

# New Hope Lutheran Church

189 Regent St. 705-673-2933  
Sudbury, Ontario email: [office@nhlc.ca](mailto:office@nhlc.ca)  
P3C 4C4 website: [nhlc.ca](http://nhlc.ca)

face book: New Hope Lutheran Church

## Pastors:

Rev. Charles Nolting  
phone: 705-920-3573 email: [pcn@nhlc.ca](mailto:pcn@nhlc.ca)

Rev. Johanna Porkola  
phone: 705-688-6284 email: [pjp@nhlc.ca](mailto:pjp@nhlc.ca)

March 14, 2021

The Fourth Sunday of Lent

## Coming Events

**All services have been cancelled until April 18, 2021 due to COVID-19.**

Mar 16 1:00pm Zoom Raamatupiiri  
Mar 17 7:00pm Zoom Lenten service & coffee

**Apr 18** 10:00am Messu † **Voima Hall**  
1:00pm Annual Meeting  
**Regent St, Voima Hall & Zoom**  
2:00pm Worship Service **Regent St**

**In our prayers** Fred, Esme, Martha.

## Prayer of the Day

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

Opening Hymn – Lead Me Guide Me #768 -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZ5FnSi4BaO>

Psalm 107:1 – 3, 17 – 22

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story— those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,

<sup>3</sup>those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.

<sup>17</sup>Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities.

<sup>18</sup>They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death.

<sup>19</sup>Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

<sup>20</sup>He sent out his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.

<sup>21</sup>Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

<sup>22</sup>Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.

First Reading “**Numbers 21:4 – 9**”

**4** They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; **5** they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!” **6** Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. **7** The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. **8** The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” **9** So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

Second Reading “**Ephesians 2:1 – 10**”

**1** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and

following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. **4** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. **6** And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7** in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. **8** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9** not by works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Gospel “**John 3:14 – 21**”

**14** Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, **15** that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” **16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. **18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. **19** This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. **20** Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. **21** But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

## Sermon

*Be A Light*

Today marks one year since we last had a regular in-person worship service. When I say “regular” I mean worship fill with hymns and singing, no masks, no distancing, and coffee time between services. While we may have felt at the time that we had some idea of what lay ahead, we really didn’t. We thought it would be pretty easy, perhaps only a bit of a nuisance, to stay in our homes, and wear masks and social distance when out for necessary errands.

One year in, it turns out that the pandemic has been exhausting. Who would have thought that staying home and distancing would be like that? Who would have thought we would be feeling such loneliness and longing for some wider human interaction? Who would have thought that – for some of us – we would always be feeling that, in spite of being busier than ever, there still doesn't seem to be enough time to do as much as we would like to?

I have a hunch that when they look back, historians will call this a dark time in human history, although I suspect that their students may just look back at them blankly, wondering to themselves; “*how difficult was it to stay at home?*” It is a dark time for us though, especially when we can't hug our loved ones, and if we live in fear of catching some variant of this virus that has taken many lives already.

In such dark times, we are in need of light. Something to perk us up, to give us some hope that will carry us through until this finally comes to some sort of close. On the bright side, vaccines are becoming available, although it may be some time before all of us have received it, meaning that our vision of “regular” church may still be some time off.

In the meantime, what have we been doing? For many, the response has been a form of survival mode. But there are others who, like lights that shine in this darkness, have been making phone calls to connect with the community, or have taken on extra duties and stress, or in some other way reached out. They are the lights in this time of darkness, ones who bring us hope and some joy in letting others know they are cared for and about.

We might ask ourselves why they would do that? What are they getting out of it? The truth is, it's not about what they will get out of it, it's that they have already received some reward and are just reacting to that. Our lesson from Ephesians speaks to that; how God has already acted to save believers from their sins. It is in coming to understand how great a gift this is that has been given to us, that we can joyfully react by loving others as we have been loved.

The result of that love is like a ceremony where a single candle is lit. On its own in the darkness it can be seen from quite a distance. It offers a glimmer of hope. But when others light

their candles off that one single candle, the light becomes greater and greater, lighting up more lives and spreading light to formerly dark places.

While we do live in somewhat dark times then, consider yourselves to be bearers of light. Spread the light of hope and love within your community by safely sharing with others your time and your gifts. Call others for no reason. Send a letter. Create something to leave on the doorstep of others, just as a gift because you have already been gifted with the greatest act of love known. In these times we are all in need of light, not just some light in the distance, but a light within arms reach. In doing so you follow the footsteps of the master who leads us joyfully to eternal life. Amen.

Hymn – Christ, the Life of All the Living - 339  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kixtOmfpDPE>

### Prayers

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all who are in need:

You sent your Son that the world might be saved through him. Inspire the witness of the church throughout the world. Empower missionaries, Bible translators, and ministries of service in your name. Bless our partners in ministry, our ELCIC global partner churches. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

From east to west your steadfast love is shown. Nourish seas and deserts, wilderness areas and cities. Give water to thirsty lands; nurture spring growth that feeds hungry creatures; bless farms as they prepare for the growing season. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You sustained your people in the wilderness. Give courage to all who lead in times of crisis and scarce resources. Prosper the work of those who aid victims of famine and drought. Bring peace in places where scarce resources cause violence. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your mercy endures forever. Deliver all who cry to you, especially those who are hungry or without homes. Give life in places where death seems triumphant; give healing to those who are sick and comfort to those who mourn. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

By grace we have been saved. Fill this congregation to overflowing with that grace, that we show mercy to others. Nourish any in our midst who are hungry, especially children, and bless our ministries of feeding and shelter. Give us patience and courage when the way seems long. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your Son was lifted up that whoever believes might have eternal life. We praise you for all who have died in Christ. Bring us with all the saints into the fullness of your promises. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray...

### Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn – My Faith Looks Up to Thee #759 -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwYy-zZ55NE>