

newhope *news*

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

December, 2022

FROM PASTOR SCOTT MAXWELL-DOHERTY

Table traditions

In our house at Thanksgiving and Christmas, two items need to be on the table or there is trouble.
Black olives, as we like to wear them on our fingers.
Fluted celery, not just plain celery, fluted.
As long as I can remember these two were the essentials.
In fact there was one holiday when the celery did not flute....and our kids looked at us with looks beyond disappointment.

The weekly Eucharist has some essential elements.
They are simple, they are of the earth, and they are essential.
Bread and wine.

As elements at the table they are just that....elements.
Elements that when we eat, we REMEMBER the presence of Christ in our lives.
We remember what it cost for our sin to be forgiven.
We remember, at the invitation of Jesus, that we and all are welcome at the table.

Thousands of theological words have been attached to this meal and its meaning.
I've read plenty of them.
But the ones that stick out to me are the simplest in the mix...FOR YOU.

Jesus invites us to the table and provides a meal of forgiveness...for you, for me, for us.
And for that our lives are filled with gratitude.

We give God thanks.

Pastor Scott



FROM DEACON LYNN

Social Justice and Social Ministry: Why We Need Both

Apparently there's been some confusion about social justice and social ministry in the congregation as our Social Justice Small Group has gotten active. Social Ministry leaders have told me that some folks have asked them if we're still going to be providing meals to Harbor House, supporting Laundry Love, and other social ministries or if we're going in a different direction with issues like voting and supporting food pantries and food banks. The answer is that we will, as a congregation and as individuals, keep supporting projects that feed the hungry, provide clean clothes and gifts to the poor, make sure kids have school supplies and Christmas gifts, and do all the things that we've been doing. That's social ministry, and Jesus tells us over and over that is our job as his followers.

One of my favorite Bible verses is Micah 6:8, which reminds us that God requires us to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Social ministry usually falls under the "love mercy" umbrella. Social justice and seeking justice looks at the "why" behind situations that may or may not be just, and asks how we can change that. For example, the social justice group has been sponsoring forums on the third Saturday of each month. The first one, in October, gave information on the propositions on the November ballot. In November we heard about the Manna food pantry in the Conejo Valley, and how and why we should support them. This month we'll look at ways our community supports animal adoption and animal shelters, and how we can help in that effort.

We can seek justice and love mercy (or kindness) at the same time. And it doesn't have to be confusing.

Blessed Advent!
Deacon Lynn





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

Evelyn Colby's daughter, Janet Hayden, passed away.

Sandy Hansen passed away. Prayers for Sue Poulson and Sandy's sons, Chris and Dave and her grandchildren.

Continued prayers of healing for Barbara Artinian, Floyd Bealer, Tom Beddingfield, Evelyn Colby, Sandy Cowden, Steve Frye, Lyla Grant, Kara Henkel, Joyce Lawson, Jorgen Makitalo, Cheryl Merrill, Kathryn Murray, Debbie Niebolt, Ava Grace O'Connell, Cindy O'Hare, Karen Orefice, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sharon Pryor, Wayne Rickert, Nina Rose Sawaya, Madelyn and Stan Swope, Jane Taschereau, and Rose Topliss.

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



Please update your church directory with their new address:

Stan and Jill Fisher
11730 Barranca Road
Camarillo 93012



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, you can use this URL for the "click here" link: <https://www.newhopeagoura.org/ministries/prayer-shawl-ministry/> and it will take you to the Prayer Shawl Request form.

Our next prayer shawl meeting is on **Sunday, December 4th at 9:15 AM** in the Amplify Room.



"Emmanuel"

Mother Emmanuel AMEC in Charlotte, South Carolina, was the site of a mass shooting on June 15, 2015. A young white man was welcomed into a Bible study, then shot and killed 9 black members, including the Pastor. The documentary "Emmanuel" will be screened at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on Avenida de los Arboles on December 4th at 2 PM. Discussion will follow the film.



Giving Options

There are many different ways one can donate to New Hope. In addition to the weekly or monthly offerings of cash/check or electronic giving through Vanco or PayPal, one can also

- donate directly from an IRA to help with a required minimal distribution (RMD)

- donate stocks or funds directly to the church (save on capital gains taxes)

- designate New Hope to receive a gift from a Charitable Fund

Please contact your accountant, financial advisor, or Joe Bullock if you have any questions.



Four Legged Friends

If you love your four-legged friends, join the Social Justice Committee Meeting to hear about how you can help homeless, injured, or abused animals have a new life.

When injured animals are brought to the Agoura Animal Shelter, they need to be healed before they can be adopted. That's where the non-profit Health Care for Homeless animals comes in. HHH prevents euthanizing of shelter animals by providing the medical treatment and fostering.

Come to the Social Justice meeting on December 17th at 10 AM to hear feel good stories about Ralphie, Pinkie, Annie, Sarge, and other animals.

Make Their Spirits Bright

The Social Justice small group is collecting donations for God's creatures waiting at the Agoura Hills Animal Shelter for their 'fur'ever home. New pet beds of all sizes, toys, collars, bowls, food, etc. are needed for the cats and dogs. These items are shared with Conejo Valley and Malibu animal rescue groups. Financial donations are also appreciated. Make your check payable to New Hope, write "shelter" on the memo line, and put it in the offering plate. Bring your items to church by December 20th and New Hope elves will deliver them to the shelter.



COME HELP DECORATE THE CHURCH

Our congregation will be gathering to decorate our church for Christmas on Saturday, December 3rd at 11 AM. The more helpers we have, the quicker it goes. Let's have a beautiful beginning for Pastor Steve!

Thank you all,
Karen Orefice



WELCA CHRISTMAS EVENING

All women of the church are invited to join us for our Christmas WELCA meeting. We will meet on Monday, December 5th at 7 PM in the sanctuary. Ann Church will lead us in the evening. She will have a project for us to make - a stain glass decoupage votive candle holder. If you would also like to help donate to a charity that night, we will be collecting socks and/or underwear (children, women and men) to give to Harbor House for Christmas. So plan on an evening of fellowship, crafts, dessert, and an opportunity to help others.



CHRISTMAS DINNER

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 11th at 5:30 PM for our annual church Christmas dinner. Santa Claus will visit with the children at 5:45 PM, followed by a delicious turkey dinner. Don't miss out on a memorable evening with your church family. Be sure to sign up at church on Sunday, December 4th or you can let Gail McGinnis (gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com or 805-523-7884) know if you are able to come by December 6th. We want to make sure we have enough food.

Be with us next Sunday,
December 4th at 10 a.m.

when we welcome

Rev. Steve Simpson

as the new Pastor
of **newhope**
Lutheran Church



Services live-streamed are 5:30 on Christmas Eve and 10:00 on Christmas morning.

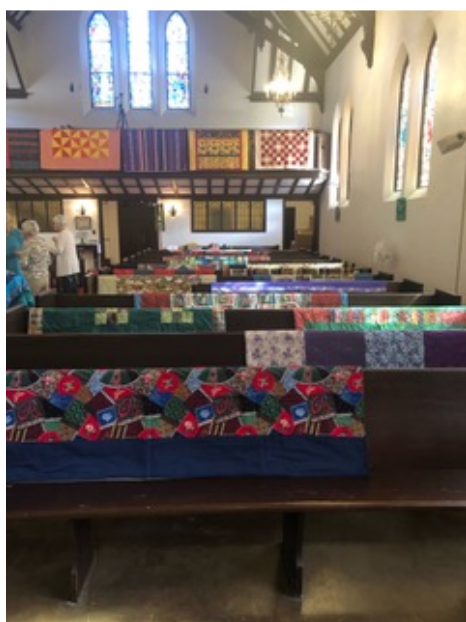
Have you ever thought about making quilts for Lutheran World Relief?

For the past two years I have been going over to Santa Monica to Saint Paul's Church every Wednesday to meet with 5 other ladies to make quilts to send off to Lutheran World Relief and I thought it was time to be making them at my own church. I would like to start a group of people to start making quilts for Lutheran World Relief from our church. If you are interested, please let me know. We can meet at the church in the room that Sunday School was using. There is storage in that room and I can provide sewing machines and fabric to start. On October 16th, I was at Saint Paul's for the blessing of the quilts and on October 20th I delivered the quilts to Saint Andrew's Church in the Valley to be shipped off to Minneapolis. They will be prepared to be shipped to anywhere in the world to help in disaster areas and countries that would need quilts. LWR, last year, received 400,500 quilts from all over the United States. We could be a part of it. Here are some pictures of the quilts that were blessed.

Kathy Rogers

kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com

818-399-5064



Social Ministry



I would like to thank everyone who so generously ordered gift cards for Harbor House and Prince of Peace Houston. Many thanks to Jane Taschereau for donating the free will offering from her beautiful cards to support our efforts.

Our next Meals Program is Monday, December 19th.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS is Sunday, December 4th. We begin our support for Good Gifts. Did you know this program supports God's family in over 88 countries to become self sustaining? We have sent several "farms, cows, goats, pigs, bee hives, vegetable gardens" and much more supporting the ELCA's empowering program. Please help us with this wonderful program as it will be available all of December.

THANKS ALWAYS for your strong support of our Social Ministry Programs. We are Jesus' hands and feet in the world!

Blessings - Merylee Blair

MANNA FOOD PANTRY

With rising prices at the gas pump and in the grocery store, Manna Conejo Valley Food Bank is seeing an uptick in client visits and new clients. In the Conejo Valley, it may appear that there is so much food available, but there are about 15,000 people in our area in need of food.

Please consider cleaning out your pantry and donating some items to this wonderful organization serving our local community. You may drop off your donations in the wood chest in the hallway, outside of the sanctuary.

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

Top Priority Items:

1. Cold Cereal
2. Peanut Butter
3. Canned Tuna/Meat
4. Spaghetti or Pasta Sauce
5. Canned Pasta (ravioli, spaghetti-o's)
6. Canned Chili
7. Canned Chicken Noodle Soup
8. Drinks - (juice, milk, almond, oat)
9. Flavored Rice
10. Shampoo/Conditioner/Soup





Let us help you recognize your special event or someone special

To request an altar flower arrangement: go to our website's **GIVING** menu, select **ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS** and complete the form, or contact the church office.

Your personal message will be included in our worship service announcements and the arrangement is yours to take following our service.



You are not alone!

How can we pray for you today?

Prayer requests can be shared through our website and by contacting the church office:
818.889.8700

www.NewHopeAgoura.org/PRAYER-REQUEST



We don't want you to miss out on all that is going on at **New Hope Church!**

If you haven't been receiving our weekly **Connection Newsletter** - sign-up today: at the **CONTACT US** menu on our website:

www.NewHopeAgoura.org

Be sure to check out our **Facebook** page too for updated announcements:

[www.facebook.com/
NewHopeLutheran](http://www.facebook.com/NewHopeLutheran)

Stillpoint, The Center for Christian Spirituality

offers program that focus on deepening one's relationship with God.

There are two upcoming programs that may be of interest to you.

For more information, or to sign up, visit their website at: <https://stillpointca.org/wisdom-in-practice>

2022 - 2023

Stillpoint

WISDOM IN PRACTICE

AN INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPLATIVE COMMUNITY

You are invited to join a community of seekers in a uniquely curated 9-month online experience of learning that incorporates the teachings of wisdom guides, transformational readings, small groups reflections and guided spiritual practices.

LEARN MORE HERE



STILLPOINTCA.ORG/WISDOM-IN-PRACTICE

Explore the spiritual practices of

**PRESENCE
COMPASSION
GRATITUDE**

Be enlightened by Native American spiritual teachings with Dr. Casey Church



Explore The Wisdom of Wild Grace with Christina Valters-Paintner

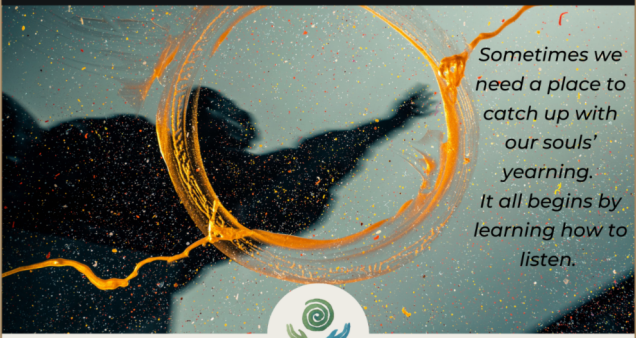


Reflect on the writings of contemplative mystics including Howard Thurman




BEGINS SEPTEMBER 2022

DISCERNMENT PRACTICE FORMATION



Sometimes we need a place to catch up with our souls' yearning. It all begins by learning how to listen.



SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

In-person & Online

The Journey is an eight-month exploration of your spiritual life in a small group setting, deeply enriching your relationship with The Divine and helping you recognize the ways that God/Spirit is present and working in your life.

Discern the next steps on your spiritual journey

Explore contemplative ways of paying attention

Beginning September 2022

PASADENA
LONG BEACH
SANTA BARBARA
ONLINE-BIPOC
ONLINE

Practice the art of deep listening

Spiritual formation in small group community

Join us!

WAYS
to 
GIVE

Thank you for
supporting the work
of newhope
Lutheran Church



In Person

An offering plate is available at all in-person worship services.



By Mail

Address to:
New Hope Church
29295 Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, CA
91301



Online

Secure Giving through our website using the PayPal donate option NewHopeAgoura.org



Volunteer

Sharing Your Time & Talents

If interested in serving, contact the church office for more information



December Birthdays

- 3 Jim Beauchemin
- 5 Vi Kemmerer
- 6 Shannon Mader
- 11 Mimi Beals
- 14 Laurie Scott
- 20 Gail McGinnis
- 25 Holly Dolliver
- 26 Jerry Orefice
- 29 Jeffrey Rausch



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! You can let Kathy Rogers know what you would like to order by emailing her at kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com You can also request a list of the hundreds of gift cards that can be special purchased through New Hope for giving. She will send to you the list via email for you to see what could be ordered.

Contact Kathy Rogers for more information - kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com

The deadline for all articles for the January newsletter is December 26th. Be sure to email them to gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com.



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:30 AM in person and/or on Zoom on Tuesday, December 6th to discuss "Klara and the Sun" by Kazuo Ishiguro. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

February 7th - "Can't Wait to Get to Heaven" by Fannie Flagg

March 7th - "The Four Winds" by Kristin Hannah

"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow."

- Melody Beattie

New Hope Lutheran Church

29295 Agoura Road

Agoura Hills, CA 91301

818-889-8700

www.NewHopeAgoura.org

