Don Hermansen
Council President



The Voice of Hope Birthday listing



If you do not want to have the month and day of your birthday listed on Hope’s monthly publication, The Voice of Hope, please call the church office or email at helc@pacbell.net.



Brochures for the trip to the Holy Land are available!

Brochures describing a possible trip to the Holy Land are now available in the Narthex. Please feel free to take one or more to pass on to friends or family who might be interested.

Preschool Corner



The children are back after Christmas break and are energized to master their studies.

In February, we are celebrating holidays with Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, President's Day, and Dental Month. Our activities will be reinforcing these themes.

We have been hosting tours for families interested in the Fall school year and receiving applications. Registration is now open for 2019-2020, and word of mouth is our best marketing tool.

Have a great month, spread the love and be loved.

Blessings,

Tracy Siri
Preschool Director



Evangelism



Our first meeting after council elections was held Aug 9.

Here are a few things we have put on the Church calendar for the next few months – since we all know how time flies when we are having fun – or just living our very busy lives!!

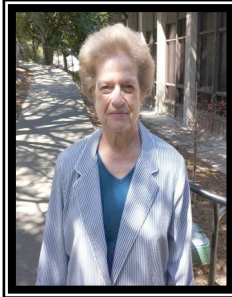
Here are a few highlights so that you can save the date on any of the items that you want to attend or help with.

Sunday, Feb 10, 2019 – *Valentine's Day dinner*

Sunday, April 7, 2019 – *Pre-School Sunday*

If you have any questions – or would like to volunteer for any of these items, please talk to Sandi Kane.

From our Choir Director



Yes, our music people do have fun. We work hard, but we also have some chuckles and fellowship along the way.

We are well on the road to learning new pieces, both bells and choral music, for the new season. We hope to inspire you, please you, and have some surprises as well.

Judy Hartnett, Erica Lin, Debra, Sandi, Luci, Hank, Helena, Ted, John, Bob, Marlys, Vicki, and Lois, Douglas and Shirley all look forward to tickling your fancy in the weeks to come.

Shirley Fitzgerald
Choir Director



Offering Envelopes

Using offering envelopes are important in the process of accounting for your pledges and for the financial organization of the church.

Each week, offerings are counted by a team of counters and that money is deposited in the bank. Your offering envelopes go to the Financial Secretary, who keeps a record of the amount of your gift **by the number on the offering envelope**. Your personal pledge and offerings are not revealed to anyone outside of the Financial Secretary, who prepares your summary statements at the end of the year.

The Treasurer and the accountant pay bills for the congregation as an organization, from the accounts where the money has been deposited. The Treasurer does not deal with any individual's offerings. He/she accounts for expenditures from budgeted sections of the entire Hope budget.

HOPE PRAYER CHAIN



If you have a need to place a prayer request on the PRAYER CHAIN, please contact either:

- Dolores Roscoe
- Else Welch
- call the office (650) 349-0100

They will make certain that your request is forwarded to those on the PRAYER CHAIN list.

HLCW Thankoffering

The Hope Lutheran Church Women have an update to their annual Thankoffering donation to Second Harvest Food Bank in San Mateo County. We have received more donations amounting to \$400 that makes our total donation \$3500 this year.

Your generosity has almost doubled our past donations and will help feed many in our neighborhood.

God Bless each and everyone of you for caring and sharing.



Treasurer Quarterly Update

Comparisons: 2018 vs 2017 (Jan-Nov)

- Church Income, including memorial gifts, is up 5.1% compared with this time period in 2017 (\$377,680 vs \$359,521)
- Church Expenses are down by 3.3% (\$365,152 vs \$377,521)
- Preschool Income is down by 4.4% (\$92,086 vs \$96,315)
- Preschool Expenses are down by 4.2% (\$107,354 vs \$112,029)

Budget Comparison through 11/30/18

- Church income, excluding memorial gifts, through 11/30/18: \$331,069
- 2018 budget income through 11/30/18: \$392,783
- **Budget income shortfall as of 11/30/18: \$61,714**
- **Expenses, including mortgage payments: \$396,428 are in line with budget of \$398,428**

As was planned as part of the 2018 budget, we will need to use memorial gifts to cover our operating expenses. In addition, our memorial accounts over the past several years have not fully been reduced, when used to cover operating expenses. As part of the 2018 closing of the books, the financial secretary and I will adjust memorial accounts down by \$60,000, plus whatever is needed to cover our 2018 budget.

Margo Kannenberg

Treasurer

Senior Luncheon at Jack's Restaurant



HELC Quilters



From Hope's quilters!
These quilts were
donated to the
Paradise fire victims.

An invitation to share through Home and Hope



It's hard to believe that another year is well under way, and in our house, all feet have taken off running. To be honest, I put all our 2019 Home and Hope hostings on my calendar and promptly stopped thinking about it, until Kris, organized as always, put me to work writing this announcement! My first response was weariness, being overwhelmed, but those feelings gradually turned to calm and joy after prayer and reflection. Calm because my family and I have stability – stability in the roof over our heads, the amazing jobs and schools we have, the food we know will be on our table - all of life's essentials that our friends in the Home and Hope homeless family sheltering program do not have. Joy because we have this unique opportunity to share our bounty and our love by serving through Home and Hope. Sure life is nuts. It always will be. But for us, it's usually not too crazy to take time to care for those who could use a helping hand.

And so I invite you to join us this month as you are able, to host our Home and Hope guests from February 17 to 24.

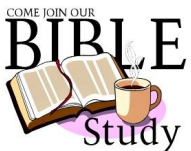
Volunteers are needed for setting up and cleaning up, bringing meals, hosting dinner, and staying as overnight chaperones. Sign-up sheets are posted in Nielsen Hall and also available on Sign-Up Genius at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0b48ada623a57-home3>

Talk to Jerry Brooks, Kris Brooks, or myself if you have questions.

In God's service,

Helena Dummler

Sunday Morning Bible Study



Our Sunday morning Bible Study continues to meet from 11:45 to 12:30 in the Educational Building each Sunday with the exception of the second Sunday when council meets. Romans is the topic and all are invited to join us, including those we haven't seen for a while. We miss you and hope you will return.

Book Club



The Book Club meets on the first Thursday of each month from 1:30 to 2:30 in the Fireside Room. We are currently reading "They Were Christians," a book about influential people of faith. The book is great and so are the discussions so if you are free, please join us. We have a great time.

Understanding Faith



The current midweek class is on the subject of faith and life. We are looking at both the theological and biblical understandings of faith and how that impacts our daily lives. We meet on Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 to 2:00 and also on Thursday evenings.

Look for announcements regarding when the evening class meets as it is not every week.

“SOUP”er Bowl of Caring—Sunday, Feb 3, 2019 | During Café Hope

SOUPEER BOWL OF CARING is a non-profit organization using the Super Bowl to bring attention to hunger in America – and mobilizing youth together to help care for people in our local communities who are hungry and those in need.

Using the energy of the Super Bowl, we are holding a fund raiser on Super Bowl Sunday. You can “vote” for your favorite team (of the two teams actually participating in this year’s Super Bowl) by placing a monetary – or food – donation in one of the big chili pots in Nielsen Hall.

The proceeds will be donated to CALL Primrose and the Samaritan House. We will donate specifically to their food programs as this is all about feeding the hungry.

If you would like to donate food, please bring non-perishable items. You can also give cash donations. 100% of all food/money received will go to the chosen charities.

Evangelism Update—Valentine’s Day



Due to scheduling conflicts of a couple key players on the annual Valentine’s day, we need to do a little “swap”. We need to cancel the Valentine’s Day Event – but, good news, we are adding back our St. Patrick’s Day Celebration. Even better is that St. Patrick’s Day is on a Sunday!

St. Patrick’s Day Celebration

Sunday, March 17, 2019

5-7 p.m. in Nielsen Hall

Cead Mile Failte

(in English, “A Hundred Thousand Welcomes”)

Let’s be Irish for a day!! St. Patrick’s Day commemorates Saint Patrick and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland, as well as celebrates the heritage and culture of the Irish in general.

So whether you are Irish or just Irish for the day, please join us as we partake in the “wearing of the green” (this means that we all wear green shamrocks which is how St. Patrick helped explain the Trinity). We will feast on corned beef and cabbage – and other traditional Irish foods. We’ll also have traditional Irish music, Irish poetry, and (of course) a Pot of Gold!

Please look for sign-ups in Nielsen Hall.

****RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED****

Any questions? Please contact Sandi

Challenge Matching Campaign Results

We thank everyone so very much for their deep generosity in helping to make the Challenge Matching Campaign so successful!

45 members and friends donated a total of \$16,475 to our Challenge account from December 16 through December 31.

These donations were then matched with a \$10,000 anonymous gift.

With challenge donations that had been previously made, this brings our 2018 challenge amount to \$38,745, which exceeded our budget goal of \$35,000!

What a strong statement of love for Hope Lutheran Church.

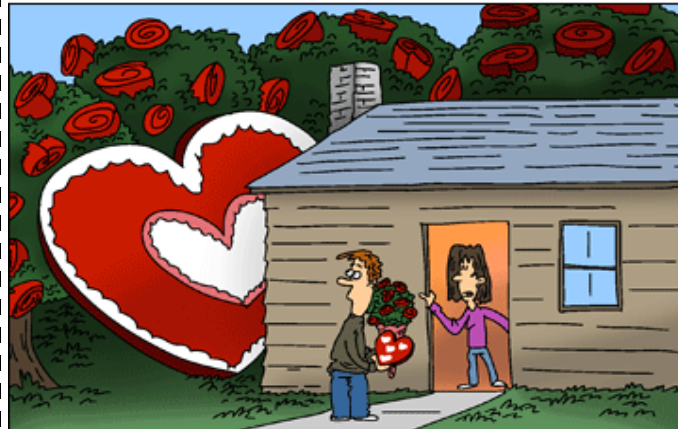
A heartfelt thank you,

Hank
Stewardship

Margo Kannenberg
Treasurer

*Thank
you*

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02-15-2013

JESUS STOPPED BY AND NOBODY LOVES
MORE THAN HIM, BUT BEFORE YOU GET
JEALOUS OR ANYTHING YOU SHOULD KNOW
THAT IT IS FOR YOU TOO

HLCW Circles

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



Celebrating birthdays in February

Max Prasad	2/3	David Phillips	2/15
Herta Von Rautenkrans	2/6	Joanne Smith	2/21
Judith Jeschke	2/9	Charlotte Hess	2/24
Jeanne Helland	2/10	Lesley Johnson	2/25
Scott McAuliffe	2/12	Eric Hoover	2/27
Helen Widdra			
Jessica Stucke	2/13		
Judy Neumann	2/15		

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

* = Friend of Congregation



Spark Time Sunday School

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
February 3	Jeremiah	Jeremiah 1:4-10
February 10	The Disciples	Luke 5:1-11, 8:1-3
February 17	The Beatitudes	Luke 6:17-26
February 24	Joseph Feeds His Family	Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Ministry Assistants

Date	Assisting Ministers	Communion Assistants	Readers	Spark Leaders
2/3	Karen Reed	Helena Dummler Bill Kannenberg Margo Kannenberg	Heidi Waters	Monika Hastings Heidi Waters
2/10	Don Hermansen	Eric Hoover Phil Gaal	Marilyn Johnson	Debra Stucke
2/17	Sandi Kane	John Dummler David Schoch	Lois Nieman	Judy Jeschke Erica Lin
2/24	Kirsten Severson	Mark Grimstvedt Erica Grimstvedt	Erica Lin	Sandi Kane Hank Harper

Upcoming Events

ADULT BIBLE STUDY Sundays @ 11:45am

The Sunday morning Bible Study continues our journey through the book of Romans.

In his introduction to Romans, Martin Luther wrote, "this epistle is in truth the most important document in the New Testament, the gospel in its purest expression...It is a brilliant light, almost enough to illumine the whole Bible." In preparation for this study, I have ordered lectures on Romans by Dr. Walter F. Taylor, professor of New Testament, Trinity Lutheran Seminary. These lectures are on DVD so we can use some of them in our classes. The lectures focus on such themes as how God makes humanity right with God, others, and ourselves, faith, baptism, Christian community, and transformed lives. This will be a great study. Everyone is invited to attend in the educational building on Sundays from 11:45 am. to 12:30 pm.

Seniors Luncheon—February 21

A lunch-outing is scheduled on Thursday, February 21, the restaurant to be determined. Stay tuned for a bulletin announcement on the Sundays prior. If you would like to carpool with us, please be at Hope Lutheran 5-10 mins before 12:30pm. Otherwise you can meet us there at 1pm.

ST. ANDREW'S LUNCHEON—MARCH 9

On the second Saturday every three months @ 11:15am, St. Andrew's will be hosting their Senior Caring Communion Service and Luncheon. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP ASAP! From Hope Lutheran there is room for only the first 10 people who RSVP. If you would like more information about this event or would like to attend, please call the church office.

THE BIBLE AND LIFE

On Wednesday, January 9th at 1:00pm, we will meet again to read certain central biblical stories that can help us understand what faith in God entails, and how faith can help us deal with the challenges and suffering in life without losing strength and hope.

The class will meet through the month of February, with the option of going further should folks desire. We will be meeting in Nielsen Hall.

Seniors Ministry—February 5

On Tuesday, February 5, we have guest speakers from the American Red Cross. Bring a bag lunch and beverages will be provided. The time: 12:30 – 2 pm
The place: Nielsen Hall. All are welcome.

Men's Breakfast

The Men's breakfast meets the first and third Saturday of each month in Nielsen Hall. Breakfast is served at 7:30am and the study begins at around 8:00am.

Men's Breakfast will meet on Saturday, February 2nd & 16th.

BOOK CLUB—February 7

Our next meeting of the book club will be on Thursday, February 7th at 1:30pm in the Fireside Room. The book we will be discussing is entitled, Be the Hands and Feet: Living Out God's Love For All His People by Nick Vujcic. Please join us for inspiration and a great discussion.

Confirmation Classes

Confirmation classes will be hosted at
Hope Lutheran Church.

The schedule is as follows:

February 17

March 24

April 28

May 19

**If you have any questions, please contact
Pastor Dan Severson (650) 349-0100 x102**

Hope Lutheran Church
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February 2019

Voice of Hope Deadline for March edition: Friday, February 15



Hope Lutheran Church

650-349-0100

Email: helc@pacbell.net

www.hopelutheransanmateo.org

www.facebook.com/hopelutheransanmateo

Sunday Worship at 10:00 AM

Sunday School at 11:00 AM

