

newhope news

Lutheran Church - Agoura Hills

July, 2024

“Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.’ So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.”

(2 Corinthians 12:7b-10, one of our readings for July 7th)

What does it mean to be strong?

I used to work at a church with a preschool, and the kids would run around the playground pretending to be superheroes. There was one that they loved more than anyone else: Superman. He can fly like a bird, he is faster than a speeding train, and he can even shoot lasers out of his eyes! The kids will go rushing around the playground pretending to fight crime and stop villains. You cannot deny it: Superman is strong.

What does it mean to be strong today? I wonder if it is not all that different from being Superman. It is about physical strength, power, and influence. It is about being the type of person that everyone can look up to and respect. It is about having control of the situation, or maybe, even over other people. It is about being a hero.

Paul here writes about a very different type of strength. He says that he has a “thorn” in his side that has been bothering him. We do not know exactly what this was, but it may have been some type of illness. In any case, this is the important part: Paul praises God for his weakness! It reminds him that he is in need of grace and that humility allows God to dwell within him.

And Paul certainly had a lot of hardships. He was persecuted for his faith and even thrown in prison. He was attacked by his fellow Christians who did not agree with his theology. He traveled far and wide, which must have been exhausting. But Paul still thanks God because it reminds him of God’s grace.

All of this does not mean that you cannot feel sad or stressed when life gets hard. Even Jesus wept. But Paul’s letter gives us a powerful lesson: you do not need to be perfect. You were never called to be Superman. We will have troubles in life, but God will always be there. You do not need to be strong because there is nothing stronger than Christ. And his love for you does not fail.

Peace,
Pastor Steve Simpson

From Deacon Lynn

Thanks to everyone who attended the first “Seek First to Understand” gathering on Tuesday, June 25th. It was a good crowd, and folks were very civil to each other while having differing opinions on the issue of the economy and inflation.

Being the Body of Christ together is not always easy. We’re never going to agree on everything; there are just too many opinions out there. But it’s good to listen to each other objectively and at least hear why other people hold the opinion they do. I enjoyed listening to both of our discussion leaders, Terry Paulson and Karen Ingram as they presented ideas that were quite opposite from each other, but well thought-out and plainly stated. I learned things about the Republican and Democratic platforms that I hadn’t heard before and got some history on why each group had the positions they did.

People that attended got to vote on what topics they’d like to discuss on continuing sessions and it looks like immigration will be the next subject to come up. I may not be able to be part of that one, as Joe is going to have some medical things going on that will keep both of us “out of the loop” for up to eight days starting around the 18th of July. Please keep our family in your prayers as we continue this journey with cancer, moving into the long-term treatment phase for what we hope will be a long period of time.

Blessings,

Deacon Lynn





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

Madeline Swope on the passing of her husband, Stan.

Continued prayers of healing for Joe Bullock, Evelyn Colby, Sandy Cowden, Lou Fiore, Suzie Frye, Lyla Grant, Eilene Green, Carlos Gutierrez, Kara Henkel, Vi and Chuck Kemmerer, Joyce Lawson, Leila Mader, Elinor Martin, Jim and Cheryl Merrill, Debbie Niebolt, Ava Grace O'Connell, Cindy O'Hare, Ahoo Pilehvari, Sue Poulson, Sharon Pryor, Karen Reed, Wayne Rickert, Suzanne Sahlie, Ardy Tamburro, Jane Taschereau, and Fred Turner.

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



MEN'S GROUP

Men's Bible Study and Fellowship

Thursdays at 8:30 AM

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.



"Never let the odds keep you from doing what you know in your heart you were meant to do."

- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

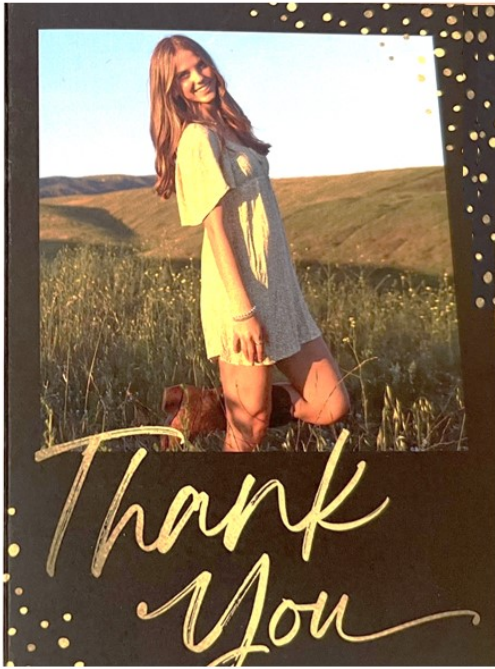
IN RESPONSE TO THE BISHOP'S ELCA YOUTH GATHERING FUNDRAISER

\$4,600 WAS DONATED!

YAY NEW HOPE CHURCH!!

CREATED TO BE

2024 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING!



Dear Allison & New Hope,
Thank you so much for all your beautiful prayers, wishes, & support over the years. The quilt is amazing & perfect for Tennessee with the bright, big orange! You all will always be in my thoughts & prayers!
much love,
Avery Mansmann



THANK YOU,
Stella
CHUDLEIGH



Dear New Hope,
Thank you so much for all of the love & thought that was put into my quilt. It's beautiful and I can't wait to bring it with me to Arizona. I appreciate the support the church has always shown me.

Stella

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From:



plus

An update from Andrew Mansmann, LSSC Board member
regarding the LSS Hillcrest location

Dear New Hope Congregation,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of [Lutheran Social Services of Southern California \(LSSSC\)](#), I am writing to share an important update affecting our local community.

LSSSC has made the difficult decision to close its Ventura site at 80 E Hillcrest Drive, Unit 101. The site will cease operations on June 26th, with the last day for Drop-In Center services being June 25th. Consequently, services such as showers, food pantry, hot meals, sack lunches, charging stations, and mail services will no longer be available at this location.

Despite this closure, LSSSC remains committed to serving the Ventura County community. The agency will continue offering programs such as [Rapid Re-Housing](#), Street Outreach, and Emergency Financial Assistance. Additionally, they will be launching a [CalAIM Community Supports program](#) in the coming months. These programs will be administered from our new office in Thousand Oaks. However, Drop-In Center operations will not transfer to the new location.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported the Drop-In Center. Your contributions, whether through providing meals, delivering care kits, donating clothing, or serving clients, have been invaluable. Your dedication has made a significant impact, and we deeply appreciate your efforts. We will keep you informed of future updates from LSSSC.

The New Hope Congregation has an opportunity to continue its generous support through the [Sack Lunch Meal Program at Harbor House](#). This program, while different from LSSSC's, serves the same local population in need. Harbor House, which New Hope already supports with a dinner program coordinated by Karen Reed, is an excellent initiative. Special thanks to Gail and Gary McGinnis for their meat donations, Alison Rowe for her current volunteer coordination efforts and to Sue Poulson for her past contributions to the volunteer program at New Hope.

Your faith in action truly makes a difference! I have been honored to witness this firsthand during my five-year tenure as a board member of Lutheran Social Services of Southern California.

With gratitude,
Andrew Mansmann

Lutheran Social Services of Southern California (LSSSC) Overview

- * [LSSSC](#) was started in 1944 by a group of churches in Los Angeles and San Diego. We are in our 80th year of service and ministry.
- * Services provided in 6 counties: Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Diego
- * 17 total service sites, 40 different programs
- * 79% of every dollar spent is on programs.
- * Platinum Transparency Award with Guidestar/Candid, their highest ranking.
- * 220 employees and growing
- * Service lines include:
 - o Emergency Assistance: food, clothing, shelter
 - o Community Education and Support Services
 - o Care Coordination Services
 - o Housing Services: helping people get into permanent housing
 - o Health, Wellness and Recovery Services
 - o Educational Services
 - o Workforce Development Services: Helping people prepare for and find work
 - o Services for Individuals with Disabilities
 - o Senior Services
 - o And so much more!
- * LSSSC serves over 25,000 women, men, and children annually.
- * In 2024, LSSSC received the largest Project HomeKey Grant ever made from the State of California to build a [Community Wellness Campus \(CWC\) in San Bernardino, \\$35 million](#).
- * Our long-term goal is to build a CWC in every county where we deliver services.
- * In 2024, we launched a \$100 million, 5-year campaign to build those CWC's.

**How did a Lutheran congregation on the shores of Lake Superior inspire a Lutheran congregation in Southern California to bring light and hope to people in Ukraine?
You might call it a faith link.**

Attached is a short article that I hope will inspire you in your faith today. Perhaps you will share this "faith link" to encourage others with hope, faith and light.

Since pictures say more than words can communicate, I've attached a few photos of people from Lutsen, MN, Thousand Oaks, CA and Ukraine. This little green box, often spoken of as the "gospel in a box," has not only brought light to Ukrainians, but compassion and joy to people who have given funds to help them.

May we sense the link of faith with our fellow Lutherans as well as people in Ukraine, whom we will never meet, but who remain in our daily prayers. We pray for the safe delivery of the Ray of Life solar light kits when hope and light are in short supply.

Living in hope,

Louise Evenson,

Member of Ascension Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks



For Epiphany Sunday on January 7, 2024, Lutsen Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lutsen, MN, led by Pastor Tom Murray raised funds to assemble 30 Ray of Life solar light kits to be delivered to Ukraine, whose electrical infrastructure had been severely damaged during the war with Russia.

The kits for Ukraine were the brainchild of Dave Nonnemacher of Two Harbors, MN. Nonnemacher had a contact in West Virginia, New Vision Renewable Energy, that had been building Ray of Life solar light kits primarily for remote villages in the world since 2011. (Today, more than 4,000 of these 4- pound durable solar-powered units are providing light in communities in 40 different countries.)

Included in the kit is a solar panel to charge the battery. When fully charged by the solar panel, the battery lights up LED light strips that provide light for up to 21 hours. Additionally, there is a connection to also charge a cell phone so people can stay in touch with their relatives and friends.

Having been in Ukraine in the spring of 2022, Nonnemacher wondered if these solar light kits wouldn't also be helpful to people in Ukraine who were living without electricity. It could bring light and hope to them, the gospel in a box.

A link in the Ray of Life chain was formed—which led to another link.

As it happened, Louise Evenson of Thousand Oaks, CA, learned about the solar light project through Pastor Murray's on-line daily Morning Meditation (lutchurch@boreal.org) She was captivated by the idea of bringing light to the Ukrainians.

So, Pastor Murray connected Evenson with Nonnemacher to discuss the project. By this time, Nonnemacher had participated in setting up a logistical network from Isanti, MN, to Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, where he has partnered with the Mariupol Chaplains Battalion to deliver the Ray of Life kits to villages near the front and to others without power.

"When reading about the devastation within Ukraine while knowing a Ukrainian student who was attending California Lutheran University, this project of light touched my heart," says Evenson, coordinator of the project at Ascension Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks, CA. "This connection between our church members with the people of Ukraine seemed to be one way to send hope and light to them."

In the spring of 2024, Ascension held a fundraising campaign to send solar light kits to Ukraine. With over \$23,000 of financial contributions so far, more than 165 solar light kits and 100 water purification kits will be delivered to Ukraine. Since domestic shipping rates are so costly, churches and groups in Minnesota are assembling solar light kits with the funds raised by the members and friends of Ascension Lutheran Church.

In June, Lutsen Lutheran Church members assembled 40 solar light kits with funds raised by members and friends of Ascension. The interconnectedness of the faith shared by these two Lutheran communities links them to one another and to our neighbors in Ukraine, whom they'll never meet.

To date, Nonnemacher has made four trips to Ukraine. The Mariupol Chaplains Battalion and others have been able to deliver more than 500 solar light units to Ukrainians.

It is indeed a faith-linked project, and there is room for more links in the chain of help for the Ukrainians. If you would like to help bring light and hope—the “gospel in a box”—contact Dave Nonnemacher at dave_nonnemacher@new-horizons.ro or Louise Evenson at Lpevenson@gmail.com.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” John 1:5

June 19, 2024

Louise Evenson, Project coordinator

"IN CASE YOU STILL WANT TO SEND HOPE AND LIGHT TO UKRAINE, GIFTS ARE STILL BEING RECEIVED THROUGH ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1600 E. HILLCREST, THOUSAND OAKS 91362 AND ON-LINE AT alcto.org AT THE RAY OF LIFE SOLAR LIGHT KIT DONOR BUTTON."





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 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 4:00-4:15 PM. The frozen pies and supplies are provided by New Hope. Would you like to be a part of this ministry? You can sign up to be a permanent baker, or you can sign up to be an "on call alternate." We will begin sign ups for September through December starting in August. For more information, you can contact Karen Reed at (805) 405-0518 or email kreed0753@gmail.com.



Ladies Crafting Group

WE WON'T BE MEETING IN JULY

JOIN US again:

AUGUST 3RD 10a.M

See Bonnie Bell or contact the church office for details.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

knit, crochet, loom & pray

Shawls are given to comfort or support those in need or to celebrate special events

See Marsha Chew for more information.

Join us in the Amplify room the first Sunday of the month at 9:15a.m.



COME JOIN US ON SUNDAY, JULY 7th AT 9:15 AM IN THE QUILTING ROOM!



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 July 11th at 9a.m.



Drop your quarters in the
laundry love jar!

Join New Hope Church
Helping neighbors in
our community have
clean laundry.



ITEMS NEEDED FOR MANNA THIS MONTH

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

Dry pasta - any kind

Flavored rice - Rice-A-Roni

One pound bags of dry rice

Hamburger Helper

Hot Cereal - Oatmeal

Baking Items - Cake/Cookie Mix, Flour, Sugar

Fresh Eggs - 12 per carton

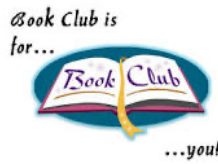
Canned Tuna - Canned Chicken - Spam

Coffee - Tea - Hot Chocolate

Personal Care Items - Toothpaste, Toilet Paper



Manna
CONEJO VALLEY FOOD BANK



July Birthdays

- 1 Gary Alwood
- 3 Wayne Rickert
- 4 John Leland
- 8 Bonnie Northcott
- Ardy Tamburro
- 13 Chriss Alwood
- Jane Taschereau
- 15 Dorr Looman
- 21 Karen Reed
- 24 Merylee Blair



The daytime Book Club will meet at 11:30 AM on Zoom and/or in person on Tuesday, July 2nd to discuss - "Good Night, Irene" by Lis Alberto Urrea. Please join us if you can. The future books we are reading are....

August 6th - "Go As A River" by Shelley Read

September 3rd - "The Sweetness of Tears" by Nafisa Haji

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

"Be happy.
It's one way
of being wise."
-Colette



"Love is not only the most important ingredient:
it is the only ingredient that really matters."
- Anonymous

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