



newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

March, 2020



Lenten Wilderness

"Then as the Lord our God commanded us, we set out...through all that vast and dreadful wilderness that you have seen..." (Deuteronomy 1:19)

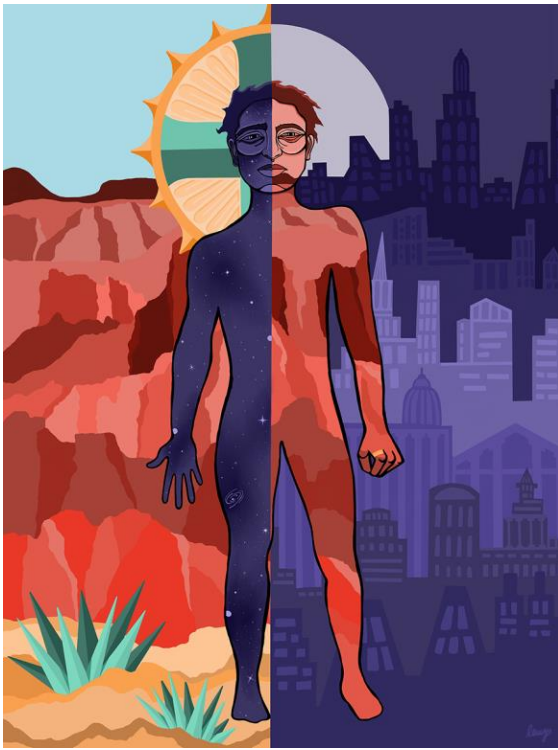
As a college student I worked in Outdoor Ministry at a Lutheran Camp and did quite a bit of camping with

college friends.

One Spring break my buddy Luke and I headed into Pennsylvania to spend part of the week backpacking and wilderness camping. It was beautiful and warm as we hiked 13 miles into our first campsite. The next day there was an unexpected shift in weather. The forecast which called for mild Spring conditions was changing fast with plummeting temperatures and a sudden storm. The second overnight we changed out our tents for a nearby cave to avoid the freezing rain. We did our best to keep warm but it was a battle to find enough dry wood. We awoke the next morning to a world frozen and covered in snow. The wilderness was both a thing of beauty but now also a source of danger.

We decided to hike out. The route we took in was now covered in ice, making the trek difficult and slow. There was a thaw so all the snow on trees was now like drops of rain or glops of wet snow. We were wet and miserable. We only made it about half the distance out that day and were forced to make tent camp another night. Temperature fell into the low 20's again. It was cold and difficult to keep a fire going. In the morning, everything wet the night before was frozen, our boots were frozen together. We were worrying about frost bite, Luke said he couldn't feel his feet from the cold. We made a fire and committed to get out as soon as possible after breakfast and breaking camp. Somewhere along the way out Luke began to complain about a blister he had on his foot—which he decided was a good sign because he could now feel his feet. We made it out, unharmed, shaken, but also encouraged that we had what it took to face the unpredictable circumstances of wilderness.

The most dangerous part of our wilderness trek wasn't in the woods or the weather. On our way back to Ohio on the Turnpike a piece of metal dislodged from a semi-truck in front of us and was drawn into the truck's draft, striking our car in the windshield and roof. It shattered the windshield, peppering us with glass, but ricocheted off thankfully.



Wilderness: the place of the wild. It may be desert or forest or a cityscape. Wilderness can be a state in which you find yourself – a desolate place, a place of danger, growth, journey. Where has been your place of the wild in life?

What is your experience with wilderness? This will be our theme during the Season of Lent: wilderness. We get our theme from the First Sunday of Lent where we read about the Holy Spirit driving Jesus from the waters of Baptism into the wilderness of temptation (Matthew 4: 1-11). In the wilderness there was danger, temptation, spiritual encounter, personal shaping, and divine presence.

During Lent -- this 46 day season which began Wednesday, February 26 and finishes at Easter, April 12 – we invite you into a wilderness journey. When I begin a journey it must be done with intention: planning, packing, preparing, and eventually going.

The journey involves the disciplines of Lent: fasting, praying, studying, or serving. We add one or more of these things to our lives to deepen our spiritual experience. Although most don't consider disciplines in such a way, but it is adding a hardship – something often not undertaken. In that wild, new place we pay attention to how God is working in the event. What shift to the spiritual landscape has the addition of prayer brought, or what awareness has come from abstaining in a fast? What do you learn about your resistance or willingness when you study or serve? There are a million ways to unpack the experience of the new thing, the wild thing, the wilderness.

Join us each Sunday for our main theme and on Tuesday at 11:45 AM for a simple lunch and a devotional service focused on making a wilderness trek in Lent.

One thing is for sure – a journey like the one Luke and I experienced in Pennsylvania long ago bonded our friendship and gave us a lasting growth experience. I trust something similar (though less life-threatening) will be the result of our Lenten wilderness journey too!

I hope you will join us as we walk the wilderness this Lent!

Your fellow pilgrim,

Pastor Craig

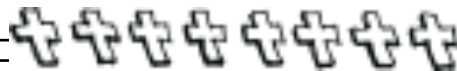
(art provided by A Sanctified Art)

From the Deacon

You may have noticed that we have some new chairs at New Hope. We have four new chairs for the social hall and other classrooms that have a heavy steel frame, and arms. This is so that our folks in walkers and who use canes or have problems with upper body strength can have chairs that they can easily sit in and get up out of without help.

There will be four more similar chairs with arms that will work for those of us who are on the shorter side of life. It's hard to sit comfortably in a chair when one's feet don't touch the ground, and the new chairs we now have make that hard for anybody who's about 5' 3" or below.

These chairs may be in the sanctuary on Sundays for a short time, but they are not meant for permanent use in the sanctuary. For worship we are looking at chairs that match the current sanctuary chairs in wood stain and upholstery, but with arms. There's still research going on for this effort, because while the chairs for the social hall and classrooms are relatively affordable, about \$55, the sanctuary chairs would be more than \$200. We want to make sure they match as closely as possible to the current chairs. If everything works out, we might have ten or twelve new sanctuary chairs with arms somewhere around Pentecost.



From Pastor Scott

We have all heard the saying “you only get one chance to make a first impression” and I think for the most part this is very helpful. It reminds us to take things seriously right out of the gate, when we meet people to try and put our best foot forward. But I think we can take this mentality a little too far. If we are thinking about how we plan to make a first impression are we really bringing our true and authentic selves to the table? That mindset could even be paralyzing, not knowing what the person or situation calls for may even cause us to think that it is not worth going through with the encounter and that it might do more damage than good. So how do we know when the risk is worth it or not?

When I ask myself this question I am reminded of another quote, “you miss 100% of the shots you don't take.” That is a famous Wayne Gretzky quote that I think of often. When I am maybe afraid to ask for something or meeting someone for the first time, especially someone who could have a major impact on my life I remember that it is worth taking the shot because you never know. The thing that I always fall back on though is the baptismal promise of daily renewal. No matter what happens, no matter what I do or choose not to do I will be made new the next day and get a fresh start. We are not defined by this particular day's decisions we make or the one encounter we have with someone. That is why forgiveness is such a key element to our faith. It is the reminder that there are things that we do and choose not to do that we wish we had. And when we remember that we are made new in Christ through our baptism we are free to live without this anxiety about what we think about ourselves or how others think of us because there is always tomorrow.



Caring Corner

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

Continued prayers of healing for Tom Appleton, Barbara Artinian, Floyd Bealer, Steve Blair, Elisabeth Brown, Chris Chigaridas, Sandy Cowden, Holly Dolliver, Jill and Chris Fisher, Steve Frye, Lyla Grant, Bob Green, Sandy Hansen, Del Hultgren, Denny Koons, Joyce Lawson, Reeta Leland, Ava Grace McConnell, Cheryl Merrill, Nick and Cindy O'Hare, Janel Perez, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sharon Pryor, Arnold Reuter, Wayne Rickert, Jane Taschereau, Rose Topliss, Britt Tsumpes, Jax Rains-Turk, 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.



To Each of You at New Hope:

It is always a delight to answer the door and see the wonderful smiles of friends from New Hope! This time it was Mary Ann and Lou Fiore, bringing such beautiful roses from your special congregation to help celebrate Valentine's Day - a gift that gives me a smile each time I look at it!

I send my thanks and hugs to each of you, as well as my appreciation, for all of the great memories of the years Bob and I were worshipping with you. Our daughters, Roxanne, Kirsten and Karis join me in the greeting as well!

*God's blessings and our love,
Joyce Lawson and family*



We rejoice with Kailey Vitt and Cameron Wood on their recent engagement. Congratulations to you both!

Prayer Partners



How can we pray for you and with you? Prayer partners are standing in the back of the sanctuary during Holy Communion. If you desire individual prayer, please see a prayer partner after you have communed and are going back to your seat.



New Hope in a Mug!

How do you start your day? Does it involve coffee, tea, hot chocolate, hot water with lemon, or almond milk with turmeric? No matter what you put in your mug, why not start your day with a positive, uplifting, faith-based message?

We have what you need. New Hope mugs are not just for visitors. Upgrade your mug collection or gift a friend or family member who needs some inspiration. For a \$5 donation, you can have your very own mug!

If you'd like to reserve a mug or two or three or four, call Laurie in the office and she'll be happy to set aside your "Hope in a Mug."



Lenten Luncheon Tuesdays

Join us each Tuesday (beginning March 3rd) throughout the season of Lent for our Lenten program. A delicious soup and salad luncheon will be served at 11:45 AM in the Social Hall followed by a time of worship and guided reflection. If you would like to bring soup, salad or rolls, be sure to sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway.



Altar Guild Guru

Are you naturally endowed with a spirit of hospitality as well as a spirit to serve others? Would you enjoy being trained to lead the Altar Guild by our very own Karen Ingram? Do you enjoy coordinating the gathering of many hands to make light the work? If so, notify Laurie Scott, Pastor Craig or Jax Rains-Turk, and let us know that you would like to be considered for this service-enhancing, faith-enriching, and spirit-renewing service to our congregation.

**SAVE THE DATE
FOR OUR ALL CHURCH
PICNIC ON SATURDAY,
APRIL 11TH!**

**More information to
follow but for now, mark
the date on your
calendar.**





Hey Tech Heads!

You know who you are! The mere thought of ticking the keyboard on a MAC, PC, Tablet, Cell Phone or Sound Board gets your heart racing. Or if you've ever sat in the service and said, "I could do that!", then don't delay, apply today. We are seeking additional tech heads to join our dedicated team to create a seamless, effortless slide and music experience for our worship. Is it YOU? Are YOU ready? Then let Laurie Scott know that you want to be added to the list for an upcoming training session where you will learn the ins/outs and little known secrets of the tech side of our house. The training session will be scheduled within a month or two. Don't miss out! Tech has become an integral part of our worship experience and your passion for tech excellence, skills and innate talent can help us take it to the next level.



From the Treasurer

Thank you for your generosity already in 2020! Your giving in January amounted to \$35,802; our expenditures were \$32,266. There were also \$45,512 in prepaid pledges. Contact Joe Bullock if you have any questions.

Thrivent Choice Dollars®

It's time to designate any remaining Choice Dollars earned in 2019! Those amounts disappear at the end of March 2020. Please consider New Hope when you designate.

Dining with a purpose

The Scrip donation program that we used to have with Vons (not the gift cards) still provides 2.5% to NHLC from various restaurants in the area and nationwide. Just register at escrip.rewardsnetwork.com to get involved.



"Pageant of the Lord"

A group from New Hope will be going to see The Pageant of the Lord on Sunday, April 5th. It's at the Rolling Hills Covenant Church in Rolling Hills Estates. The program begins at 3:00 PM and tickets are \$20 each. It's similar to Master of the Arts in Laguna. Some of us went last year and loved it and look forward to going again this year. If you are interested in going, please let Gail McGinnis (805-523-7884) know **ASAP** as tickets are going fast. We will carpool there together. If you decide later on to go, you can always order them yourself online. If you'd like more information or to see what it's all about, go to www.PageantOfOurLord.com.

The program states that - "The primary purpose of this annual event is to present the gospel of Jesus Christ (the Master artist) through living reproductions of famous works of art. Although this unique presentation is different each year, the essential message of God's love and grace remains the same. This is accomplished through the extraordinary combination of art, music, drama, and dance in powerful ways to make a major impact on those who attend."

Christmas Eve Services

So, believe it or not; Lent is here; Easter will be here before we know it, All Saint's Day, and then heavenly hosts will be on the scene again for Christmas. So, we are planning now for our Christmas Services. Worship and Music is focused on creating a meaningful, memorable holiday experience for our church family and guests. As such, our reaching out to all members of the congregation to query you about our Christmas Eve celebrations.

So, we want to know how you'd like Christmas Eve Services to be timed. Currently, we offer 3 services at 5:30, 7:30 and 11 PM. in order to better meet you, your family and your friends/guests needs, we need to know the following:

1) Would you like for us to consider going from 3 to 2 services?

Yes ☐

No ☐

2) If yes - please tell us why? If no, continue on to Question 3 or 4.

3) If not, why not?

4) If you voted yes - Why?

5) If you voted yes, pick the service schedule you'd like to see:

5:30 and 10:00 ☐

5:30 and 11:00 ☐

7:30 and 10:00 ☐

7:30 and 11:00 ☐

Please use the slips in your bulletins and let your voice be heard by placing them in the offering plates or basket in the back of the sanctuary!



The Daytime Book Club will meet at 1:30 PM in the church library on Tuesday, March 3rd - to discuss "The Honey Bus" by Meredith May. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

April 7th - "Secret Daughter" by June Cross

May 5th - "Becoming" by Michelle Obama

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, March 10th at 11:45 AM in the social hall. This will also be our Lenten Lunch so please come join us. If you are over 50, you are more than welcome to attend.



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.



Middle School Confirmation

Join us each Wednesday at 5:30 PM in the library. We conclude at 8 PM.



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



Drivers are needed to assist our seniors who need a ride to Tuesday Bible Study and Sunday Worship. Pick-up locations are in Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village. Please see Marsha Chew for details.



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)



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, March 16th. 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.



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.



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.

Did you Know?

Your Church Council has been busy compiling valuable resources for our community. Visit the **RESOURCES** tab at **NEWHOPEAGOURA.COM** and you will find an extensive collection of information on **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS** that can assist you and your family in becoming prepared for the next event. Many of these resources are now available at our communications bulletin board in the hallway.

Giving By Text discontinued

New Hope began using Vanco's GIVING BY TEXT as an alternative donation option in August of 2018. Since then its use by our visitors and members has been minimal. With consideration for the additional costs associated with this program, the Church Council has voted to discontinue offering the GIVING BY TEXT option at this time. Donations and SCRIP gift card purchases can still be made with mobile giving apps such as Zelle. Thank you for your willingness to try new things!

*"You must do the thing
you think you cannot
do."*

Eleanor Roosevelt



Free income tax preparation service

In cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service, and sponsored by the Goebel Senior Adult Center in Thousand Oaks, IRS trained and certified volunteers will provide **FREE Federal and California** income tax preparation from **Monday, February 3, through Wednesday, April 15**, for persons who are either:

Seniors age 60 or older at any income level

or

Anyone with an income of \$56,000 or less, regardless of age

This FREE service is available at these locations:

Wednesdays Only

Newbury Park Library
2331 Borchard Road
Newbury Park
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Weekdays (Monday through Friday)

Conejo Creek South Community Building
1350 E Janss Road
Thousand Oaks
8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

No appointments are taken – 1st come, 1st served. Taxpayers should bring their relevant tax documents such as:

Photo ID

Social Security Card (required for all persons on the income tax return).

A copy of last year's Federal and State income tax returns

Social Security Benefits Statement (SSA-1099)

Wage and earnings statements (W2's, 1099's)

Interest and dividend statements (1099 INT; 1099 DIV; 1099 B) as well as the cost of stocks and bonds with the date bought and sold.

Property tax bill, medical expenses, charity contributions for itemized deductions

Health insurance cards for proof of coverage

Bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit if desired.

Any other relevant information about income and expenses.

Relevant income and expense records for self-employment businesses (Schedule C). The service for self-employment is limited to those who are reporting a profit and have expenses of under \$25,000

No rentals (Schedule E)

No out-of-state returns

No Married Filing Separately filing status returns

Contact Alison Rowe or her husband, Tom Beddingfield at (805) 371-9219, if you have questions or desire additional information.



Fifty and
Better

California
Lutheran
University

NEW PROGRAM!

**For those FABulous 50 and better seeking
intellectual stimulation without
homework and tests!**

Mondays (Oxnard Center, 10am-12pm)

The History of Los Angeles 1847-2000, with David Parsons, PhD

This course will present a broad survey of the historical development of Los Angeles, from its acquisition in the Mexican-American War to its transformation into America's western megalopolis.

Tuesdays (Oxnard Center, 10am-12pm)

The Flying A: Silent Films West of Hollywood, with Dana Driskel, MFA

The American Film Company, known around the globe as the Flying A, produced over a thousand films, launched the careers of many industry legends, and was a major player when the movies were in their awkward teens. Yet the company disappeared without a trace by 1925. What went wrong? Or right?

Thursdays (Thousand Oaks Campus, 4pm-6pm)

Religion & Public Life, with Dr. Colleen Windham-Hughes, PhD

Explore the variety and richness of religious diversity in public life in settings such as education, sports, and service. Consider the relation of religion to culture and the adaptations of religions to changing times.

Fridays (Thousand Oaks Campus, 10am-12pm)

A Window on the World: The Art of the Renaissance, with Katherine Zoraster, MA

Explore the changing role of the artist and their resulting masterpieces within the context of style, iconography, patronage, social context, and the revival of classical antiquity.

REGISTRATION

Opens March 2nd

Courses Begin the
Week of March 23rd

Courses meet 6 times
(2 hours each session)

\$60 per course

Free Parking!

LOCATIONS

Thousand Oaks Campus

*60 West Olsen Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360*

Oxnard Center

*2201 Outlet Center Drive, Ste. 600
Oxnard, CA 93036*

For Registration Info

go to our webpage

[https://www.callutheran.edu/centers/
lifelong-learning/fifty-better.html](https://www.callutheran.edu/centers/lifelong-learning/fifty-better.html)

or contact us at:

805.493.3928
fab@callutheran.edu

Make a **BIG IMPACT**. Change a life for the better, forever



Big Brothers
Big Sisters®
OF VENTURA COUNTY

BOWL

For
Kids'
Sake

A FUNdraiser that's **BIG FUN**

Saturday, March 14 2020

Buena Lanes

1788 Mesa Verde Ave, Ventura, CA 93003

9:00 am (Sold Out) • 10:30 am • 12:00 pm

Sign up at bbsvc.org/BOWL OR on **FACEBOOK:**

Visit facebook.com/bbsvc

Underneath our page header, click "+ Create Fundraiser"

When it asks to "Select Nonprofit," click on or type in "Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ventura County"

Set a fundraising goal and an amount of time to fundraise for!

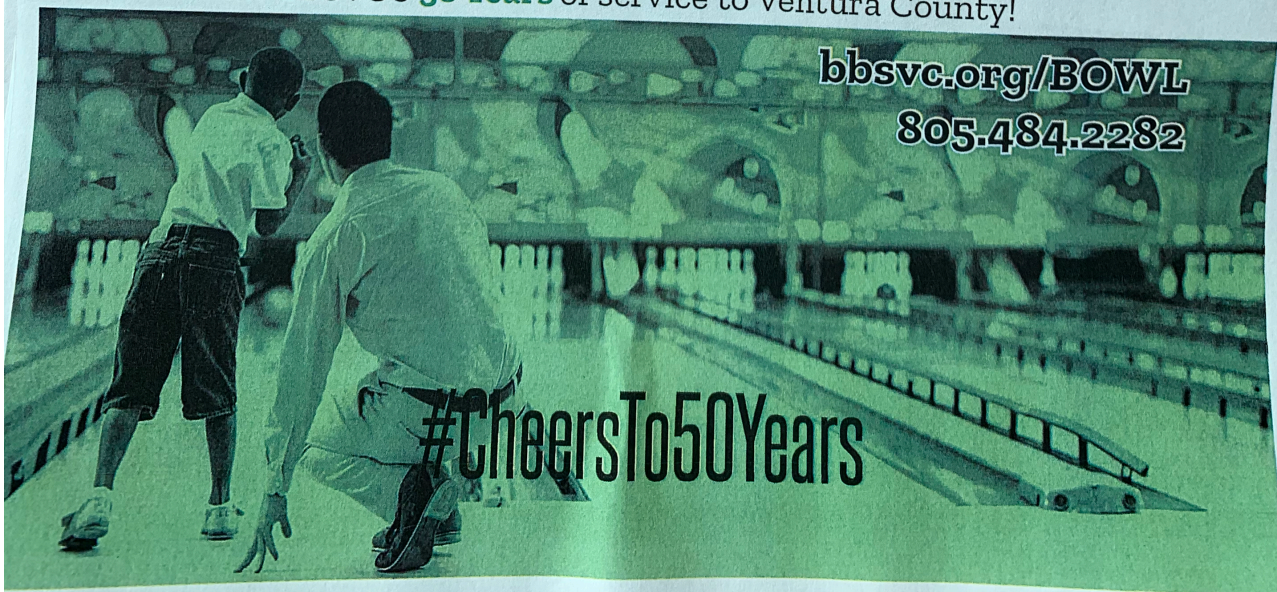
Name your fundraiser... reference "Bowl For Kids' Sake" or "BFKS" if you want to get event credit.

FUNdraise to make a **BIG difference** in the life of a child

Celebrate BBSVC's **50 Years** of service to Ventura County!

bbsvc.org/BOWL

805.484.2282





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!

March Birthdays

- 5 Gaye Khan
Jim Merrill
- 6 Lyla Grant
- 8 Jake and Sam Beeker
Luke Gibbons
- 19 Taylor Mansmann
- 22 Gerda Sawaya
- 30 Clara Church
Gail Beeker



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!

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



**DON'T FORGET TO
MOVE YOUR CLOCKS
AHEAD 1 HOUR ON
SATURDAY, MARCH
7TH!**

New Hope Lutheran Church
29295 Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
818-889-8700
www.newhopeagoura.com

