

# newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

August, 2021

### In Need of a New Connection

It wasn't long ago my cell phone stopped charging. This presented a crisis - there are so many ways I use my cell phone: text, social media, calendar, camera, and, of course, a phone call. These days a cell phone without a charge is like lungs without oxygen. I'm gonna need an expensive new phone, I moaned! After a bunch of unnecessary handwringing, it turned out that every one of my charging cords were not connecting with my device. I didn't need an expensive new phone. I needed a new cord. I needed a good solid connection to recharge.

Since Spring several of us have been discussing the need for a good solid connection to take place at New Hope. The previous 15 months have disconnected us from almost everyone, leaving some of us isolated and drained. We began to talk about ways to reconnect.

That group began to envision small group ministry at New Hope. We certainly have groups at New Hope (several Bible studies, Men's and Women's groups, prayer shawls, etc). But we were looking at ways to intentionally move us into greater intimacy with God and with each other, that would restore vitality and for some create vitality not previously experienced.

Community is written into the understanding of the nature of the church from the beginning. I think if you've been part of New Hope for any amount of time you'll agree: we are better together. Here are some ways intentional small groups work for us:

Community Building -

God as Trinity, God exists in community, and God created us in God's image to live in community. Our unity displays the oneness of God in the Trinity. In the Bible (for example, Genesis 1:26 and John 17:21) community is a fulfillment of God's purposes. We ought to be intentional in creating it.

Culture Shaping -

We all know the power of tools that create a culture - take social media for example. Whole movements for good or not-so-good can grow from a tweet or a post. As we grow in our obedience to Jesus through the group environment, every area of our lives is transformed. This individual transformation works itself out in public ways that shape homes, churches, and communities. See Matthew 5:13-16

Disciple-Making -

Disciple-making is the essential responsibility of Jesus' disciples (See Matthew 28:18-20). As we engage in groups, we encourage each other to grow in the knowledge of and obedience to Jesus that a book, a sermon, or even a class cannot. I cannot disciple anyone from the pulpit, but I can disciple and be discipled in a small group. See Hebrews 10:24-25.

If you'd like more information about small groups you can talk with Deacon Lynn, Natalie Larkin, Gail Beeker, Mary Gallagher, or me.

I hope you will:

- 1) Pray, asking God to bring fruit from this small group initiative.
- 2) Pray, asking God what part you can play and what you might gain from being in a life group.
- 3) Consider how you can either be a leader or support other leaders.
- 4) Join a small group when they begin.

Thanks for being a part of the family at New Hope. As we come out of pandemic, a lot of things have frayed our connections. Let's work to get a good, solid connection with these life-giving relationships. May we work to provide this vital connection to others in life-giving ways.

Still in One Peace, the peace of Jesus.

Pastor Craig



### PRAYER VENTURES AUGUST, 2021

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social, and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.

1 - What do we seek or yearn for when we follow Christ; what proof do we plead for when told of God's presence, activity and infinite power? Pray that the Spirit will stir in us an enduring faith in God's word and promises that does not depend on miracles, signs or personal favors.

2 - Pray for people in our country and around the world who are suffering from persistent drought and extreme heat. Ask God to keep them safe, restore life-giving water to their lands and grant us the wisdom to use our water resources with respect, responsibility, restraint and concern for the present and the future.

3 - Pray for women of all ages convening digitally for the Eleventh Triennial Convention of the Women of the ELCA. Pray for their time together as they conduct business, elect leaders, grow in faith, support and encourage one another, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, our society and the world.

4 - Pray for young-adult, lay and professional religious leaders participating in the inter-religious summer school of the World Council of Churches' Bossey Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland. The summer school will examine issues of religious pluralism and intercultural acceptance in a society based on migration and globalization.

5 - Though we have different gifts, perspectives, life experiences and passions as siblings in Christ and children of God, pray that we will receive and take to heart God's assurance that our faith and baptism unite us to do God's work in the world, together.

6 - Pray for our ELCA missionaries serving alongside companion churches and organizations in Slovakia: Rachel Bossuyt, Megan Freudenberg, Jonathan Kent, Jennifer Norberg, Edward Patricks, Naomi and Nicholas Sveholm, the Rev. Kyle and Anna Svennungsen, John Rogers and Sue Strekal.

7 - Remember in prayer victims of gun violence, their families and friends, impacted communities and all who are working to prevent gun violence in our country. Ask God to remind us that when anyone suffers, grieves or experiences trauma, we are all affected.

8 - Give thanks that God reveals the true Jesus and what he has accomplished for humankind through Scripture and the work of the Spirit. When gathering for the sacramental meal, give thanks for the clarity of Jesus' words: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh" (John 6:51).

9 - Give thanks for the critical work and ministry we accomplish together

in the world through Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR). Our generous support and prayers and the work of LDR and its partners bring God's hope, healing, renewal and assistance to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world.

10 - Pray for teachers, school staff and administrators who have begun a new school year, and for those who are preparing to open schools. Ask God to sharpen their wisdom and judgment as they make decisions for protecting the health and wellbeing of students and responding to social, emotional and academic needs that have surfaced because of the pandemic.

11 - We are not perfect in our actions, motives or relationships, but we can be imitators of Jesus and follow Paul's urging to "put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:31-32). Give thanks and praise that we live each day in God's grace and forgiveness.

12 - International Youth Day: "Transforming Food Systems" Pray for youth and adults working together to implement stable and sustainable food production, provide equitable food distribution, address nutrition-related chronic diseases, improve nutrition education and decision-making, and seek new solutions to other complex issues related to food systems, nutrition and the environment.

13 - Give thanks and praise to God, for the Lord is good, delivers us from our fears and offers a welcoming refuge.

14 - Remember in prayer the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them in learning, choosing leaders, proclaiming the gospel, growing the church, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in an ever-changing world.

15 - Pray that Mary's song in the Gospel of Luke will remind us of God's power, mercy, loving kindness, concern for the humble and neighbors in need, and great work in the world for our sake.

16 - Pray for Lutheran Men in Mission and other congregational ministries for men, that they will flourish, equip new leaders, respond to the needs of men of all ages, inspire men to share their faith, and help men support one another as they witness to the gospel through their relationships, actions, service and words.

17 - Pray that we will trust and honor God's word and ways, and heed the psalmist's urging: "Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" (Psalm 34:13-14).

18 - Give thanks for our church's commitment to lifelong learning and biblical and theological education for laypeople and leaders through the Lay Schools for Ministry network and other programs.

19 - Give thanks to God that the Spirit fills us and gathers us as siblings in Christ to worship and praise our Creator, care for one another, serve our neighbor and share the good news of Christ in our daily life.

20 - Remember in prayer the leaders, voting members and others gathering online for the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them in learning, choosing leaders, proclaiming the gospel, growing the church, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in an ever-changing world.

21 - Give thanks for ELCA Racial Justice Ministries, which encourages us to embrace each person and confront barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, age, gender, family and sexual orientation that often manifest themselves in unjust treatment, inequality, exclusion and violence.

22 - Pray that we will follow Jesus and grow in faith and trust even when we are perplexed by the mysteries of our faith, have questions and doubts, or wonder how to respond to God's call to serve our neighbors and share the gospel.

23 - Pray for our ELCA missionaries serving alongside companion churches and organizations in the Middle East and North Africa, including the Rev. Christie Manisto and Steven Saari (Egypt), the Rev. Carrie Ballenger (Israel/ Palestine) and the Rev. Gabi and Rev. Meghan Aelabouni (Israel/Palestine).

24 - Give thanks and praise that God hears our cries for help, attends to the brokenhearted, saves those whose spirits are crushed and rescues us from our troubles.

25 - We pray that God's saving power through Jesus Christ will be known throughout the world, that all may praise God and sing for joy.

26 - Thank God for the young adults who have served in Lutheran outdoor ministries this summer, and pray that they will continue to respond to God's call to use their experience, gifts and passion for doing God's work in other settings and ministries throughout the year.

27 - Ask God to equip us spiritually with everything we need to resist darkness, evil and temptation so that we will be bold, living witnesses of God's love, mercy, truth, goodness and power.

28 - Pray for volunteers, leaders and staff who are planning fall programs for congregations, that these will enable all ages to deepen their faith and their understanding of Scripture, to serve their neighbor, to share the gospel and to do God's work in the world.

29 - What Lutheran traditions are most important and influential in your life? Where did they originate, and what is their significance in your congregation? Ask God to open our hearts and minds to reflect on the purpose and impact of our traditions and practices and whether they help us honor God's will and deepen our faith or distract us from enriching our faith and practicing openness and hospitality.

30 - Pray for our ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries, that God will bless and further their work of education, encouraging faith, helping students discern their vocations and equipping leaders for the church and world.

31 - Pray that the Spirit will fill us with God's goodness and truth, making us hearers and doers of the word — God's word.

This resource may be copied and shared among members and friends of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Contact info@elca.org for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631-4101. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.

### From the Deacon

Wanted: caring people to do all sorts of things in the church, for the church, and in the world. Of course, that covers just about everything the church (not just our congregation, but the church in the world) does in life, doesn't it? Right now, though, I'm referring to New Hope Lutheran.

In the church on Sunday morning, or preparing for Sunday morning, we have quite a few things that need to be done each week. Instead of a mass choir, we're using up to five people a week, leading songs for worship. Interested? Talk to Aleta. As we start bringing things along we will need folks to help Merylee Blair leading Amplify for kids Preschool-grade 5. Every Sunday our livestream service take 4-5 people to run: someone doing slides, someone running the V-Mix process with the cameras, and someone running audio. The first Sunday of the month we'll need folks to prepare communion, help serve communion, and afterwards take communion to people who are at home.

That last one takes us to the "for the church" part of things, that happen outside of our Sunday worship. There's lots that goes on outside of the worship that benefits our members and others. Visitors need to be welcomed, offerings need to be counted, mailings prepared and stuffed, etc. And the biggest thing needed as we approach our annual meeting in September is that we need 3-4 people each year to join the Congregational Council. This year it's four, with the current positions needing to be filled being Social Ministry, Stewardship, Lay Ministry, and Treasurer. Interested? Talk to Tom LaVanne, Merylee Blair or Pastor Craig.

In the world could make a whole column by itself. Matthew 25:35 is a good place to start: *"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,* <sup>36</sup>*I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."* 



### thrivent

### Women, Wealth & Wisdom



You're invited to an educational and empowering event, Women, Wealth & Wisdom.

Learn to apply real-world lessons about managing money and reaching your financial goals. You'll hear stories from women who figured out how to take control of their finances - and enriched their lives in ways beyond what's in their bank account.

Join us to discover:

- · How to live the life you want.
- Protect your most valuable asset.
- Pay it forward.

**Event Details** 

### Hosted By

Virtual Event Tuesday, August 3 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Pacific Time

of the West Advisor Group WestAdvisorGroup TMN@thrivent.com

Thrivent Member Networks

### RSVP



Free to attend. To learn more & register: Scan the QR code with your phone camera or register here: http://bit.ly/printWWW8-3

No products will be sold thrivent.com 800-847-4836

### Manage your savings, expenses and credit. · Build a plan to handle setbacks.

• Give your family direction about your end-of-life decisions.

You're invited to an educational event.

Financial Foundations: Your Blueprint to Thrive.

Learn how to build a foundation to handle setbacks.

### thrivent

### Closing the Racial Wealth Gap

You're invited to an educational and inspirational event, Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.

Discover how to create financial prosperity and an intergenerational legacy from Eugene Mitchell, author of "Closing the Racial Wealth Gap-7 Untold Rules for Black Prosperity and Legacy".

Join us to learn:

- · Strategies to build, protect, leverage and pass on assets.
- Tools to identify your worth and achieve financial clarity.
- · How we can thrive individually and collectively to create financial stability for all.

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Pacific Time

**Event Details** 

### Presented By

### Eugene Mitche

America.

Founder of the \$50 Billion Community Empowerment Movement on a mission to close the racial gap in

### RSVP



Virtual Event Tuesday, August 10

> Free to attend. To learn more & register: Scan the QR code with your phone camera or register here: http://bit.ly/pRacialWealth8-10

### Contact WestAdvisorGroup.TMN@thrivent.com with questions.

No products will be sold. Eugene Mitchell is not atfiliated with or endorsed by Thrivent. The views expressed in this presentation and not necessarily those of Thrivent or its affiliates. The material presented has been obtained from sources we believe to be Thrivent.com/disclosures. tion by Eugene Mitchell are his ow he reliable and is current



27878F R1-21

Virtua**l** Event Thursday, August 5 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Pacific Time

**Event Details** 

thrivent

### Hosted By

Thrivent Member Networks of the West Advisor Group WestAdvisorGroup.TMN@thrivent.com

### RSVP



 Free to attend. To learn more & register:
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or register here: http://bitly/printFoundai Scan the QR code with your phone camera or register here: http://bit.ly/printFoundation8-5

No products will be sold thrivent.com 800-847-4836

27878F R1-21







# New Hope Agoura

# You will receive automatic notifications when our *live* worship begins

Recognize a special someone or event during our worship service

Order an altar flower arrangement online at: www.NewHopeAgoura.org/ altar-flower-donations/



# Children's Amplify Update

We have postponed our return for now until things improve with the Delta variant. Stay tuned for more updates.



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

Kristine Beeker broke her leg.

Del Hultgren was hospitalized with an infection and has now returned home.

The Grogan and Roos families on the death of Bryn.

April Davis fell and broke her leg.

Continued prayers of healing for Katie Jo Ash, Flovd Bealer, Irene Bright, Elisabeth Brown, Evelyn Colby, Matt and Sandy Cowden, Faith David, April Davis, Holly Jill and Chris Fisher, Dolliver, Steve Frye, Lyla Grant, Bob Green, Sandy Hansen, Del Hultgren, Sue Koons, Diane Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Reeta Leland, Elisabeth and Jorgen Makitalo, Cheryl Merrill, Kathryn Murray, Debbie Niebolt, Ava Grace O'Connell, Nick and Cindy O'Hare, Karen Orefice, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sharon Pryor, Wayne Rickert, Jane Taschereau, Rose Topliss, Fred Turner, 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.



## Calling all carpool drivers

Please let Marsha Chew know if you're able to be on a call list for a Westlake and a Thousand Oaks senior who would like rides to Sunday worship. Thank you.



### **Church Directory Update**

Please make the following changes to your church directory:

### Barbara Artinian

420 Holly Street St. Simon's Island, Georgia 31522 912-434-6099



### **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

A prayer shawl is a knitted or crocheted shawl that can comfort and support those in need. While stitching, the maker of the shawl prays for the recipient. Prayer shawls can be made to convey blessings for a wedding, birth, Baptism, or comfort during an illness or loss. If you would like to request a prayer shawl for someone, or would like information on how you can participate in this ministry, <u>click here</u> to contact the church office.

> Only when we are no longer afraid do we begin to live. - Dorothy Thompson

"A Benedictine monk once said, 'Happiness doesn't lead gratitude to gratitude leads to happiness.' By saying 'thank you,' you are making both vou the thanker and the thank-ee happier. It's a low-cost way to live."

- A.J. Jacobs



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have a wonderful new audiovisual system and sound board! We are so excited to show it off! We also need some volunteers who would assist us with Sunday worship. Each week during the mid-week and again on Sunday morning at 9 AM the worship team (musicians, Pastor, Deacon, and key volunteers) rehearse Sunday worship. We would like to invite you to be a part of the endeavor of worship exciting leadership. We can and will train you for the work as slide advancer, sound director, and VMix director. Currently a small group (Calvin Beeker, Chris Chigaridas, Gail Beeker, Garv McGinnis, Laurie Scott, and Terry Paulson) serve in those capacities. You can certainly learn it and the worshipping community needs your help! Contact Pastor Craig.



### MANNA FOOD PANTRY

Food can now be brought to church to be donated. Look for the MANNA box in the narthex. If you would like to make a donation in person to MANNA, they are located at 3020 Crescent Way, Thousand Oaks 91362.

Any questions, call Ann Ashamallah at (818) 613-6818.

### Top Priority Items:

1. Baking Items – cookie/cake mixes

- 2. Canned Spaghetti
- 3. Pasta Sauce (Canned)
- 4. Ramen/Noodles
- 5. Canned Stew/Chili
- 6 Hamburger Helper
- 7. Kidney Beans
- 8. Flavored Rice
- 9. Jam/Jelly
- 10.Condiments



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:45 AM on Zoom on Tuesday, August 3rd to discuss "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

September 7th - "Chances Are" by Richard Russo

October 5th - "A Door in the Earth" by Amy Waldman



For over a few months, we have been doing a morning hike every Tuesday and Saturday from 7:30-8:30 AM. We are calling ourselves the Heavenly Hiking Fellowship, 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.



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? Contact Kathy Rogers at <u>kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com</u> or call her at 818-889-4058 to let her know what cards you would like to purchase. You can also have a current list of the hundreds of gift cards that can be special purchased through New Hope for gift giving. Contact Kathy Rogers for more information. She will be happy to send you a current list of the cards that are available to order. God is like... BAYER ASPIRIN He works miracles.

God is like... A FORD He's got a better idea.

God is like... COKE He's the real thing.

God is like... HALLMARK CARDS He cares enough to send His very best.

God is like... TIDE He gets the stains out others leave behind.

God is like... GENERAL ELECTRIC He brings good things to life.

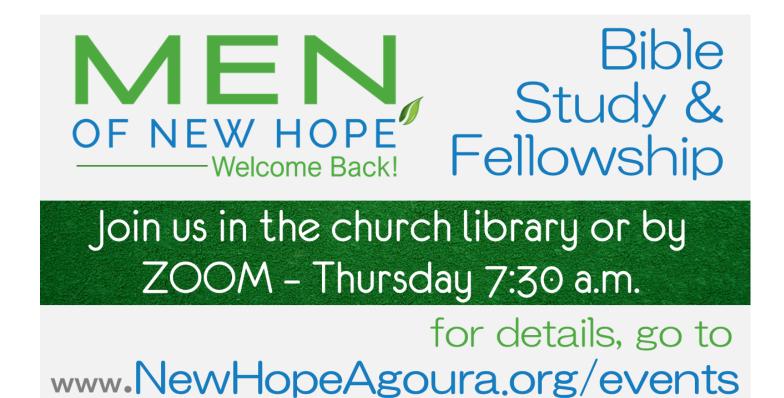
God is like... ALKA-SELTZER Try Him, you'll like Him.

God is like... SCOTCH TAPE You can't see Him, but you know He's there.

God is like... ALLSTATE You're in good hands with Him.

God is like... DELTA He's ready when you are.

God is like... Chevrolet... the heart beat of America.



# On display now at New Hope Church

# PANDEMIC ISOLATION

A unique art exhibit featuring works from the artists of New Hope







**PayPal** 

> In Person Offering plates

# > Online

NewHopeAgoura.org

TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF NEW HOPE



> **Mail** 29295 Agoura Rd Agoura Hills, CA, 91301



There is so much to discover on our local trails.

Join us 7:30-9a.m. Tuesdays and Saturdays



For details, see the events at www.NewHopeAgoura.org



We 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. Don't miss this option to stay connected with your friends and church family while deepening your relationship with Jesus.

### This Sunday's Adult Study & Discussion—ONLINE Sunday Evenings at 7p.m.

The Wired WORD An Adult Curriculum Scripture-based study and discussion about current issues in the news. Pastor Craig leads this online Bible Study and Discussion each week using a resource called "The Wired Word." The study examines a current event and applies the light of God's Word to it. Using the Bible along side current events, the Wired Word, helps us weave together our ancient faith with modern life. **ZOOM:** <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87648778666</u>

Meeting ID: 876 4877 8666

The study material is included in our Weekly Connection email. It is also available on our website by clicking the following link: <u>Sunday Adult Bible Study & Discussion – New Hope Agoura</u>

### Women's Bible Study-ONLINE Mondays at 10a.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 to draw closer to God and to be supported by one another.

Hosted by Merylee Blair —We meet by Zoom each Monday at 10a.m.

ZOOM <u>https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6818228212</u> Meeting ID: 681 822 8212 . Password: 29295

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



Our study comes from the June issue of Gather Magazine, Study material is provided by Pastor Craig each week. If you would like to be added to the mailing, contact the church office. Hosted by Pastor Craig, we meet by ZOOM each Tuesday at 10a.m.

ZOOM <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86865607518?</u> pwd=N2RSejdZLy9iWE8rMXpEQkF10VpGUT09

Meeting ID: 868 6560 7518 . Passcode: 095272

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



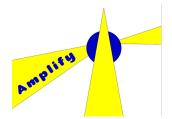
The Men of New Hope gather each week for stimulating conversations about current issues involving life and faith. We have resumed meeting in the New Hope Church Library and for those who are unable to attend in person, we welcome you to join us via ZOOM.

### Hosted by Dr. Terry Paulson

• https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81484471665

Meeting ID: 814 8447 1665

### Programs for our Youth



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



Confirmation is for middle school students who want to study their faith and make an Affirmation of their Baptism. Our classes have concluded for this year. Check back us in the fall if you have a student you would like to enroll.



- **Dutch Schulze** 3
- Marsha Chew 4
- 5 Jack Powledge Debbie Martin
- Joan Looman 6
- 8 Eilene Green
- 10 **Kristine Beeker** Tom Powledge Scott Ash
- 12 Devyn Blair
- 13 Craig Beeker
- 17 Joe Bulock
- 18 Stan Fisher Rob Taschereau
- 19 Tom Beddingfield

**New Hope Lutheran Church** 29295 Agoura Road Agoura Hills, CA 91301 818-889-8700 www.NewHopeAgoura.org



- 20 Del Hultgren Aleta Braxton 22 Bud Larson
- 23 Bethany King Leila Mader
- Alison Rowe 24
  - Sandy Hansen
- 25 Faith David
- 28 Zac Beeker
- 31 Zack Niebolt

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

"I discovered I always have choices and sometimes it's only a choice of attitude." - Judith M. Knowlton



### **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. You may drop these items off in the box in the narthex.