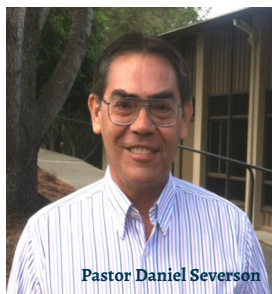


The newsletter of Hope Lutheran Church

The Voice of Hope

JULY 2019

“Knowing and sharing the good news of Hope in Christ”



Pastor Daniel Severson

Dear Friends,

My vision for the program regarding midweek classes is that they should be an opportunity to cover a wide range of topics related to faith,

spirituality, and life. Accordingly, we have focused on the subject of the world's great religions, how the first eleven chapters of Genesis can help us understand common human problems, how Christianity differs from the secular world view that now dominates western culture, and how historical, archaeological, and literary evidence can help us understand the Bible. The next topic I would like to address is ethics, that is, the subject of right and wrong. As was the case with the other classes, this topic is far too big for one short course. However, because its importance cannot be underestimated, it would be good to at least introduce the various ways in which western culture has approached the question of what it looks like to live a moral life. The class will meet on Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 to 2:00 in the youth room, and it will begin on July 10th, ending on either July 31st or August 7th. As always, come when you can and don't worry about those occasions when other commitments will make it impossible for you to attend.

By way of a brief introduction, I would like to point out that there are three basic ways in which this topic has been addressed. The first and most common perspective in today's culture is what has been called “enlightened self-interest.” According to this view, morality is basically an agreement between people that allows everyone to pursue their own goals, or whatever they believe will make them happy. The only thing that might be characterized as an absolute moral standard here is that everyone agrees not to pursue their happiness at the expense of others. Outside of that, whatever is considered to be the highest good is a matter of personal choice. There is no highest good for everyone. This is relative to the individual. If I think wealth

will make me happy, then I should be free to accumulate as much money as I wish so long as I don't harm another person's interests in the process. Or, if I desire a variety of sexual experiences as a means to the good life, then as long as those experiences are consensual, no problem. Moreover, it is considered impermissible to “impose” one person's moral standards on another. Rather, the ideal is “tolerance.” But it needs to be said that the purveyors of this view are very intolerant of intolerance, and they are very dogmatic about not being dogmatic. Needless to say, there are self-contradictions in this view, but it does seem generally reasonable in a society that values self-fulfillment above all else.

The next view is that there are, in fact, objective and absolute moral standards that apply to everyone regardless of how we may feel. To say, “I feel this is right” is to make morality an entirely subjective matter because then it is based on a person's feelings, and these vary, not only from one individual to another but also at different times in the same person's life. When we make feelings the foundation of what we consider to be right and wrong, not only do we make a consistent ethics impossible, we turn it into a narcissistic enterprise. Rather, those who hold to the absolute moral standard view point out that there is a remarkably consistent view on what constitutes moral imperatives from one culture to the next. In other words, no one feels a moral duty to lie, steal, or defraud another person. We may be tempted to do these things for the sake of self-gain, or in order to avoid problems, but nevertheless, our conscience tells us that these things are wrong. Moreover, we do feel a moral duty to tell the truth and refrain from committing adultery. The Ten Commandments are one example of the absolute moral standards written on the conscience of all people. There is disagreement on where these standards come from. Some folks think they come from God, and because we are created in the image of God, we feel a duty to reflect the character of God in the way we live. Others, assorted atheists and agnostics, believe that these standards are derived from our ability to reason and thereby discover the truth, just as we

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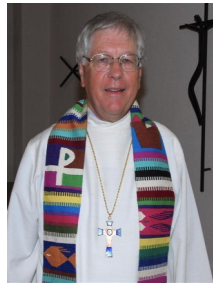
can discover scientific truth. Yet others believe that both positions are true. This position is common among Roman Catholic theologian

The third and, according to Thomas Jefferson, who was no slouch where intellectual matters are concerned, the highest moral vision is that embodied in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew, chapters five through seven. According to this view, it's not enough to do what is right and just. One must be willing to sacrifice even one's life for the sake of the good. Love is the operant word here. And love must be consistent. In other words, love applies not only to people who deserve it. It is also imperative that we love even our enemies, pray for our persecutors, and sacrifice our own interest for the sake of the neighbor's well-being. "Going the extra mile" is a slogan that comes from Jesus' command that we should go even further than we are asked to go by someone who forces us to carry their burden. (Matthew 5:41) Here, the standard is not what is just and fair according to reason. The standard is self-sacrificial, (agapic), love. Moreover, the ideal is not only to refrain from doing harm. It's actively seeking to do good, regardless of self-interest. But why would a person adopt this as their moral compass, especially when you consider the fact that we are incapable of doing so under our own power? The foundation is God's love for us. The highest good is not moral behavior. The highest good is God, and since God is love, (I John 4:8) when we have received God's greatest expression of Love through faith in the gift of Jesus Christ, our heart's greatest longing and desire is fulfilled. The expression of self-sacrificial love is an outward sign of the fact that our hearts are fixed where true joy is found. We can willingly sacrifice things that are of secondary value because we are in the process of receiving that which is the highest good and of the highest value, namely, God's love in Christ. Paul called those things he had to sacrifice for the sake of gaining Christ "rubbish." (Philippians 3:8)

Please join me beginning on July 10th at 1:00 as we examine how these different moral perspectives apply to real life issues, and how the practice of each one has impacted our individual, political, and social quality of life.

Blessings, Pastor Dan

Pastor Paul's Notes



PASTOR PAUL'S NOTES

I read with interest a column written by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton a few months ago. In it she offered some different questions that we need to ask regarding the state of the church. She said in her article, "Some now see the decline of the church in general, and the ELCA in particular, as inevitable. The response can be to turn our churches into bunkers with our congregations sheltering within the walls or to try every new program that breathlessly promises to attract people to our congregations. Neither is an effective or faithful long-term strategy. I think we are asking the wrong questions."

She notes that the questions we are asking have to do about us, and they express loss and grief and fear, such as: 'what can we do?'; 'what will we become?' It's as if the church's foundation rests on us and our efforts. Rather, she encourages us to ask first of all, "What is God up to?" and acknowledge that we don't have the answers. Words of hope come from Isaiah 43: "Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" It was to say that God was still acting. And we are encouraged that God is still acting today.

She suggests that we be open to these questions:

"How is the Spirit reshaping the church?"

"How will Christ use us as Christ's living body in the world?"

Bishop Eaton concludes that "when we stop asking what we can do to fix the church and start asking what God is up to, we open ourselves up to the life-giving promise of God's future." Can we begin to respond to these questions and follow where they may lead?

As we are halfway through the year, we recall and honor those among us who have passed away (in the last year). Norma Martin, Liisa Schroeder, Clark Speetzen, Verena Brauen, Hermine Bauer, George Henderson, Ruben Clevén, Niels Nielsen, Ron Johnson, Helen Widdra, Jens Hansen, Bob Paulus and Dorothy Stienstra. Thanks be to God for their lives and service.

From our Council President



Summertime has a different meaning for me from when I was growing up. We all looked forward to the last day of school and having the summer off. For me that meant swimming, starting with Red Cross lessons with my friend Danny Nielsen whose father drove us to the pool in his '55 Ford if my mother couldn't

take us. Then there was camping with my family in the redwoods of Humboldt County. We swam all afternoon in the Eel River, sometimes got up early to go fishing, and listened to the rangers tell stories at campfires in the evening. We always camped with another family and sometimes three other families, all with three or four kids. At one point, our parents held Sunday school and put word out that other kids were invited. These were all families that we knew from our church in San Francisco before we moved to San Mateo. One of the other fathers later attended seminary and became a Lutheran pastor.

After I grew up, summertime became different. College years brought summer jobs, first as a typist in a San Francisco shipping agency for my uncle (my dad's twin), and then in a variety of factories, making paint, food wrappers, and cardboard boxes. I got to know some of the people who worked in these factories. They were hard-working, honest people who were salt of the earth. While I was able to count down the weeks and days until my last day on the job before going back to school, these people worked year-round and were happy and content in their work. I worked four years in the box factory, sometimes with the same people summer to summer.

From the beginning of our marriage, camping was not an option. We made road trips here and there around California and even as far as Oregon and Washington. Our kids all participated in summer swim teams and enjoyed the meets. We volunteered as timers and recorders at swim meets or worked in the snack bar. I still enjoy watching swim meets. We made friends with many of the swim families and still see some of them around Redwood City. Nowadays, the best part of the summer is that morning commute traffic is lighter, mainly because school is out. Ah, simple joys!

Around Hope, many activities are taking a break for the summer. Worship continues, of course, and it forms the basis for the week for many of us. All aspects of our spiritual life are fed by what we get from worship. There are other aspects of that foundation, including prayer, Bible study, and fellowship, that contribute to our spiritual life. Enjoy the summer. Come to church on Sunday and be fed what you need.

Your church council does not take a break during the summer. We meet monthly to plan, with the help of the pastor, everything that goes on at Hope. Committees continue to meet so that we are ready to go when the summer break ends. (By the way, committees could always use some fresh ideas. If a particular committee interests you, check the Sunday bulletin for names of the committee chairs, and make it a point to speak with them.)

P.S. Did you catch my childhood friend's last name? His father was Hope's first pastor.

Church Council News

Congratulations to our 2019-2020 Church Council and the elected representatives. Our new members are: The new members are:

Sandi Kane	Don Hermanson
Monika Hastings	Karen Reed
Hank Harper	Mark Grimstvedt
Nick Holl	Judy Jeschke
Lynn Loveall	David Schoch
	Anne Wilson

Non-Council Positions:

Treasurer:	Margo Kannenberg
Financial Secretary:	Claire Owens

The next council meeting will be Sunday, July 14th at 11:45 am.



From our Choir Director

It's Your Turn

From September until mid June, the choir members and hand bell ringers work hard at learning and leading music for you.

From mid June until September, it is your turn to contribute to the summer music program. Most any kind of music can be appropriate, from singing, to playing piano, another instrument, or any other type of music. Accompaniment can be provided if you need it. Many of you have hidden talents that could enrich our worship.

Most Sunday's are open, and there is a sign up sheet in Nielsen Hall, so sign up for your favorite week. We will look forward to hearing from you, and we are available to help you in any way that you need.

Please share your talent with the congregation this summer. If you need help, contact Shirley.

Shirley Fitzgerald
Choir Director



Welcome to our Organist

Vaughn Jones is a native of St Joseph, Missouri and a graduate of the Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri in Kansas City. He and his wife Gloriann live in Daly City and have four children and seven grandchildren. Vaughn has served as organist and choir director at many Lutheran, Catholic and Episcopal churches in the the Bay Area since 1974.

Treasurer's Quarterly Report

Dear Members and Friends of Hope,

Adjusted Offering update, effective May 31

Church offering income for period ending May 31, 2019: **\$139,309**

This is a **3% drop in income**, compared with the same period in 2018 (**\$143,523**)

Budgeted offering income for this time period, including potential funds that are needed from reserves: **\$164,788**. This includes an expected **\$14,583** in challenge giving as well as an additional **\$16,667** that would need to be taken from reserves.

Challenge donations so far this year are **\$100**. Please prayerfully consider what you can give to support our challenge fund. It is needed to meet our operating expenses.

Margo Kannenberg

Welcome to our Office Manager

Originally, I am from the Philippines. I came to California in 1982. I got married in 1984 to my husband Dimitri Volpe from Geneva, Switzerland. We are blessed with two (2) children; and in order to introduce them to their cultural heritage, we went and lived in Basel, Switzerland from 1997 to 2004; and in 2004 to 2011 we moved and lived in Cebu, Philippines. I finished my Masters in Theology in 2014 at the Franciscan School of Theology in Berkeley, CA., a member of the Graduate Theological Union.

Whilst working with you here at Hope Evangelical Church, as an Office Manager, I am also furthering my doctoral in education specializing in research and evaluation; writing the topic of the Spiritual Journey of the Mind to God. Likewise, to all of you, I hope to serve with perfection and order as God is a perfect and a God of order; consequently, both in efficient manner. Thank you for having me in your congregation.

Carmel Cabahug-Volpe

Altar Flower Donations

NEW "LOANER VASES"

We are delighted to announce that altar flower donors may now borrow new short "loaner vases". The tall altar floral arrangements fit well in these short glass vases, and they are heavy enough to hold most tall arrangements intact to enjoy at home. Hope has recently received a donation of five beautiful square glass vases for this purpose. Please return these vases to the narthex table within 2-3 weeks so we can keep these available for lending. Thank you to everyone who donates flowers to decorate the altar! Please continue to sign up on the flower chart posted in Nielsen Hall.

From the Worship Committee



Updates from the

SemiAnnual Congregational Meeting

Thank-you to everyone who was able to attend our June 23rd semi-annual meeting. Your attendance was key to ensuring that we had a quorum present to elect our council for July 2019-June 2020.

ICYMI (In Case You Missed It), here are some of the key topics covered at the meeting. Detailed minutes from the meeting will be available later this month.

Congratulations to our new and returning council members and congregational representatives. The list of the 2019-2020 representatives are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. As noted in the meeting, we have one vacant council position. If you are interested in serving on this year's council, please contact Don Hermansen.

Margo Kannenberg presented an update on our financial position. An important point to communicate is that this year's budget was based on receiving \$35,000 in challenge giving this year, in addition to regular, weekly giving. Through May, we have only received \$100 in Challenge income, and church spending has exceeded our operating income by \$31,000. Without additional Challenge Income, we will need to pull additional funds from our Memorial Funds.

We encourage all members to consider making a financial contribution to our Challenge Fund. More information on our financial position and challenges will be communicated to everyone by the Stewardship team in July.

Don provided a brief update on the status of our petition regarding Pastor Dan's status with the ELCA. Our petition has been forwarded to the National Level and we are waiting a decision. Don will keep the congregation updated as the situation changes.



Birthdays in July

Jean Dehner	7/4	Judith Hunt	7/24
Bill Fong	7/12	Ellen Leaf	7/27
Hank Harper	7/12	Heather Hoover	7/28
William Hroziencik	7/13	Carrie Miller	7/28
Else Welch	7/14	Erica Grimstvedt	7/29
Danielle Grimsby	7/17	Scott Hroziencik	7/29
David Hermansen	7/18	Lois Nieman	7/30
Bill Kannenberg	7/18	Sam Wilson	7/31

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

Spark Time Sunday School



Children Ages 3-8 are dismissed after the Children's Message for a 15 minute lesson and return to their parents in church.

Children Grades 3-6 dismissed to Sunday School during Sending Hymn and join parents in Café Hope after 30 minutes of study and activity.

(Beginning June 30, Sunday School will recess for the summer and resume again on August 18)

Date	Lesson	Bible Text
July 7	Message from God	Deuteronomy 6:1-9
July 14	Praise God	Psalm 8
July 21	The Beatitude	Matthew 5:1-12
July 28	Salt and Light	Matthew 5:13-20

Ministry Assistants

Date	Assisting Ministers	Communion Assistants	Readers	Spark Leaders
7/7	Don Hermansen	Bill Hroziencik Sandy Polster	Karen Reed	Monika Hastings Heidi W.
7/14	Hank Harper	Margo and Bill Kannenberg	Lois Nieman	Judy Jeschke Deb Stucke
7/21	Karen Reed	Phil and Skip and Marilyn Gaal	Kirsten Severson	Sandi Kane Hank Harper
7/28	Margo Kannenberg	Nancy Kehl Skip Dahl	Vicki Hanson	Monica Hastings Heide W.

Upcoming Events

TRIP TO THE HOLY LAND

On Wednesday, September 25th I leave with a group of twenty-one (21) people for a trip to Israel. We will return on Friday, October 4th.

PASTOR DAN'S VACATION

Pastor Dan's vacation schedule this year includes Monday, July 22nd to Friday, July 26th for a father/son trip to Southern California. He will return to lead worship on Sunday, July 28.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study on Sunday Monday is on a break for the summer. On Sunday September 15th, we will begin a study of the gospel according to Luke.

ELMS

The date for worship at The Elms this month is Wednesday, July 17th. We could use more enthusiastic people to help bring some joy to the residents who are always very grateful for our time together. The service is at 10:30 am but if you want to carpool, meet us at the church at 10:00 am. All are welcome to come, and the residents will thank you.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Worship Committee will meet on Wednesday, July 10th at 10:00 am.

HLCW CIRCLES

Over the summer, we will hold a joint **Women's Circle** 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am.
Location: Nielsen Hall

Pastor Dan will lead the Bible Studies.

PASTOR DAN'S MID WEEK CLASS

There will be no Bible Study on July 3rd. We will resume on Wednesday, July 10th, will meet in the Youth Room and we will end either on Wednesday, July 31st or August 7th.

Our topic will be titled, The Christian Life on the Ethical Perspectives Based on Christian Faith. We will look at issues related to Christian Ethics both on the social and on the individual perspective. How does Jesus' call to "follow me" inform our ethical perspectives?

The following is an outline of the class.

- 1) How does the biblical notion of "sin" inform our ethical decision?
- 2) How does faith in Christ change our perspective on ethical behavior?
- 3) What is the relationship of faith and good works?
- 4) Church and Society: The role of faith in the secular realm.

BOOK CLUB—July 11th

The book club is working its way through C.S. Lewis' book entitled "Mere Christianity." Our next meeting is Thursday, July 11th at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. As much as more people have joined us, I continue to encourage more participation. We meet for one hour to share our insights. We will also choose the next book at July's meeting so please come with your suggestions.

Pastor Dan

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Voice of Hope Deadline for August edition: Friday, August 16



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Sunday Worship at 10:00 AM

Sunday School at 11:00 AM

