

# newhope news

***Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills***

**February, 2023**

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*“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.*

*“Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.”*

*Psalms 46:1-3, 10*

There is something that follows me wherever I go, and I never leave home without it: my phone. It tells me my schedule, sends me emails, gives me directions, and connects me to the world. It has been a blessing, to be sure, but I am also a little ashamed to say how much that piece of electronics controls my life. It is a constant reminder, always hiding in my pocket, of how busy life can be.

Life can be hectic. And as technology helps us to become more connected, you may find yourself overwhelmed. Your phone reminds you of all the appointments you need to keep. Emails bombard you with bills and advertisements. The news on the television gives us new reasons to be anxious. It can all be a bit overwhelming.

In the month of February, we'll be stepping into the season of Lent in the church with Ash Wednesday on the 22nd. This is a time that encourages reflection and meditation. It is about slowing down and listening to God.

What keeps you from hearing God's voice? What are the distractions that follow you everywhere you go? And most importantly, what would it look like to let go of them?

This passage from the Psalms reminds us that God is a rock and refuge. During times of stress or worry, we can also turn to the Lord. Whatever problems you might have, whatever worry you might be carrying, you can place it into God's hands. God is always by your side with an unfailing and unstoppable love.

God is with you. So listen. Be still. Turn off the television or spend a day without your phone. The emails can wait until tomorrow. Just be attentive to the world around you. You might be surprised where you find the Holy Spirit at work. Because God is always near.

Peace, Pastor Steve Simpson

## FROM DEACON LYNN

Last Sunday New Hope welcomed fourteen new members! They ranged in age from three to eighty-something. Many have been worshiping with us for some time, but were waiting until our new pastor got on board and settled. Now that that has happened, it was time to welcome new members before our January congregational meeting. All fourteen people had sponsors in the congregation who were friends or family members who were already members. We are blessed to have everyone joining us!

### New Members

- Ryan Dibley, Andrea Carter  
Luke and Ada Dibley
- Joy Elazary
- Paul Mondragon
- Jim and Renee Olmstead
- Bill and Sonja Speer
- Suzanne Sahlie
- Dyanne Schulze
- Dutch and Bonnie Schulze

### Sponsors

- Leila and Shannon Mader
- Mary Gallagher
- Mary Gallagher
- Joe and Lynn Bulock
- Gary and Gail McGinnis
- Susie Turner
- Natalie Larkin
- John and Bonnie Bell

Please welcome all our new member and say hello when you get a chance. If you know them, invite them to join you at Bible study, being part of an activity with you, or just sitting next to you during worship.

Blessings,

***Deacon Lynn***





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

Lou Fiore fell and broke a bone in his hand.

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.



*Dear Church Family,*

*Thank you so much for your condolences and prayers of comfort and peace during this difficult month for our family.*

*Blessings and good wishes,  
Steve and Marsha Chew*



## Undecorated the Church

We had a wonderful, efficient and helpful group to take down our Christmas decorations. We completed the task in under an hour! A huge thank you goes out to: Linda and Kevin Barry, Lynn and

Joe Bulock, Marsha and Steve Chew, Oliver Edens, Mary Ann and Lou Fiore, Gaye Khan, Sue Koons, Gail and Gary McGinnis, Jerry Orefice, Pastor Steve, Lorie Paulson, Jeff Rausch, Bonnie and Dutch Schulze, Laurie Scott, Suzanne Sahlie and Kris and Ernie Salmon. You were all amazing! Thank you very much .  
Karen Orefice



The Gift Card program is starting fresh for 2023. Going forward, if you would like to purchase gift cards, we would like to have you order the cards with Kathy Rogers and pay for the cards when ordered. You can pay for the cards with check, cash, or Zelle, which is a program with your bank. The cards will be ordered for you and delivered to you the following Sunday at church. Kathy will be creating an order form and making it possible for you soon. Please see Kathy with any questions you may have.



## Bowls of Hope

Many thanks to the 13 painters who enjoyed learning about Many Mansions as they painted ceramic bowls for the V Annual Bowls of Hope fundraiser. We have some talented and creative members! This year's fundraiser will be held March 26th from 11 AM - 2 PM at Kingsmen Park on the CLU campus. Ticket information coming soon.



## Social Justice Small Group

At our regular meeting on January 25th, our small group and a few others heard Leila Mader discuss social justice issues in her home country, Iran. Leila shared her personal story as a Christian in a Muslim country, her experience as an asylum seeker in the U.S., and her concerns for the people of Iran under the current regime. When asked how we can help, Leila asked for prayers, especially for the women and children who are so suppressed by the regime. Please join us in praying daily for the people of Iran and all countries where human rights are ignored. Thank you Leila, for sharing your story and concerns for your family and your country.



Karen Ingram - President  
Mary Gallagher - Vice-President  
Joe Bulock - Secretary  
John Bell - Treasurer  
Ann Ashamallah  
Gaye Khan  
Natalie Larkin  
Tom LaVanne  
Leila Mader  
Robin Martin  
Chuck Titcomb





## Conejo Valley CROP Walk 2023

Please consider supporting the 2023 CROP Walk on Sunday, March 5th at Cal Lutheran University. Registration and check-in starts at 12 noon, and the walk starts at 1 PM. Your choices are a short walk, a longer walk, a short campus stroll or a donation. Also, workers are needed to assist with registration and water stations.

CROP Walks take place each year around the country to address hunger and poverty locally and around the world as we join other churches and community groups to support Church World Service relief efforts internationally. For example, farmers in Vietnam learn to build low cost water purification systems to access clean water. Shelters in Belgrade, Serbia allow children to do homework, eat a meal, take a shower, and get a change of clothes. Farmers in the Dominican Republic improve their harvests and plant vegetable gardens. They also raise pigs, fish, and other animals to improve their diet and earn extra income.

One-fourth of the funds raised stay in the Conejo Valley and supplement funding to Meals on Wheels (both Westlake Village and Thousand Oaks), MANNA, and Harbor House.

Please use the following web site to register to walk or to make a donation:  
<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/thousandoakscsa-->

You can search for New Hope or Fred Dunn to join our team. Thank you for your support to this community activity.



## 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, February 5th at 9:15 AM in the Amplify Room.



## "SOUPER" BOWL 2023



Support your favorite team and our local food bank! Bring nonperishable food item(s) to church on Super Bowl Sunday (**February 12th**) and place in the bin outside the Sanctuary. Cast your vote for who will win the big game!



### Top Priority Items as of January 2023

Thanks to your generosity, we are currently not in need of canned goods. Please consider donating the following:

1. Personal Care Items (Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap, Toothbrush, Toothpaste)
2. Paper Products (Toilet Paper / Paper Towels / Tissue Boxes )
3. Diapers (All Sizes)
4. Shelf-Stable Drinks (Juices, Oat, Almond, Soda)



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### 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.

# IRS Certified Volunteers Provide

## FREE TAX PREPARATION



In cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service, trained and certified CSVP volunteers will provide FREE income tax preparation for persons in either of these categories:

- Seniors 60 years of age or older (any income level) OR
- Persons with an income of \$58,000 or less, regardless of age

**Conejo Creek South Community Building**  
**1350 E. Janss Rd., Thousand Oaks, 91362**

**Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays,**  
**Thursdays, and Fridays**

**Monday, February 6 - Friday, April 14, 2023**  
**8:30am - 4:00pm**

**SPANISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**  
**MONDAYS, 12noon - 4:00pm &**  
**Wednesdays, 8:30am-4:00pm**

**MANDARIN TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**  
**FRIDAYS, 8:30am - 4:00pm**

**Newbury Park Library**  
**2331 Borchard Rd., Thousand Oaks, 91320**

**WEDNESDAYS ONLY**

**Wednesday, February 8 -**  
**Wednesday, April 12, 2023**  
**10:00am - 4:00pm**

**MANDARIN TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**  
**10:00am-4:00pm**

### WHAT TO BRING

- For married filing joint, both spouses must be present
- Photo identification
- Social Security cards or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number documents for you, your spouse, and dependents
- Birth dates for you, spouse, and dependents
- A copy of last year's Federal and State tax return
- All Forms W-2, 1098, and 1099
- Interest and dividend statements (1099-INT; 1099-DIV; 1099-B)
- Form 1095-A and FTB 3895 (Marketplace Health Insurance)
- Other relevant information on income, expenses, deductions
- Information for all deductions/credits
- Total paid to day care provider and their tax ID number
- Bank Routing numbers for direct deposit
- For prior year returns, copies of income transcripts from IRS if Form W-2 not available

### WILL PREPARE TAX RETURNS THAT INCLUDE

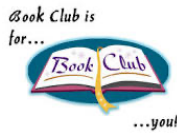
- Wages, salaries, etc. (Form W-2)
- Interest Income (Form 1099-INT)
- Dividends Received (Form 1099-DIV)
- State Tax Refunds (Form 1099-G)
- Unemployment Benefits (Form 1099-G)
- IRA Distributions (Form 1099-R)
- Pension Income (Forms 1099-R, CSA-1099)
- Social Security Benefits (Form SSA-1099)
- Capital Gain/Loss (Form 1099-S)
- Sale of Home (Form 1099-S)
- Self-employed Income (Form 1099-MISC, 1099-NEC, 1099-K)
- Gambling Winnings (Form W-2G)
- Cancellation of Debt (Form 1099-C)
- Health Savings Accounts (Form 1099-SA)
- Itemized Deductions
- Education Credits (Form 1098-T)
- Child Tax Credit
- Earned Income Credit
- Prior Year and Amended Returns
- Business income/expenses for Schedule C (ONLY if there is a profit and expenses are under \$35,000; no home use, inventory, or depreciation)

### CANNOT PREPARE

- Schedule E (No Rentals)
- Out-of-state-returns
- Married filing separate returns
- Returns with more than four K-1's

For more information, contact CSVP at 805.381.2742 or [csvp@crpd.org](mailto:csvp@crpd.org)





## February Birthdays

- 4 Bonnie Schulze
- 5 Uche Olelewe  
Calvin Beeker
- 8 Carol Mansmann
- 9 Andrew Mansmann
- 11 Brianna Hershman
- 14 Elizabeth Sauger
- 18 Kyle and Logan Ashamallah
- 22 Hannah Mader
- 23 Natalie Larkin



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:30 AM in person and/or on Zoom on Tuesday, February 7th to discuss "Can't Wait to Get to Heaven" by Fannie Flagg. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

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

**April 4th** - "The Maid" by Katie Prose

**May 2nd** - "The Bee Keeper of Aleppo" by Christy Lefteri

*The deadline for all articles for the March newsletter is February 24th. Be sure to email them to [gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com](mailto:gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com).*

## Thrivent Opportunity

Start 2023 on a generous note! If you haven't already done so, you can still direct Choice Dollars® to New Hope. Don't miss this opportunity to recommend where Thrivent gives back!

"Optimism is a happiness magnet. If you stay positive, good things and good people will be drawn to you."

- Mary Lou Retton

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**[www.NewHopeAgoura.org](http://www.NewHopeAgoura.org)**

