

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,
 On Wednesday, March 6th, we will commemorate the beginning of the Lenten season with an Ash Wednesday service that focuses on our need for repentance. This is the

traditional theme of Lent, and has often been observed by sacrificing something we may have overindulged in, usually some kind of consumer product. However, while this may be of some benefit, the theme of repentance is best understood as a process of change whereby we seek the grace of God in order to more fully live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. As one of the prayers for Lent puts it, "Christ is both a sacrifice for sin, and a model of the godly life." That is, because Christ sacrificed himself for our sin, we can be freed to make the positive changes that are necessary to live as he lived. In our Lutheran tradition, this possibility is examined in "The Theology of the Cross." We will be looking at this idea in more detail during our midweek Lenten services.

The Theology of the Cross was presented by Luther when he was still a relatively young man during an academic debate sponsored by the Augustinian Order in Heidelberg. For him, the underlying question was, "How do I find a gracious God?" The God who gave the law was demanding. This was an exalted and righteous God who prohibited some things, commanded others, and threatened punishment to all who disobeyed. Moreover, and not for lack of trying, he discovered that it was not possible for him, or any other weak and vulnerable human being to consistently obey these high moral standards in the spirit in which they were meant to be obeyed. On top of that, he found that all of us are subject to what he called "anfechtung--" temptations, understood as "assaults from the devil." For these reasons, he felt as Isaiah did when he encountered a vision of the Holy God in the temple. "Woe is me! I am lost, for I

am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips." What saved Isaiah from despair was an angel who, after purging his lips with hot tongs taken from the altar, said "Now...your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." (Isaiah 6:7) Thus freed from his sin, Isaiah was now empowered to become a prophet and share the word of God with the people.

For Christians, this experience of being freed from sin, and empowered to become a disciple, comes from meeting God in "Christ, and him crucified." (Paul) Because God as the righteous lawgiver and judge leaves us feeling accused and convicted, we need God to reveal Godself as merciful, forgiving, and gracious, so that, through God's love, we can be freed to serve him, even if only imperfectly. Moreover, because we will always find it necessary to return to God in repentance, and to seek God's mercy, perfection being out of the question, God revealed who God is by taking our sin upon himself. Thus, our cross is the need to honestly acknowledge how far short we fall, and God meets us to show his mercy in the cross of Christ. The Theology of the Cross refers to the fact that we meet God carrying our cross, which is our need for mercy, where Christ carries his cross, thereby showing us the mercy we need.

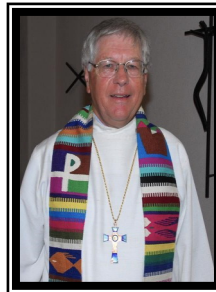
It seems clear to me that this is a perspective we are desperately in need of recapturing these days. I find it distressing that here in America, where Christian values were once practiced more commonly in the public realm; that belief in forgiveness and redemption seems to have become a thing of the past. Too often, we hear of the former sins of public figures, or others as well, and even though many of these people who have been exposed by malicious "opposition research," or people who disagree with their political views and desire to discredit them; even though many have apologized for whatever hurt they caused, and assured folks that they no longer feel the way they did, nevertheless, no grace whatsoever is extended. "They should resign in

disgrace!" Even though some of these offenses were committed decades ago, ruined reputations and lives seem to be the desired end. Since social media makes it possible to spread this dirt far and wide, the utter lack of grace and forgiveness has been made even more destructive. It's as if there has been a reincarnation of the self-righteous authorities Jesus condemned; you know, those shown mercy by God but who refused to extend it to others. (See the parable of The Unforgiving Servant in Matthew 18;23-35) While our justice system has never demonstrated a belief in the possibility of redemption when it comes to the criminal behavior of the poor and disadvantaged; while it has been the norm to house people convicted of crimes in prison for years with little or no attempt to prepare these folks for a responsible and productive life when they get out, which is one reason the recidivism rate is so high; that we now attack and condemn people who have engaged in unacceptable behavior when they were as young as high school, and try to ruin their careers, that is a new low. Does the decline in Christian faith and values have something to do with this? Now that we are post-Christian, we are also becoming post-civil and gracious. As Snoopy once said after having accidentally lost the balloon Lucy gave him for safe-keeping: "Make one mistake and you pay for it the rest of your life."

Not so in relation to God, who alone matters in an ultimate sense. As Luther discovered, we have a gracious God. This is not the god of this world. This is the living God who meets us on the cross so that our cross will be transformed from an experience of judgement to one of forgiveness and mercy.

Blessings, Pastor Dan

Pastor Paul's Notes



Congratulations to our youth for spearheading "SOUPERBOWL OF CARING" on February 3!! As was reported, \$300 + canned goods were distributed to Samaritan House and CALL Primrose.

It was begun in 1990 as a national campaign to benefit local agencies whose mission is to alleviate hunger and poverty. In 2018 nearly 4,000 groups collected more than 8 million in cash and food. This year the total was just short of an additional 8 million. Led by youth, it takes of course people of all ages to pull it off. Thank you to everyone for responding!

There will be two SENIORS EVENTS in March.

On **Tuesday, March 5**, we will gather in Nielsen Hall, 12:30 to 2 pm (bring a bag lunch...beverages provided). Our guest speaker that day will be **Sue Gibson** from "Care Patrol". She is a certified Senior Advisor in this agency which has provided free community service for over 20 years. Sue will talk about a variety of issues regarding senior housing, including 'home assistance' vs. 'assisted living.' She can describe the retirement homes and living facilities in this area and beyond. Questions are welcomed. All are invited to attend.

On **Thursday, March 21**, a lunch-outing is scheduled. The restaurant and time will be included in Sunday bulletins in early March.

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Coming in April! Plans are developing for viewing the Video, "The Mission," on **Tuesday, April 2**. The congregation is invited. It will begin at 12 noon as it is a 2 hour showing----pop corn will be served. It will be in either the youth room or Nielsen Hall.

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"They who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar as with wings of eagles."

- Isaiah 40:31

From our Council President



Having been a biology major in college, I learned early about life cycles. I realized a long time ago that life cycles apply to other things besides living organisms. Retail businesses, associations, and other organizations have life cycles in

which they go through periods somewhat like the life cycles of plants or animals. Hope is one of those organizations, specialized as it is in providing a spiritual home for us. Membership and activities have waxed and waned over the years. This happens as more people become more involved and then when people are no longer able to participate.

I do not know the total number of people who volunteer their time at Hope. Some do so very quietly and seemingly in the background. Some people volunteer on a regular basis, performing the same task regularly, perhaps once a week or once a month. Others volunteer on an irregular basis – filling needs as they crop up. Everything that these volunteers do is important and is valued and appreciated.

From my perspective, however, our ranks of volunteers have thinned recently. It's often difficult for me to ask for help, but I'm using this bully pulpit to ask you to step in when and where you see a need or at least be available to help if asked. The business of the church is vitally dependent on all those who volunteer their time. If you don't know what you can do or what is required, ask one of us on church council. Our pictures are on the wall in Nielsen Hall, and most of us are around every Sunday (and often on other days of the week).

Blessings,

Don Hermansen
Council President

Stitches & Ties x x x x x



Quilters have resumed their charitable construction of cozy quilts, large and small.

Reviewing 2018, 50 quilts were shared locally including those delivered by Diane Bare to fire victims in Santa Rosa and Paradise.

From Hope LWR received 25 quilts as well as 32 fabric kits consisting of 6 yards of fabric and 500 yards of thread. During 2018, Lutheran World Relief shipped a total 13.4 million kits and quilts to 25 countries, benefitting more than 601 thousand individuals. Visit [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/LuthWorldRelief), [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/LuthWorldRelief) or [twitter.com](https://twitter.com/LuthWorldRelief) all with /LuthWorldRelief after the social network title.

One visitor at the February 12 meeting tied several large quilts. Thank you, May, for bringing Frances.

Quilters always welcome additional help. Hope to see YOU soon..

Preschool Corner



The months are rolling by with so many activities. We are starting with a Spaghetti/Bingo Night for the preschool families.

March is our March Madness Month including Silly Hair day, Wacky Wednesday, Sports day, Superhero day and St Patrick's Day (silly leprechauns). These fun activities are learning moments for the children.

The children are 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 the blessing.

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!!

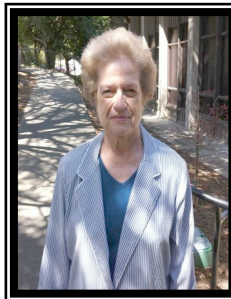
Here are a few highlights so that you can save the date on any of the items that you want to attend or help with.

Sunday, Mar 17, 2019 – St. Patrick's Day dinner

Sunday, Mar 31, 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



GIFT

GIFT often implies a special favor by God or nature. The *gift* of singing beautifully is often considered a gift from God. Often people think that singers in a choir possess the gift of singing as a gift from God. Sometimes that's true, but often it is someone who acts on a talent or a gift that they embrace and develop which then becomes a gift to other people. Many of our choir members possess this gift or develop their gift from God. Many choir members are "ordinary" singers but choose to use their talents, big or small, to benefit others.

What is your gift? Whatever it is, making soup, repairing equipment or making music, God has given you a gift to develop and benefit others. When you use your talent, it is not only of benefit to others, it fulfills your sense of fulfillment. **DON'T WASTE GOD'S GIFT TO YOU.**

Shirley Fitzgerald
Choir Director



Preschool Sunday

Join us for Preschool Sunday on:

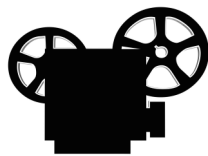
DATE: March 31

TIME: 10:00AM

As we honor our Preschool during our 10am service. Activities for kids and fellowship to follow during Cafe Hope.



Join us for a special afternoon at the Movies in Nielsen Hall. All are invited on April 2nd at 12 noon!!



Come see

The Mission



Starring Robert De Nero and Jeremy Irons

(a 1986 award-winning film)

This is a powerful historically authentic adventure drama depicting the religious and political tensions among the Spanish and Portuguese colonists and the native people of South America during the 17th and 18th centuries. In addition to being a gripping story, the scenery and music are outstanding. It takes place in the jungles around the spectacular, world renowned Iguazu Falls (consisting of 275 falls) on the border of Brazil and Argentina. This is certain to invite discussion afterward.

The movie will begin at 12:00 and run approximately 2 hours. Bring a bag lunch. Popcorn will be served.

A FAMILY SHARING HOPE IN CHRIST WELCOMES YOU

HOPE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER

SUNDAY,
MARCH 17
5PM

FUN GAMES | SUPERB DINNER

BE LUCKY AND JOIN US FOR
FRIENDS AND FELLOWSHIP

TO RSVP, PLEASE CALL OR VISIT:
650.349.0100
FACEBOOK/HOPELUTHERANSANMATEO

Midweek Services for Lent



Lent Begins
Ash Wednesday

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6th. At 7:00 pm, we will have a service of reflection and self-examination that includes both the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. On each Wednesday thereafter during the season of Lent, we will gather in Nielsen Hall from 6:00 to 7:00 for bread and soup suppers with a brief service of the word to follow from 7:00 to 7:30. The theme of this year's services will be Luther's "Theology of the Cross," one of his most influential and lasting contributions to Christianity.

The Sunday morning Bible study continues with the book of Romans. A new study will begin soon. Please look for an announcement in the bulletin for more information in the coming weeks.

Starting on Wednesday, March 6th, our midweek class on theological and spiritual topics will be focusing on something I have wanted to do for a long time, and which is perfectly suited to the season of Lent, namely, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Most people believe that the New Testament is the only source of our knowledge of Jesus. Not so. Moreover, since the four gospels were not written as purely historical narrations of Jesus life and activity, it is necessary to learn how to separate the historical from the interpretive material in these documents. We will be looking at all the extra-biblical material that mentions Jesus: books by the Jewish historian Josephus, and references to Jesus by several Roman authors. We will also examine what we know about Galilean culture and history in the first century, including such things as typical diets, climate, and geographical characteristics. Most important, we will examine the literary and historical contexts of each gospel, and what this has to teach us about Jesus' life and times. For example, the characters in Jesus' parables, as well as the people he encountered on a daily basis, were taken from real life experiences. Who were these day laborers, tax collectors, Pharisees, Sadducees, Samaritans, vinedressers, beggars, and bandits? What was it like to grow up in Nazareth? Why did Jesus avoid the cities in Galilee? Who was Herod Antipas? What do we know about John the Baptist? How about Pontius Pilate? How big was Jerusalem? What languages did Jesus speak?

I think you will enjoy this class. You will certainly come away with a deeper understanding of who Jesus was as a historical figure, and what life was like in his day and age. I hope you will join me as we examine this exciting topic.

COMING SOON: THE UNDERGROUND BIBLE: What archaeology has to teach us about what happened during the biblical period, from the Patriarchs, (2,000-1,900 B.C.) to the united monarchy under David and Solomon (1,000-930 B.C.) to the two kingdoms, (930 B.C.-586 B.C.) to the restoration, (530 B.C.-330 B.C.) to the Greek and Roman periods, (930 B.C.-135 A.D.). The Bible as it is written was never meant to be pure history in the modern sense of the term. The Bible is interpreted history, written from a God's eye view. What is the difference between the biblical version of Israel's history, and what has been discovered through the science of archaeology?

The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah

A midweek class from March 6th to April 10th.

March 6th: The sources of our historical knowledge of Jesus, and the three “Quests for the Historical Jesus.”

- ◇ Extra-biblical sources
 - Josephus
 - Tacitus
 - Suetonius
 - Thallus
 - Rabbinic Sources
- ◇ The canonical gospels
- ◇ The apocryphal gospels

March 13th: The politics, history, religion, culture, climate, geography, and economy of first century Galilee.

March 20th: Literary and historical study of the four canonical gospels.

- ◇ Narrative criticism and gospel genre
- ◇ Redaction criticism
- ◇ Form criticism
- ◇ Source criticism
- ◇ Historical criticism

March 27th: Historical chronology of Jesus’ life and ministry.

April 3rd: Preacher, teacher, healer.

April 10th: The passion and resurrection. What does it all mean? The Jesus of history and the Christ of faith.

If you are interested in attending “The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah”, please cut at the dashed line below and return the slip to the church office.



Yes, I will attend the class on Wednesday from 1pm-2pm during the season of Lent.

Name _____

Holy Week Schedule



<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Palm Sunday	April 14th	10:00 am
Maundy Thursday	April 18th	7:00 pm
Good Friday	April 19th	7:00 pm
Easter Sunday	April 21st	8:00 am 10:00 am

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03-16-1998

I AM RUNNING A CHRISTIAN OPERATING SYSTEM CALLED "STAINED GLASS WINDOWS '98" ... IT'S PRETTY COOL BECAUSE WHEN YOU MAKE AN ERROR THE COMPUTER SAYS "FORGIVE THEM FATHER FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO"



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.

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 March

Richard Green	3/1	Patricia Duvall	3/11	Daniel Severson	3/25
Brandon Blundell	3/3	Eric Grimsby	3/12	Carolyn Worthge	3/26
Soren Voss		Doris Childs	3/16	Don Hermansen	3/27
Annika Dummler	3/4	Quinta Ekong	3/19	Ciera Dahl	3/28
Patricia Lionberger		Nancy Kehl	3/20	Susan Hoffheins	
Rachael Stucke	3/5	Paige Holl	3/22	Donald Neumann	
Pauline Timm		Marcia Coyne	3/24	Lisa Sallander	3/30
Jerilyn Struven	3/7	Jason Jung	3/25	Jeffrey Struven	3/31
Christopher Bravo	3/10	Bengt Sandberg			

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
March 3	The Transfiguration	Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]
March 10	Tempted	Luke 4:1-13
March 17	God's Promises to Abram	Luke 13:31-35
March 24	Parable of the Fig Tree	Luke 13:1-9
March 31	NO SPARKS	---

Ministry Assistants

Date	Assisting Ministers	Communion Assistants	Readers	Spark Leaders
3/3	Skip Dahl	Bill & Margo Kannenberg		Monika Hastings
3/10	Bill Kannenberg	Skip Dahl Kirsten Severson	Karen Reed	Debra Stucke
3/17	Kirsten Severson	Sandra Polster Tom & Debra Stucke	Sandi Kane	Sandi Kane Hank Harper
3/24	Margo Kannenberg	Robert & Dustynne Mendes	Marilyn Johnson	Judy Jeschke Erica Lin
3/31	Hank Harper	Bill Fischer Linda Harvey	Hank Harper	NO SPARKS

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—March 21

A lunch-outing is scheduled on Thursday, March 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 LIFE & MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST

On Wednesday, March 6th, our midweek class on theological and spiritual topics will be focusing on something I have wanted to do for a long time, and which is perfectly suited to the season of Lent, namely, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

The class will meet through the month of March up until April 10th. We will be meeting in the Youth Room at 1pm.

Seniors Ministry—March 5

On Tuesday, March 5, we have a guest speaker from the Care Patrol. Bring a bag lunch and beverages will be provided.

The time: 12:30–2pm.

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, March 2nd & 16th.

BOOK CLUB—March 14

Our next meeting of the book club will be on Thursday, March 14th at 1:30pm in the Fireside Room. The book we will be discussing is entitled, They Were Christians: The Inspiring Faith of Men and Women who Changed the World by Cristóbal Krusen. 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:

March 24

April 28

May 19

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

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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

