

newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

February 2026

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”
(Romans 8:26-27)

Do you ever struggle to find the right words when you pray? I find that this happens to me all the time. I’ll sit down, fold my hands, but the words don’t come to me. The emotions are in my heart, but I cannot always find a way to describe them. It is an odd feeling.

At times like this, I find comfort in this passage from the Book of Romans. God knows what is written in our hearts, even when it is beyond what we can express. Sometimes all we can utter is a sigh. In those moments, the Holy Spirit joins in with us. God always knows you, and God loves you.

Our theme for Lent this year is “Pathways of Prayer.” There are countless ways to talk with God. It could be a prayer spoken from the front of a church sanctuary, words whispered between friends, a sentence or two as you drive down the highway, or in the melody of a song. As the Book of Romans reminds us, sometimes we are not even sure what to say. Yet we trust that God still hears us. The important thing is that we set aside the time to simply be with the Lord.

With the pressures of life, and the stress of the world, we can feel overwhelmed. In the midst of it all, God invites us to take moments of rest. This Lent, allow yourself to lean into the blessing of prayer. What might you say? What are you carrying in your heart? And how might you give that to God? Even if you can only muster a small sigh, God will hear it. You are not alone. You are loved.

Peace,

Pastor Steve Simpson





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

Ardy Tamburro is recovering from hip surgery.

Continued prayers of healing for Joe Bulock, Steve Chew, Sandy Cowden, Mariella Edgar, Joy Elazary, Mary Ann Fiore, Suzie Frye, Lyla Grant, Ben and Kara Henkel, Vi and Chuck Kemmerer, Beverly Larkin, Joyce Lawson, Dorr and Joan Looman, Elinor Martin, Katie Jo McCarthy, Jim and Cheryl Merrill, Katie Murray, Renee Olmstead, Jerry Orefice, Karen Reed, Wayne Rickert, Madeline Swope, Don Tamburro, and Jane Taschereau.

Prayers for our servicemen - Heather Brown, Keith Brown, Farrah Hayden, and Ikenna Olelewe.



I wish to thank all of the dedicated members who came out on a beautiful Saturday to help take down the Christmas decorations! Many thanks to Linda and Kevin Barry, John Bell, Lynn and Joe Bulock, Mary Ann Fiore, Sue Koons, Gail and Gary McGinnis, Pastor Jennie and Pastor Steve, Kathy Rogers, Kris Salmon, and Laurie Scott. You all really dove in with joy to make it happen efficiently and quickly. You are all so very appreciated!

Blessings,

Karen Orefice



Conejo Valley CROP WALK 2026

The CROP Walk will be held on Sunday, March 22nd at 1 PM starting on the campus of Cal Lutheran. Registration opens at noon.

No one in the world should be hungry. By participating in the CROP Walk, you can take steps and raise funds to provide meals to those in need within our community. A portion of the funds raised goes to MANNA, Harbor House, and Meals on Wheels.

Please make a donation to the CROP Walk - New Hope Lutheran team on the Conejo Valley CROP Walk 2026 page or give a check made out to CROP Walk to Fred Dunn. Thanks for your continued support.

Fred Dunn



Children's Sunday School is now being held on the 2nd Sunday of the month only. We are using the Spark Children's Bible to share Bible stories and will be learning some songs and doing crafts. All children are welcome!



Bread Breakers

Introducing Bread Breakers, New Hope's new small group for those who like to eat out and try new restaurants. Our first meal will be brunch at 11:30 AM on February 19th at Café Vivi (1724 E. Avenida de los Arboles). Come break bread with fellow members of your New Hope family. Feel free to bring a friend. Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex so we can make reservations if needed. For more information, contact Karen Ingram.



Welcome Neighbors Task Group

As you may know, a 300+ apartment complex is being built down the road from New Hope, near Wood Ranch Restaurant. We are looking for volunteers to help develop a strategy for New Hope to reach out and welcome our new neighbors. If you would like to be part of this process, please let a member of Council know.

Supper's 8

Supper's 8 started up again and all that have attended enjoyed themselves and had a delicious meal. We will be meeting again soon. If you didn't sign up and would like to join us, it's not too late. Let Gail McGinnis know (gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com) and she will add you to the list. We'd love to have more adults join us.



Social Justice Small Group

The Social Justice Small Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 2-3 PM. This is a safe place to discuss issues of social justice and how to respond to God's call to care for each other. Please contact Karen Ingram to receive the link.



First Monday Prayer Gathering

Please join our First Monday Prayer gathering on February 2nd, at 5 PM in the Prayer Chapel. We pray for the individuals on New Hope's prayer chain, as well as concerns for our community at large. This month we will pray for love to overcome hate in these divisive times. We also pray that New Hope continues to be a blessing to those in need on seeking God's love.



Our theme for Lent this year will be "Pathways of Prayer." We will be exploring what the scriptures have to say about prayer and the many different ways we can talk with God. Ash Wednesday worship will be February 18th at 11 AM (including ashes). The sanctuary will be open from 5 - 7 PM on that day as well. People can stop by for ashes during this time.

We are planning to do midweek Lenten Bible Studies and a soup lunch on Wednesdays like in previous years. The first day will be February 25th. Time to be determined.

2025 Leadership

Our 2026 Congregation Council was installed on Sunday, December 28th. Please keep Linda Barry, John Bell, Joe Bullock, Mary Ann Fiore, Karen Ingram, Gaye Khan, Natalie Larkin, Gail McGinnis, Burnis Reed, Dutch Schulze, and Pastor Steve Simpson in your prayers.

We also give thanks for Chriss Alwood [Staff Relations], Gary Alwood [Financial Secretary], and Kathy Rogers [Counter] for their hours of service and leadership.

January Council Meeting Highlights

- The Executive Committee was elected by the Council: Joe Bullock – President; Mary Ann Fiore – Vice President, John Bell – Treasurer, and Gail McGinnis – Secretary.
- Action items identified in the Stewardship Brunch discussion were prioritized for implementation.
- Council provided guidance on proposed Lenten worship preferences.
- Council approved a draft 2026 budget and moved to have it approved by the Congregation on January 25th.

Congregational Meeting Highlights

- John Bell presented the year end 2025 Financial Report and the proposed 2026 budget.
- The congregation approved the 2026 Budget and the January 2025 Congregation Meeting Minutes.

Donate to the Altar Flower Fund

Let us recognize your special
someone or event during our
worship service announcements
and in our newsletter

Dedicate flowers online at:

[www.newHopeAgoura.org/
altar-flower-donations](http://www.newHopeAgoura.org/altar-flower-donations)



Join us
for the next

LADIES CRAFT & CHAT

FEB. 7TH | 10AM-12PM

at the home
of **Bonnie Bell**

Drinks are provided -

Last names "N-Z" bring
snacks





Custom Greeting Card Fundraiser

On sale in the narthex, before
and after the worship service
Sunday, February 1

– All proceeds are donated
to benefit others–

First Monday Prayer Gathering

We will meet in
the Prayer Chapel
Monday, February 2nd
5–6p.m.



newHope

A graphic for the Prayer Shawl Ministry. On the left, the title "Prayer Shawl Ministry" is written in a cursive font. Below it, the words "knit, loom, crochet, & pray" are listed. To the right of this text is a small illustration of a red ball of yarn with a red heart and a red string. On the right side of the graphic is a photograph of a person's hands knitting a shawl with colorful yarn. At the bottom, the website address "NewHopeAgoura.org/ministries/prayer-shawl-ministry/" is displayed.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

*knit, loom,
crochet, &
pray*

*Created to comfort and support those in
need or to celebrate special events*

For more information go to:

NewHopeAgoura.org/ministries/prayer-shawl-ministry/

We will meet on Sunday, February 1st at 9:15 AM.



Our quilting group meets every other Thursday,
from 9:30am to 1p.m.

We will meet again on January 29th

See Kathy Rogers for more information about this ministry,
or how you can donate to the cost of materials.



Hot Meal Program

the 3rd Monday of each month

**Volunteer to bake & deliver
pot pies to Holy Trinity
church. Pies & supplies are
provided by New Hope.**

Sign-up Sunday in the Narthex!



New Hope Church participates in the Harbor House Hot Meal Program by providing 50 hot chicken pot pies, salads, and desserts each month. Our New Hope volunteers bake the pies then deliver them to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on the 3rd Monday of each month, between 4:00 - 4:30 PM. Emails to follow. Thank you to all. The frozen pies and supplies are provided by New Hope. Any questions, text Karen Reed at (805) 405-0518.



newHope
Lutheran
Church

Helping neighbors in
our community have
clean laundry



Drop your quarters in the Laundry Love jar!

The cost of washing is \$2.50 for small loads and up to \$6.50 for large washers. Drying time is \$.25 per 5 minutes.

God bless you for your prayers and continued support of Laundry Love, helping the needy in our community! Volunteers are also appreciated! See Burnis Reed for more information.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR MANNA THIS MONTH

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

Canned Pasta Sauce

Broth - Canned or Soft Sided Carton

Instant Ramen

Canned Pasta Sauce

Canned Soup - any kind

Canned meat - Chicken, Ham or Spam

Coffee or Tea or Hot Chocolate

Canned Beans - Red, Navy, White, Kidney or Garbanzo

Canned Baked Beans, Refried Beans or Chili

Canned Pasta - Raviolis or Spaghetios

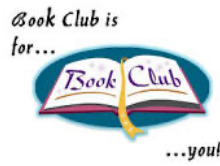


Manna
CONEJO VALLEY FOOD BANK



February Birthdays

- 4 Bonnie Schulze
- 5 Uche Olelewe
Calvin Beeker
- 8 Carol Mansmann
- 9 Andrew Mansmann
- 14 Elizabeth Sauger
Joy Elazary
- 22 Hannah Mader
- 23 Natalie Larkin



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:30 AM on Zoom and/or at church on February 3rd to discuss "Broken Country" by Clare Leslie Hall.

The future books we are reading are...

March 3rd - "The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn

April 7th - "The Personal Librarian" by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray

The deadline for the March newsletter is February 22nd. Be sure to email them to gsmcginnis@roadrunner.com

Souper Bowl Sunday

The food collection bins are returning to the narthex for SOUPER Bowl Sunday. One bin will be labeled Seattle SEAHAWKS, the other New England PATRIOTS. Please bring your donation of soup and other non-perishable items to church February 8th and place them in the bin you're rooting for at the Super Bowl. A bowl will also be available to collect cash and check donations. Please make your check out to New Hope and note "SOUPER BOWL" on the memo line.



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