



newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

October, 2020

Autumn -- Whole-hearted Beginnings

We are arrived at Autumn. The September tomatoes have settled in the garden and its time to pull and toss them into the compost pile. It seems cruel. There is something in me that is not ready to let go of summer. The garden is one of them. We've carefully cultivated all these months. Tomatoes given by Charlie in Spring have done their best, full of heart they bloom again. There are still pale yellow flowers bobbing in the air with the hope there still might be time to fruit. In Southern California the issue isn't killing frost, it is October heat and Santana wind, burning the vines, withering the fruit. Either way, cold or heat, this garden is at its end.

Autumn is not an end. It is a beginning. In some climates it is time to begin to enjoy the abundant harvest. In those climates it is also time to plan the winter wheat that will sprout and lie under snow awaiting warmth to stretch upward. My garden in zone 9/10 has come to an end and is ready for reincarnation. It is a beginning: time now to prepare for winter plants: Beets, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kale, Lettuce, Onion, and Spinach are in the nursery. It's Autumn, time to begin again, again.

Autumn at New Hope isn't a time to slow down or winter-over either. We have a month full of important activities for the church, for you and your family, and for the community.

October 4th – Sunday worship includes the blessing of our pets. This month commemorates the life of St. Francis who was known for his commitment to and living into the Christian life for creation and creatures. So tune in to our worship on Sunday to see a special location and blessing of your pets.

October 10th – Saturday. New Hope hosts the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center for a webinar (9:30-11:00 AM) entitled “The Use of Language: Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love.” This class on Zoom will assist your life and family with tools for conflict management and resolution. See our website to sign up today!

October 11th – Sunday is the conclusion of our stewardship drive with the collection of pledges received at church 10:30 - noon. New Hope establishes its 2021 budget based in part by pledged support from members of the church. If you would like to pledge but have not received or misplaced your pledge card, you can receive one at church on October 11th or you can call the church for a card to be sent to you by mail.

October 11th also is the Drive-Thru Holy Communion Sunday (10:30 - noon). We are offering Holy Communion in the parking lot at the church building that day. Please return the post card in your stewardship letter to let us know you will be participating or if you'd still like Holy Communion

delivered to your home (as we have been doing since pandemic). We ask you to remain in your car and the Deacon and myself will bring Holy Communion to you in your vehicle.

The end of the month is the celebration of Reformation Day and we have special events planned for our worship that day. Stayed tuned.

I want to close with an encouragement to continue vigilance with social distancing, hand washing and hygiene, and wearing a mask. We care for the lives of every member of our church and community. We ask you to be smart, follow guidelines, and stay safe. We will be together sooner if we remain vigilant.

This time apart gives each of us a period to focus on prayer and devotion and study. This far into pandemic your discipline may be waning. We invite you to participate in one of our Zoom studies during the week. There is something for everyone. If you would like material to enhance your personal prayer time or your study of God's word, please ask. It is time to pray fervently for those working on treatment plans and vaccines to fight this virus. It is also time to pray, in these next five weeks, for the election of leadership of our nation that will take us into a united future as a global leader. We ask for God's guidance, wisdom, and intervention.

Like Autumn, this time of pandemic is not necessarily an end of activity. Instead, it can be like turning the soil for deeper roots, achieving greater harvest in the vitality of your spiritual life.

Finally, promise me that, if you are not allergic, you will get the flu vaccine soon. The Center for Disease Control tell us this flu season partnered with the Coronavirus is potentially more dangerous. I plan on getting the flu shot this weekend before the beginning of flu season. Annual influenza epidemics follow a winter seasonal pattern in the United States with typical activity peaking during late December to early February. The CDC recommends getting a flu vaccination in September or October so plan to get your vaccine soon.

Under the current guidelines, the Deacon and I are still not allowed to make pastoral care visits to the local hospitals and most nursing facilities (and there are significant restriction of family visits, as well). It is a strange time to be sick, to schedule a surgery, or to have a procedure at the hospital. Do yourself a favor and, as far as it is up to you, do the things that promote wellbeing and good health. Of course, if you need medical treatment, please seek it and don't delay it. Stay in contact with us and with members of the church family – we want to provide quality care and will do our best to support you in time of need.

Let me close by thanking you and all those who attended our Annual Meeting on September 27th. We worried about having such a meeting in a virtual setting via Zoom. We had nearly 80 people (a quorum is 57) and good discussion of the agenda items. Thank you!

We are fatigued from pandemic, unrest, division of our times. Tod Bolsinger from Fuller Seminary writes: It's tempting to just want to give up, binge-watch another show, or pull the covers over our heads and hope it will be 2022 soon. But could there be another way?

"The antidote to exhaustion is not necessarily rest," Brother David Steindl-Rast told poet David Whyte.

"What is it then?", David Whyte asked.

"The antidote to exhaustion is whole-heartedness." (from an online article entitled "How not to Waste a Crisis")

Let us be whole-hearted in our community life. We are praying with and for you. May God guide our life together through this critical time. Thanks for being you, being New Hope.

Pastor Craig

From the Deacon

COMING SOON:

***Our workshop in partnership with Lombard Mennonite Peace Center,
The Use of Language – Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love
Saturday, October 10th 9:30 - 11 AM***

This workshop will be on Zoom, and it's a way to explore our call to "love our neighbor as ourselves" in discussions of difficult situations. Whether it's the pandemic, contentious elections, a gnarly personal issue, or matters of faith, we all have those folks in our life that are difficult to deal with. Yet, Jesus calls us to respond in love. This workshop will give you practical, spiritually-based ways to respond in love. Lombard Mennonite Peace Center is known for their helpful workshops and teaching seminars for clergy, community, and congregations. They have agreed to do a private session of this webinar for New Hope, our friends, and others in the Conejo Valley.

New Hope is graciously sponsoring the workshop, making the cost of attending only \$15, payable on the church's PayPal link on the website. To register, go to newhopeagoura.org and click on the link that says "Register" for the workshop. It will then let you pay for your registration by clicking another link.

You can "attend" a Zoom workshop on your laptop, tablet, or even on a smartphone and should be able to register through any of those methods. If paying by PayPal is a problem, call the church office at 818-889-8700 and leave a message telling us you've registered and are mailing a check to the church. If you haven't registered already, do so quickly. We look forward to "seeing" everybody there.



From the Youth Director, Pastor Scott

Matthew 21: 23-32

Last week Pastor Nikki and I decided to watch a movie that we had seen advertised on social media, the movie was about, well social media. It is called the Social Dilemma and it is a very, very deep dive into how social media applications like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat work. And I don't mean how to use different filters when taking selfies or how to record different types of videos and post them to your Instagram story, but essentially how these companies have figured out how to keep you engaged in your social media, even to the point of being addicted to it, all for a huge profit.

One of the most interesting things is how information is presented to us on our social media feeds. Now you might be thinking, well obviously the stuff I click on and the stuff I like determines what I will see more of, but it goes even deeper than that, these applications even time how long you look at a picture or how long you engage in a video, just by using it and looking at your screen they continue to get a better idea of what is going to keep you coming back to your phone. The other shocking thing is that the documentary talked about was that when you use Google to search for something when you type in your search and google autofills it, that autofill will be changed depending on your location. You will be shown something different if you live in California as opposed to Ohio or Texas.

When all of these factors combine, we all of a sudden have our own little worlds that show us the information that we want to see, it cultivates this reality where there are no competing viewpoints and for some reason we are surprised when someone mentions seeing a story or piece of information on Facebook and we are confused because we have never seen anything even resembling it. And imagine if you saw something on your feed that stood for something you completely disagreed with. When that happens it is almost surprising, like "what is this doing here" and this is a question we see in the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus is teaching in the temple and the chief priests and the elders of the people come to see what he is doing and question by what authority he is doing such things. For them there is something wrong with the algorithm, this shouldn't be showing up on their feed. And things like this still happen today, if there is one thing I see on my video feed on Facebook is videos of people questioning the presence of others in certain spaces. Specifically white people questioning people of color what they are doing in their neighborhood or why are they picking up trash outside their building, when that person also lives in the building, why are you swimming in this pool in my apartment complex, who do you know that lives here? When in fact people of color do not need to constantly justify why they are occupying space like the rest of us do on a daily basis and are never questioned.

I would highly recommend watching the social dilemma and thinking long and hard about some of the social dilemmas that we are currently dealing with in our society. Amen.



Caring Corner

Let us remember the following people in our prayers.....

Denny Koons has throat cancer.

Joan Looman is recovering from knee surgery.

The Pasko family on the death of Marian.

Fred Turner had heart ablation procedure.

Continued prayers of healing for Barbara Artinian, Katie Jo Ash, Floyd Bealer, Merylee Blair, Irene Bright, Elisabeth Brown, Evelyn Colby, Sandy and Matt Cowden, Faith David, Holly Dolliver, Jill and Chris Fisher, Steve Frye, Lyla Grant, Bob Green, Sandy Hansen, Del Hultgren, Joyce Lawson, Reeta Leland, Elisabeth and Jorgen Makitalo, Cheryl Merrill, Ava Grace O'Connell, Nick and Cindy O'Hare, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sharon Pryor, Wayne Rickert, Jane Taschereau, Rose Topliss, Jax Rains-Turk, and Britt Tsumpes.

Prayers for our servicemen - Landen Anderson, Gerren Blair, Taylor Blair, Heather Brown, Keith Brown, Patrick Clohessy, Cynthia Colby, Jonah Hershman, Kyle McCarley, Ikenna Olelewe, and Jason Retter.

EVERY TIME YOU SMILE
AT SOMEONE, IT IS AN
ACTION OF LOVE, A GIFT
TO THAT PERSON, A
BEAUTIFUL THING.

- Mother Teresa



Do you need a facial covering?

Kathy Rogers will make you a custom mask. For \$5 the money will be donated to Lutheran Social Services and to NHLC. Just email her at Kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com or call her at 818-889-4058. Above are 2 samples - pleated or more fitted. She can now make masks for Halloween and the fall.



SCRIP gift cards are easy to give and fun to receive plus a percentage of every gift card purchased through New Hope comes back to New Hope! Purchasing SCRIP is once again available by contacting Kathy Rogers at kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com or 818-889-4058. Kathy will be happy to let you know when and how the cards will be delivered to you. She can also make a list of participating vendors upon request.



Support Our Military

Please continue to collect personal care items and treats to support our troops. Travel size products such as soaps, shampoo, razors, lotions, deodorants, etc. are especially appreciated. Hard candies, lifesavers, and breath

mints make refreshing treats to share too. Contact the church office at 818-889-8700 or by email to laurie@newhopeagoura.com to make arrangements for drop off.

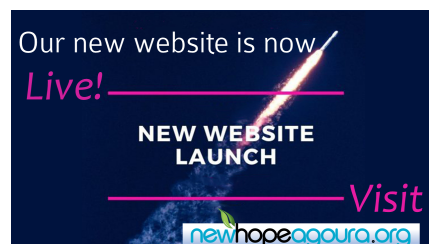


Thanks to the congregation for everyone's discussion and input for the by-law changes from Sunday's congregational meeting.

Joe Bulock



Congratulations to new Council members: Natalie Larkin (Lay Ministry - first term), Robin Martin (Worship and Music - first term) and Leila Mader (Fellowship - second term). Outgoing Council members as of the end of December are Joe Bulock, Sandy Hansen and Kailey Vitt. THANKS for all your years of service to the Council and congregation.





MANNA FOOD PANTRY

Manna will gladly accept ANY unexpired (within 12 months prior to the "sell-by" date), non-perishable food items that are unopened and in good condition. Donations can be taken directly to Manna. Any questions, call Ann Ashamalla at (818) 613-6818.

Top Priority Items

- 1 - Peanut Butter
- 2 - Pancake Mix
- 3 - Red/Kidney Beans
- 4 - Hamburger Helper
- 5 - Ramen Noodles
- 6 - Tomato Soup - Canned and Boxed
- 7 - Tomato Paste/Sauce
- 8 - Canned Vegetables
- 9 - Canned Fruit
- 10 - Flavored Rice (Rice-a-Roni)



New Hope in a Mug!

While we are spending more time at home, we can all use some daily encouragement. New Hope mugs are designed with a positive, uplifting faith-based message to enjoy in your home. If you would like to reserve a mug for yourself or anyone that can use "New Hope," email laurie@newhopeagoura.com. (Mugs are \$5 each.)



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:45 AM on Zoom on Tuesday, October 6th to discuss "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

November 3rd - "The Secrets of Mary Bowser" by Lois Leveen

December 1st - "Caste" by Isabel Wilkerson



Disaster Preparedness

As we enter into the fire season, now more than ever is a good time to review the Disaster Preparedness resources that have been compiled by your Church Council and posted to our website. <http://www.newhopeagoura.org/disaster-plan/>



From the Treasurer

Thank you for your continued generosity in 2020! Your giving through August amounted to \$291,535, which is still above our budget expectations. This does not include the PPP loan/grant amount. Our expenditures so far this year were \$273,267 which is about 3% below budget.

New Hope Mission Endowment Fund

The Committee has designated \$5,000 for grants to be disbursed in 2020-2021, and will be accepting grant applications this fall to support religious, charitable or educational projects. Please direct your favorite charities submit a form found on the new website.



Join Our Heavenly Hiking Fools

For over a few months, we have been doing a morning hike every Tuesday and Saturday from 7:00 – 8:30 AM. We are calling ourselves the Heavenly Hiking Fools, and we are a fun, uncompetitive group of Christian hikers. Because the Conejo Valley is blessed with a number of amazing hikes with beautiful views, we go on a variety of hikes. Whether experienced or new, all are working to get in shape and maybe lose a little weight. We take rest stops to give new hikers a chance to catch up and get in shape. We hike for 45 minutes and then go back the way we came so people can get on with their day. If you would like to join us when your schedule allows, send an email to Terry Paulson (terry@terrypaulson.com). You'll receive a regular email update on our next hike and how to get to that trailhead. We may not be able to worship together, but we can hike together and maintain physical distance.

CHRISTMAS GREENERY

It's that time of year to order your greenery. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE talk to your neighbors, friends and co-workers and encourage them to send direct delivery gifts. Everyone has a special person who is difficult to shop for and they will love receiving a fresh green wreath or other decoration that fill their home with the aroma of Christmas. The direct delivery gifts are a great idea for companies to send to their clients. It's a special way to say "Thanks." Be sure and make this unique opportunity known to all who like to have beautiful fragrant and REAL Christmas greenery surround them at the holidays. And don't forget to order greenery for your own home too! The greenery will arrive shortly after Thanksgiving. Being that this year is different with the pandemic and not sure if you will be able to be celebrating with friends and family, an easy gift to send them would be greenery. You don't even have to go to the store to get it. Being that we aren't together on Sundays for worship, I can't show you the flyer in person or give you an order form. If you want to order greenery, please email Gail McGinnis (gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com) or call me at 805-523-7884 and I will be happy to take your order. If your order will be going to the same people you sent to in the past, I have all your info on the computer so make it easy on yourself. Give me a call and I will work with you. You can send your checks directly to the church, just be sure to mark it for "greenery." The prices and pictures of greenery are below. There is no charge for delivery, but we now have to pay sales tax and that will be added on to the price of your greenery order. All orders are due to me no later than November 10th.



HOLIDAY GREENERY

22" Mixed Evergreen Gift Wreath - \$36

2 - 10' Western Cedar Gift Garland - \$43

Gift Centerpiece with LED Candle - \$33

Noble Fir Gift Door Swag - \$40

28" Mixed Evergreen Gift Wreath - \$41

Cone Gift Basket - \$30

Evergreen Gift Set - \$65



3 ways to give to support the work of New Hope

Give
ONLINE 
SECURE GIVING WITH **PayPal**

Online donations can be
made through our Website
using the PayPal option

Give
ELECTRONICALLY



Contact the church office for
assistance in setting up
automatic giving

Give
BY MAIL 

Address to:

New Hope Lutheran Church
29295 Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

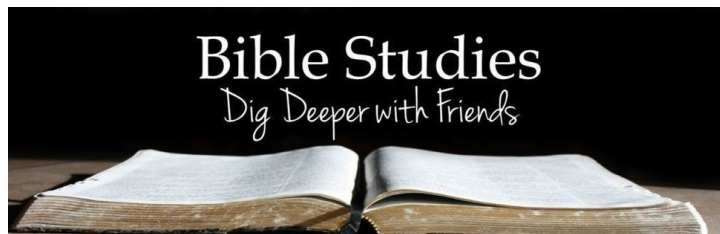
Visit our website

1 THESSALONIANS 5:25

PRAYER WALL

SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST • PRAY FOR SOMEONE ELSE

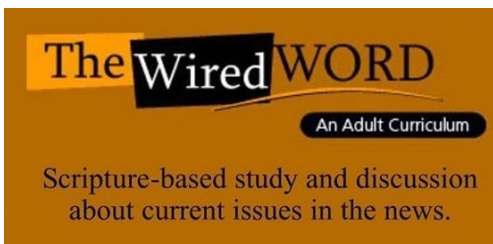
*Praying together
keeps us together*



Are the continuing COVID-19 restrictions causing you to feel disconnected from your church family? Even though we can't be together in all the ways we have been accustomed, we can connect by taking advantage of technology! We would like to encourage you to check out our weekly Bible Studies held on **ZOOM**. ZOOM provides a "real-time" meeting environment where you can interact with all participants. If you would like help getting started, reach out to the church office at newhope@newhopeagoura.com or call us at 818.889.8700 and we will assist you. Don't miss this option to stay connected with your church family while deepening your relationship with Jesus.

Details for all our classes, including convenient links that will connect you to the ZOOM meetings, can be viewed on our website at: www.newhopeagoura.org/upcoming-events

Adult Study & Discussion—ONLINE



Sunday Mornings at 9a.m. or Sunday Evenings at 7p.m.

Join us each Sunday on ZOOM when we delve into a current event taken from the "Wired Word." If you would like to receive a preview of our weekly discussion, email Pastor Craig at craig@newhopeagoura.com to be added to the mailing list.

Women's Bible Study—ONLINE Mondays at 10 a.m.



Women of all ages are invited to attend our weekly bible study when we spend time in God's word, in prayer and in fellowship. It is a great opportunity during this time of COVID-19 restrictions, to draw closer to God and to be supported by one another.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study—ONLINE at 10a.m.



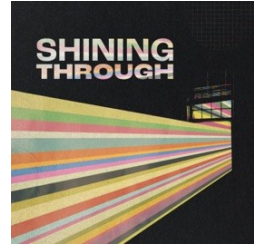
This bible study is hosted by Pastor Craig. We are currently using the study from *Gather Magazine* from the Women of the ELCA. If you would like to receive the study material each week, email Pastor Craig at Craig@newhopeagoura.com

Men's Bible Study & Fellowship—ONLINE Thursdays at 7:30a.m.

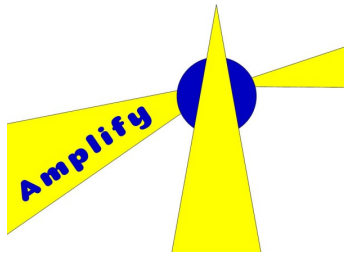


The Men of New Hope gather each week for stimulating conversations about current issues involving life and faith. They are currently in a study entitled "Shining Through" featuring Rev. Andy Stanley from North Point Community Church near Atlanta, Georgia.

Join us. All Are Welcome



Programs for our Youth



Amplify is a Sunday School program designed for children ages 4 years through 4th grade. Join us each Sunday morning on ZOOM at 9:30a.m.

Contact Merylee for **ZOOM** access information



Confirmation continues to meet as a middle school youth group with activities planned each week on ZOOM including: art projects, cookie baking, games, prayer, and good conversation.

Contact Pastor Scott or Pastor Craig for **ZOOM** access information



October Birthdays

- 1 Cheri Ash
- 3 Chuck Kemmerer
- 10 Reid Powledge
- 11 Nancy Rowe
- 14 Kathy Rogers
- 15 Mary Ann Fiore
- 17 Darlene Daigle
- 23 Terry Paulson
Julie Gibbons
- 29 John Bell
- 31 Bryce Vitt



DON'T FORGET TO SET
YOUR CLOCKS BACK ON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER
31ST. YOU WILL GAIN AN
EXTRA HOUR OF SLEEP!



*The deadline for all
articles for the November
newsletter is October 25th. Be
sure to email them to
gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com.*

**OCTOBER IS CLERGY
APPRECIATION
MONTH. LET'S ALL BE
IN PRAYER FOR
PASTOR CRAIG,
PASTOR SCOTT AND
DEACON LYNN THIS
MONTH AND EVERY
MONTH.**

*"Listen to the wind,
it talks. Listen to the
silence, it speaks.
Listen to your heart,
it knows."*

- Native American Proverb

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