



Happy
New Year

newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

January, 2020

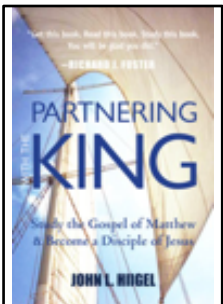
2020 – A Year of New Vision

*“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink.
As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’”*
— Jesus (John 7:37–38)

Vision 20/20 in 2020 is a catchy phrase. However, clarity of vision in life and for a congregation takes time to form while intentionally walking with God. The inner life of each of us is gradually shaped by everything and everyone we spend time with. Most of us are completely unaware of this formation process. When we do become aware of issues in the way we’ve been formed (for example, a struggle with anger, pride, or insecurity), we often don’t know how the problem developed, or what we can do about it.

The good news is that there is something we can do about who we are now, and about who we are becoming. An awareness of our own formation will allow us to become more intentional about what — and who — we let shape us. As followers of Jesus, we want to pour out our lives for others. This is a good and beautiful thing. However, if we are not continually replenished by “living water,” we will end up drained, dry, and exhausted.

Jesus showed us what it means to be fully alive, living in intimate connection with the Father, serving in God’s power. We’re invited into that kind of life — life in the Kingdom of Heaven — right here and now.



One tool I’d like to share and discuss together in the coming year is Partnering with the King by John Hiigel. The author of Partnering with the King is Professor of Biblical Studies at the University of Sioux Falls in South Dakota. For newcomers to faith, the book can serve as an introduction to the Christian life. For more seasoned Christians, it will be a source of renewal and vision. This resource follows Matthew’s gospel, coordinating with the readings assigned for Sunday morning this year.

I’d like to read the book together as members of New Hope and study it together. I don’t have a chosen time in mind to meet together. I’d like to work that detail out with those who would like to study it together. Please let me know if you would like to join this study -- sign up on the bulletin board at church as soon as possible.

I imagine it will take us about 7 months to cover the material, meeting once a month, along with reading the entirety of the gospel of Matthew. I hope you will join together with other members of our family of faith to talk about the way your life and our life together may be shaped by God.

Together, may we walk closer to Jesus, and gain a vision that is closer to 20/20 in 2020.

Pastor Craig

*“Jesus-centered spiritual formation is the process
of being transformed into the image of Christ,
through a relationship of intimacy with God,
by the power of the Spirit, in order to live a good and beautiful life
of faith, hope, love, joy, and peace — a life that will be a blessing to oneself
and to others and will glorify God now and for all eternity”*
— James Bryan Smith

Skipped Story on 12/29:

On December 29th I preached a sermon on Matthew 2:13-23 entitled, “Pursuing the King.” King Herod was a popular king but he was the villain of the story in Matthew 2. He held onto his status in the ways the world always does - wealth and power. In his case, his desire to retain power included murderous actions toward children. Herod couldn't have been further from the vision God had for the world in the infant Jesus he sought to eliminate. This is how the world works: wealth, power, violence. We see it every day on the news. But God has cast a different vision – where God's people protect, serve, love, and care for the lowly and needy. I spoke of Christians being committed to God's vision of reality and serving those in need. In order to save time, I skipped the following story some of you requested:

Jesse Jackson tells about a visit he made to the University of Southern Mississippi. While touring the campus with the university president, he saw a towering male student, sixfeet, eightinches tall, holding hands with a fidgety coed barely threefeet tall. What a contrast, sixfeet, eight-inches tall and only threefeet tall. His curiosity piqued, Jackson watched as the young man, dressed in a warmup suit, tenderly kissed the tiny coed, and sent her off to class.

The president said that the student was a star basketball player. Both parents had passed away when he was a teenager, and he made a vow to look after his sister. Many scholarships came his way, but only Southern Mississippi offered one to his sister, too.

Jackson went over to the basketball star, introduced himself, and said he appreciated the way he was looking out for his sister. The athlete shrugged and said, “Those of us who 600God makes sixeight have to look out for those he makes threethree.” (SOURCE: Philip Yancey, *Rumors of Another World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), pp. 203-204.)

And then I summarized the message:

We still live in Herod-filled world with values that do not match God's, but a new world is coming. You are invited into it, a world without oppression and death, and it begins now under the gentle and just rule of Jesus. May we make it our aim of pursuing a worthy king like Jesus.

Thank you!

This congregation is always so generous and you are always so caring for our family. We are grateful and overwhelmed by the generous Christmas gift the congregation gave to us in December. Your generosity made our Christmas more joyful, helped us to complete some home projects (those projects never end!), and assisted our family in our own year-end generosity. Thank you!

-Pastor Craig and Kristine



Caring Corner

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

Sue Poulson is recovering from surgery for a broken arm.

Wayne Rickert had surgery for knee replacement and a 3-way bypass surgery. He is now in rehab and doing well.

Continued prayers of healing for Tom Appleton, Barbara Artinian, Floyd Bealer, Calvin Beeker, Steve Blair, Elisabeth Brown, Chris Chigaridas, Evelyn Colby, Sandy Cowden, Holly Dolliver, Nancy Esmay, Jill and Chris Fisher, Steve Frye, Lyla Grant, Eilene and Bob Green, Sandy Hansen, Del Hultgren, Gaye Khan, Joyce Lawson, Reeta Leland, Ava Grace McConnell, Cheryl Merrill, Debbie Martin, Porter Nevins, Nick and Cindy O'Hare, Karen Orefice, Marion Pasko, Janel Perez, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sue Poulson, Sharon Pryor, Arnold Reuter, Jane Taschereau, the family of Chad Tsumpas, Jax Rains-Turk, Rose Topliss, Susie Turner, and Pastor John Wilker.

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.



Thanks for Decorating the Church

We had a very dedicated group helping to decorate the church this year! Thank you, one and all. Special thanks go out to Linda and Kevin Barry, Jim Beauchemin and Dixie Burton, Gail and Calvin Beeker, Kristine Beeker, Bonnie and John Bell, Etienne (visitor), Mary Ann and Lou

Fiore, Lucille Fjoslien, Mary Gallagher, Pat Henkel, Natalie Larkin, Cindy O'Hare, Jerry Orefice, Lorie and Terry Paulson, Jax Rains-Turk, Kathy Rogers and Jim Valestrino. I know that there were one or two others who helped but I didn't get their names before they left. Please know you are thanked as well.

Our church would not look as wonderful as it does without all of you! Please join us for the "take down" day on Sunday, January 5th right after service. We will need helpers once again.

With Appreciation,
Karen Orefice



Cerebral Palsy Home Gifts

Thank you to all that contributed gifts to the CP Home. The guests there are so appreciative and thankful to New Hope Lutheran for their generosity. You are all so willing to participate in giving to others, and it extends our outreach to the community. Thanks for all you do.
Bonnie Bell

Adopt A Family 2019

Thank you to all the people who participated in this year's Adopt A Family Program. We made a lot of kids happy in the Conejo Valley! Here are the heroes:

Marsha Chew, Mary Ann Fiore, Karen Orefice, Kathy Rogers, Karen Ingram, Gaye Khan, Gail McGinnis, Bud Larson, Joe and Lynn Bulock, Sandy Hansen, Sue Koons, Mariella Edgar, Linda Barry, Susie Turner, Rose Topliss, Sue Poulson, and Dixie Burton

Happy New Year

Social Ministry

Happy New Year! I would like to begin this new year with deep gratitude to you all for your generosity last year to our Social Ministry programs! In December alone, you provided gifts for 4 Harbor House families children, 23 gifts for the Cerebral Palsy home and an astounding 103 Target gift cards to the children of Prince of Peace Houston. I wish to thank the following folks who make our Social Ministry possible:

Manna - Ann Ashamallah, Harbor House/LSS - Sue Poulson, CP Home - Bonnie Bell, For The Troops - Fred and Susie Turner, Conejo Valley Meals Program Coordinators - Dixie Burton and Sue Koons, Houston Gift Cards - Kathy Rogers and Holiday "Socks" Donations - Deacon Lynn and Chris Chigaridas and Extravagant Generosity - Our Church Family!!

With Love,
Merylee Blair

New Hope Mission Endowment Fund

The Mission Endowment Fund was established in 2017 to support outreach, locally and around the world, above and beyond the programs supported through the annual budget. The Committee evaluated eleven requests for outreach support this year and will be recommending several proposals to Council for funding from the Endowment Fund. Thank you for your interest and participation.

*May God be with you
throughout the New Year
filling your home with
peace, comfort and joy.*



The Daytime Book Club will meet at 11:30 AM in the church library on Tuesday, February 4th - "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Della Owens. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

March 3rd - "Secret Daughter" by June Cross

April 7th - "The Things We Cannot Say" by Kelly Rimmer

BIBLE STUDY

Join us in the Social Hall from 9:30-11:30 AM on Tuesday mornings. Study starts at 9:45. We are currently using the study from Gather Magazine from the Women of the ELCA.



Monday Night Bible Study

Open to all women of all ages. We meet in the New Hope library from 7-8:30 PM for prayer, study and fellowship.



Prime Timer's Luncheon

Prime Timer's will meet on Tuesday, January 14th at 11:30 AM in the social hall. Brian Gibbons will speak to us on estate planning. If you are over 50, you are more than welcome to attend. Come join us for lunch but be sure to let Rose Topliss know if you are able to come so we will have enough food for all.



The New Hope Lutheran Men's Fellowship

Join us on Thursday mornings for Men's group from 7:30-8:30 AM. We are continuing in our stimulating DVD series featuring Rev. Andy Stanley from North Point Community Church near Atlanta, Georgia. His programs are fun, thought-provoking, and Biblically based. Come and help stimulate some great conversations about current issues involving life and faith. Come when you can to enjoy the coffee, donuts, and fellowship with some great men of faith.



Sunday Morning Adult Study

Join us at 9 AM in classroom 2 each week before our worship service 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.



Church Nursery

This is just a reminder that there is a church nursery for infants through 3 years old during the worship service. If there isn't a person in the nursery, please ask an usher and they will let the volunteer know you need someone to watch over your child while you are in worship. We are happy to watch your child and look forward to spending time with them.



Amplify

Amplify is a Sunday School program designed for children ages 4 years through 4th grade. Following the "Children's Welcome" time, the students will be released to their Amplify teacher who will lead them to Classroom #3. They will return near the conclusion of the service to take part in communion and in singing the closing hymn with their families.



From the Treasurer

Thank you for your continued generosity in 2019! Your donations through November amounted to \$398,096 (2% over projected budget); expenses were \$382,303 (1% under budget). This level of giving may mean we will not have to tap into church reserve funds as much as expected. Contact Joe Bullock if you have any questions.

The Budget Explained (Miscellaneous Designated Funds)

In addition to budgeted giving, the church receives various gifts associated with memorial gifts, donations of flowers and poinsettias, purchase of WELCA casseroles, holiday greenery and gift cards. You bought over \$45,000 worth of gift cards from Kathy Rogers and her assistants together in 2019. Council decides how to use the profit from those sales, normally for extraordinary expenses that arise during the year. Contact Joe Bullock if you have any questions.



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. Please leave any donations in the box the narthex. Any questions, call Ann Ashamallah 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)



Risk Taking Mission and Service Opportunities

Please check out our "Help Wanted" section on the bulletin board in the narthex. These are tasks and support projects we are in need of help with. Some tasks may require a one day commitment while others may be 3-6 months, but all offer an opportunity for you to bring your much needed skills and gifts to New Hope. Additional "Help Wanted" cards will be posted as needs arise so please check back often. When you see a card that interests you, please

contact the person noted on the card for more information. We thank you in advance.

Can you help out?

We are in need of more people to help be a part of the Sunday worship services. If you would like to volunteer to be a greeter, guest greeter, usher, reader, communion assistant, acolyte, altar care, nursery, or serve goodies, please let Gail McGinnis know at 805-523-7884 or gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com and she will add you to the volunteer list. Remember, if we each do our share, it won't have to be the same people doing it all.



Support Our Military

A campaign is underway to honor and support our troops. Those on the front lines keeping us safe are often low on the basic necessities and treats. Please help us fill the collection box located in the narthex with travel size products such as soaps, shampoo, razors, lotions, deodorants, etc. Items like lifesavers, breath mints and hard candies make refreshing treats you can share too.



Conejo Valley Meals Program

Conejo Valley Meals Program serves the needs of the homeless and disadvantaged in our community by providing food and shelter. This effort is coordinated with the churches of the Ecumenical Council of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills. Our church hosts a dinner once each month.

New Hope will be hosting the next

meal at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Thousand Oaks on Monday, January 20th. A sign-up sheet for desserts and salads is in the narthex and donation envelopes are available if you would like to contribute monetarily. The food needs to be at the church by 6 PM. If you have any questions, please contact Merylee Blair at 805-490-1867.



SCRIP gift cards are easy to give and fun to receive but did you know that a percentage of every SCRIP gift card purchased through New Hope comes back to New Hope? It's a WIN/WIN! Stop by the SCRIP table today and choose from our current inventory. You can also pick up a list of the hundreds of gift cards that can be special purchased through New Hope for Christmas giving. See Kathy Rogers for more information.



Zelle Give Better With Mobil Banking

For those who use mobile banking, New Hope has enabled e-giving via Zelle.

It's fast (via your phone banking app); safe (using our church email) and has no fees charged to our church. Note: It will default to general giving unless you designate Youth Fundraiser or Scrip gift cards in the note field. Be sure to confirm the email address is set to: laurie@newhopeagoura.com before sending money. Contact Joe Bullock or Kathy Rogers if you have any questions.



*Prayer Shawl meets the first Sunday of each month
in the Amplify Room at 9:15 AM.*

Give a lift...
be a
blessing!



Drivers are needed to assist our seniors who need a ride to Tuesday Bible Study and Sunday Worship. Pickup locations are in Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village.

Please see Marsha Chew for details.

From the Deacon

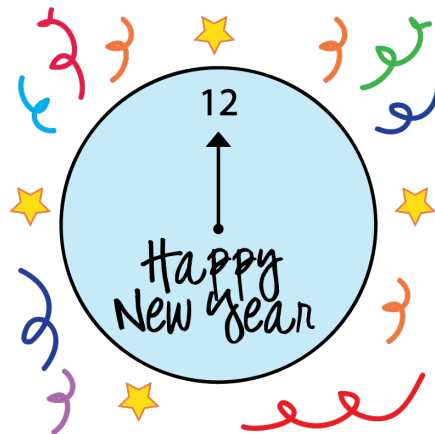
Dear New Hope Friends,

First, thank you for your generosity with my Christmas gift! I look forward to using some of it practically, and some of it for fun stuff like movies and books (my favorite pasttimes).

When you read this I will still be on vacation, at least for a little while longer. After not really taking a formal break for a while, I am taking eleven days off from absolutely everything I do at New Hope, for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the various other projects that fall between those two places. It will be great to come back in January refreshed and with a new outlook on everything.

In the meantime, I'm reading, doing puzzles, hanging out with family, and playing with the dog. I'm also trying to ingrain the faith practices that "busyness" has pushed to the sidelines, like daily Scripture reading and a more solid prayer life. I've started this at Christmas so it doesn't get tangled up in New Year's resolutions. It would be easier to do some of it if my favorite radio stations and Sirius channels hadn't stopped playing hymns and carols and Christmas classical music on December 26th. Next year I'm going to start talking about the Twelve Days of Christmas when Advent starts, so that we can be ready not just for the waiting of Advent, but ready to savor Christmas for twelve days instead of just one.

*Blessings on your new year,
Deacon Lynn*





January Birthdays

- 5 Avery Mansmann
Linsey Niebolt
- 9 Bob Davis
- 10 Pat Henkel
- 11 Reeta Leland
- 15 Tom LaVanne
- 23 Karen Ingram
- 25 Bob Green



Join the choir and sing your praises to God. We meet on Thursday evenings from 7-9 PM in the sanctuary for rehearsals. We hope you will join the choir and bring some joyful music to Sunday worship! All are welcome!

**CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 26TH
FOLLOWING THE
WORSHIP SERVICE TO
DISCUSS THE 2020
BUDGET.**



Please help keep our utility costs down by turning off the lights when leaving a room or hallway and by making sure all lights are out if you are the last to leave the building. Thank you!



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

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