

newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

August, 2023

*“The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.”
(Psalm 145:8-9, one of our readings for worship on August 6th)*

God’s love is abundant. The Book of Psalms is filled with images of grace. This little verse is a great example. Read it over once more. These words truly are something amazing. The goodness of God stretches to every corner of the earth. The Lord overflows with grace, compassion, and steadfast love. In just a few words, the author paints a vivid picture: God’s love is something humongous.

This is so different from how the world normally works. We are quick to anger and slow to forgive. We seek vengeance, vindication, and violence. We long to see pain brought to the people we consider the “enemy.” But God works differently. The grace of the Lord abounds above our imagination.

Psalm 145 speaks a word of comfort. God’s compassion covers all of creation, including you. You are always loved. But this passage also speaks a word of challenge. We are not only loved by God, but we are called to share that love in return.

If we truly believe that creation is beloved, then we must treat it as such. This means loving our neighbor as ourselves. It means abounding with kindness even when it feels difficult. It means opening our hearts to care about those people who are normally excluded.

It can often feel like we live in a society that is more divided than ever. Sometimes it even feels as though we have begun to celebrate divisiveness as a virtue. But God has a different vision for the world and for you. God overflows with grace and asks you to do the same.

May you abound in compassion and make love known.

Peace,

Pastor Steve Simpson



From the Deacon

I always learn something during a memorial service. Sometimes it's something about the person New Hope is remembering, and sometimes it's something that applies to life in general. Once in a while I learn both kinds of things.

Recently we celebrated the life of Vega Wolf, a lovely person who had been part of the congregation since its beginnings in 1972. I had the pleasure of knowing Vega, and her husband John, since our family came to California in 2000.

Vega was a woman of great faith with a wonderful sense of humor. She drew people in and welcomed everyone. You never wondered where you stood with Vega, or what her opinion might be on something. She and John were married more than sixty years when he passed five years ago, and while their lives were not always easy, they had a lot of fun.

Vega loved people and animals, travel (especially to Hawaii) and was a wonderful teacher. She taught high school and owned and operated a preschool, and I think she was the most alive around young children and animals. The thing I learned about her that I hadn't known before was that in addition to rescuing dozens of cats and kittens, and the occasional dog or bird, she once housed a duck in one of their bathtubs for several months! That's definitely showing a special love for God's creation.

The broader thing I learned, or maybe re-learned from Vega's memorial service came from one of her daughters talking about what she'd learned from her mother. "When you tell someone you care about goodbye, always tell them you love them." We never know when we'll see someone for the last time. And I don't think anybody can hear that they're loved too many times. Please, remember this bit of wisdom and use it often. I know that I try to, at least once or twice a day.

Blessings,

Deacon Lynn





Save the Date:

August 27th at 2p.m

*Join us as we celebrate
with great joy, the
ordination of*

Deacon Natalie
Larkin

Please know that everyone is invited to come to the service of ordination on Sunday, August 27th at 2 pm at New Hope Lutheran. All are welcome! I certainly have felt the prayers, presence and support of the congregation as I've discerned this path towards ordination in Word and Service as a Deacon. My area of ministry is spiritual formation which often happens beyond the walls of the church in small groups, homes, one-on-one sessions, and retreat settings. Of course, I continue as a member of New Hope. Please join me in this celebration worship service!

Blessings,

Natalie



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

Former members Vega Wolf and Sonya Varnum Essick passed away.

Continued prayers of healing for Sandy Cowden, Lou Fiore, Steve Frye, Lyla Grant, Kara Henkel, Chuck and Vi Kemmerer, Joyce Lawson, Cheryl Merrill, Debbie Niebolt, Ava Grace O'Connell, Cindy O'Hare, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sharon Pryor, Phyllis and Wayne Rickert, Suzanne Sahlie, Madelyn and Stan Swope, Jane Taschereau, and Fred Turner.

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.



We are still looking for a volunteer to serve as the liaison between the support groups and the church. This person will process the monthly contributions from the groups, coordinate the meeting schedules, inform groups when church activities are happening, etc. The tasks will take 3-5 hours per month. Some computer skills are necessary. If interested, please see Laurie Scott. Thank you!



MEN'S GROUP Men's Bible Study and Fellowship

**Thursdays at 8:30 AM -
New Time**

Our men's group uses Rev. Andy Stanley's sermons to focus our discussion. We frequently stop the video to discuss our reactions and applications to our faith journey. We are always marveling at how helpful they are in developing spiritual growth. Recent series included such compelling topics as: *Your Integrity: Our World, Not in It to Win It, and Heaven: Who Goes There?* Join us when you can. Attend in person in the church library or join us on Zoom.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Come by the Amplify Room (behind the kitchen) to our next gathering on Sunday, August 6th at 9:15 AM and see what we're about. We knit, crochet, or loom shawls for those who may be in need of comfort of support or to recognize a celebration or a blessing.



Thank you to everyone who donated socks and underwear for the 9th annual James Storehouse Back to School Bash. Your donations will help over 800 youth

head back to school with everything they need to feel prepared for the upcoming school year.

Thank you,

Linda Leland



LaundryLove is Growing!

Our partnership with Church of the Epiphany Oak Park in LaundryLove is making a difference for families in our community. The opportunity to have a break once a month from laundry costs is so greatly appreciated by those who participate. As we grow in this service, your help is needed to keep our quarters flowing. If you would like to help with a donation, please see Burnis "Burnito" Reed at church or phone / text at 805-405-8378. Thanks for your support! Merylee Blair



Our Scrip Gift Card Fundraising program has a fresh start for 2023. Kathy Rogers, our Scrip Coordinator, has begun taking special orders for gift cards. The cards will be delivered to you at church, the following Sunday. You can pay for the cards by check, cash, or electronically through your bank using Zelle (*New Hope Account* is: laurie@newhopeagoura.com) Please see Kathy for more information.

Thank You!!!



I would like to offer a huge thank you to our New Hope Lutheran family for the generous outpouring of support of the Casa Pacifica Backpack Project. We received enough school supplies to fill all 50 backpacks which will be assembled and delivered to Casa Pacifica.

Joy Elazary



Safety & Security Ministry

If a medical emergency occurs at church, it is important to have trained volunteers, ready and able to respond.

The Safety & Security Ministry is offering CPR/AED classes at New Hope on Thursday, August 17 at 1 p.m. or Wednesday, August 23 at 6 p.m.

If you would like to participate in this essential part of our ministry, please contact the church office to be scheduled for training.



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF NEEDS OUR HELP

For more than 75 years, LWR has responded to war, disaster, and emergency by turning the compassion of kit makers like you into tangible items that meet urgent needs and offer glimpses of hope for families experiencing crisis.

The Social Justice Small Group is asking for donations to prepare personal hygiene kits for people in need throughout the world. Although a hygiene kit might seem like a drop of help in an ocean of need, these basic necessities might be impossible for families to find on their own in the wake of disaster.

Each kit contains the following: towel, bar of soap, toothbrush, nail clippers, comb, at a cost of approximately \$10 per kit including shipping. Toothpaste is added at the collection site. If you would like to donate, please indicate LWR on your check. A collection basket will be found in the narthex during the month of September.

The Social Justice Small Group will be purchasing the needed items and then will sponsor a kit making party after church on an upcoming Sunday in October. The number of kits we can provide will be decided by the amount of donations. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Sue Poulson



The Safety and Security Ministry will be offering CPR/ AED classes at New Hope

Should a medical emergency occur at church, it is important to have trained volunteers available to respond. To help New Hope be prepared, we have scheduled two CPR/AED training classes:

1 PM on Thursday, August 17th
6 PM on Wednesday, August 23th

Our instructor will be Mark Hollinger who is an RN, EMT and Educator and Consultant in Emergency and Tactical Medicine. We are limited to maximum 10 participants per class. If you would like to participate in this essential part of our ministry, please contact the church office to be scheduled for training.



2022 Audit Committee

Council has appointed Steve Chew, Dutch Schulze and Alison Rowe to conduct the audit of our 2022 finances. They are already hard at work. Please join Council in thanking them for saying YES when asked to take on this important and necessary task.



Beginning in August, there will be no ushers needed during worship service. So when it's time to go up for communion, please follow the row in front of you. For special services, such as Christmas and Easter, ushers will be needed.



2024 Council

We are seeking 3 individuals to fill upcoming vacancies on the 2024 Council. Leila Mader, Robin Martin, and Church Titcomb will be leaving Council at the end of the year. The 2024 will be setting the course for New Hope's next 50 years of Ministry. This is an exciting time to be part of the journey. Please let Karen Ingram, Pastor Steve, or Deacon Lynn know if you are interested in serving. Thank you.



THE PIECE MAKERS HAVE BEEN BUSY

Seven ladies have been making lovely quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We have 10 finished now and we just started in April. We have everything we need from donated fabrics, thread and sewing machines. But, we do need to purchase the batting that goes into each quilt. We will gladly take donations to purchase the batting.

If writing a check, or donating electronically by Zelle®, please indicate that you are donating to Piece Makers.

Alpha is coming to New Hope
Sunday, September 10th
at 11:15a.m.

**IS THERE
MORE TO
LIFE THAN
THIS?**

explore
the basics
of the
Christian
faith



Join us for fellowship and
lunch followed by a short
video and then discussion
Contact the church office to signup

Explore the basics of the Christian faith - ALPHA is for EVERYONE!

GIVE YOURSELF AND THOSE YOU KNOW the gift of “New Hope” by signing up to attend Alpha. The Alpha Course is a FUN and FREE 10-week exploration into the Christian faith, providing a safe environment to explore the big questions of life and faith. Alpha combines learning with laughter. Whether you're new to New Hope Lutheran, investigating Christianity, or just looking for faith renewal, Alpha offers an opportunity to make new friends and deepen your faith. No question is regarded as too simple or too complicated. IN FACT, if anyone has questions about God, this is the place and the program to ask them. Feel free to invite friends. Christians, seekers, and non-believers are all welcome. This is a relaxed, non-pressure environment. Come and see for yourself.

Alpha starts after church on Sunday, September 10th. Join us for fellowship and lunch at 11:15 followed by a short video and then discussion. You'll be out by 1:15. Talk to Terry or Lorie Paulson if you want more information!

Terry Paulson, PhD



Piece Makers

Quilt Project for Lutheran World Relief

This quilting group meets in the Amplify classroom, every other Thursday, from 9a.m to 1p.m. Our goal is to contribute quilts for distribution through Lutheran World Relief.

Please contact Kathy Rogers if you would like to join us, or for more information.

Kathy can be reached by email:

kathleen.rgrs@gmail.com

Our next meeting is August 3rd at 9a.m.



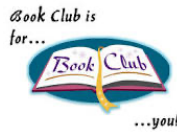
Please place any of these "top priority items of the month" in our Manna Box in the hallway:

1. Personal Care Items: shampoos, conditioner, soap, toothbrush & paste
2. Diapers— all sizes
3. Paper Products: toilet paper, paper towels, tissue
4. Shelf-stable Drinks: juices, oat, almond, soda



August Birthdays

- 3 Dutch Schulze
- 4 Marsha Chew
- 5 Debbie Martin
- 6 Joan Looman
- 10 Scott Ash
- 14 Ryan Dibley
- 17 Joe Bulock
- Dyanne Schultz
- 18 Stan Fisher
- Rob Taschereau
- 19 Tom Beddingfield
- David Cohen
- 23 Leila Mader
- 24 Alison Rowe
- 25 Faith David



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:30 AM on Zoom on Tuesday, **August 1st** to discuss "The Seven Sisters" by Lucinda Riley. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

September 5th - "Demon Copperhead" by Barbara Kingsolver

October 3rd - "We Begin at the End" by Chris Whitaker

November 7th - "Thursday Murder Club" by Richard Osman

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

"What you do with yourself between the last time you heard from God and the next time you hear from God is the ongoing challenge of a life of faith."

- Cece Winans



"Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

- Helen Keller

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