

# New Hope Lutheran Church

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## Pastors:

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**October 24, 2021**

*22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

## Coming Events

Oct 26

2:00 Finnish Bible Study **Finlandia-Impola Room**

Oct 27

10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St. (inside)**

Oct 28

6:30 Finnish Bible Study **Zoom**

Oct 31

10:00 Finn. Worship Service † **Voima Hall**

2:00 Eng. Worship Service † **Regent St.**

**In our prayers** Ruth, Esme.

Opening Hymn – Many and Great, O God (837)  
<https://youtu.be/xfRkknWrcAY>

## Prayer of the Day

Eternal light, shine in our hearts. Eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance. Eternal compassion, have mercy on us. Turn us to seek your face, and enable us to reflect your goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## Psalms 126

- <sup>1</sup> When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed.
- <sup>2</sup> Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.”
- <sup>3</sup> The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.
- <sup>4</sup> Restore our fortunes, LORD, like streams in the Negev.
- <sup>5</sup> Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.
- <sup>6</sup> Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.

## First Reading “**Jeremiah 31:7 – 9**”

**7** This is what the LORD says: “Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, ‘LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’ **8** See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. **9** They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel’s father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son.

## Second Reading “**Hebrews 7:23 – 28**”

**23** Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; **24** but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. **25** Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. **26** Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. **27** Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. **28** For the law appoints as high priests men in all their

weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel “**Mark 10:35 – 45**”

### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.*

*The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.***

## Sermon

*By Rev. Charles Nolting  
“Blindness”*

In today’s gospel reading we come across a person very much dedicated to his health. The beggar, Blind Bartimaeus, apparently was not one to sit around quietly minding his own business. When he discovered Jesus was nearby, he began shouting with all his might for Jesus to come and see him. In spite of people telling him to just be quiet, he wouldn’t listen and continued to call out, until Jesus finally came.

It struck me that this is quite a contrast to the beggars we see around this city, who are usually standing on the median at a traffic light with a cardboard sign, head bowed down, and shuffling back and forth. How do you respond when one approaches you? Do you shift your eyes away, even if you really want to read what it says on their cardboard sign? There was, after all, an undercover police officer in one city, dressed as a beggar, whose sign said: “*I am a police officer checking to see if you are using your cell phone while driving.*” What do you do when approached by a silent, shuffling beggar?

I think deep down we like the fact that they keep silent. Can you imagine if our beggars were like Bartimaeus, shouting at us and demanding to be seen? I'm sure someone would call the authorities to have them removed. I'm also sure they keep silent so that people will take pity on them and give them something to survive on.

But if no one hears their plight, does that really help? It seems that its only when the poor get in our faces that something actually happens to help them out. The tent city of the homeless in memorial park being in the news over the past months appears to have at last perked the attention of the local politicians; people who can make some real changes. Between the pandemic and the high cost of housing, how can someone with a part-time menial job (if they even have that) find a place to live on their own? They need some outside help, but may only get it if people pressure those in charge to actually look at the poor and hear them, rather than asking the powerful to only deal with our own wants and needs.

But I digress. Back to our gospel. Bartimaeus got help because he got in people's faces, but not only for that reason. He was also very persistent, (just as we need to be persistent in our prayers), and he firmly believed that Jesus could make a change in his ability to see. Jesus even confirmed that it was his faith that made him well.

What may seem odd is that Bartimaeus' faith appears different from the faith of the crowd that is assembled. While they were very interested in Jesus message, they didn't appear to believe that message of compassion, and this is shown by the way they were attempting to shut Bartimaeus down. "*Be quiet, I can't hear what Jesus is saying!*" One has to wonder who was really blind. We are reminded here that faith, without any kind of works backing it up is not a living faith. Our actions speak to what we believe.

For instance, if we believe a stove top is hot, we will not place our hand on it. If we believe vitamins are essential for good health, we will take them. Good marketers persuade people to believe they need a certain product in order to induce people to buy it. The actions that result from our faith aren't much different from those that result from our other beliefs. If we truly believe in God and God's word to us, our actions will reflect that.

That's the reason Bartimaeus shouted. He firmly believed that Jesus could heal, and he wanted a part of that. It's not too often we see a person that riled up on Jesus' behalf. But that's what faith actually looks like.

It might be helpful if we saw faith looking that way more often. How often do we only look at our faith from the perspective of "*what do I have to do now?*" How often do we see faith as being a burden on us?

We have been in pandemic mode for almost 20 months now. In that time we have gotten away from the habit of attending regular worship, and going by reports from fellow clergy, we aren't the only ones. After all this time having Sundays free from worship, it can be tough to get back into it, and it might seem like a chore for some. We may also view the assistance needed for worship to happen as a chore as well. It can feel like all we ever do is give.

Jesus however, turns that around by asking a daunting question. If Jesus asked you; "*what do you want me to do for you?*" what would your answer be? Make the pandemic disappear? Let me see my wider family and friends again? Singing followed by coffee and fellowship after worship?

I don't know if you noticed, but that list has a lot to do with us, and not a lot to do with making our faith work. Maybe the best thing we could ask for as people of faith is the same thing Bartimaeus asked for; that Jesus take away our blindness.

May we ask to see how we can put our faith to work here, and in the community where so much compassion and hope is needed. May we ask to see brothers and sisters in need and how we can be of help to them. May we ask to see how our own actions might be silencing voices that cry for help. And may we ask that others may see God working through us to spread hope. Amen.

Hymn – Rise, Shine, You People! (665)  
[https://youtu.be/ymwKMfBTC\\_s](https://youtu.be/ymwKMfBTC_s)

### Prayers

Set free from sin and death and nourished by the word of truth, we join in prayer for all of God's creation.

Risen One, we give you thanks for congregations and ministries throughout the world that serve as centers of prayer and action. Empower missionaries, teachers, healers, evangelists, and all who are sent to share your song of joy. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, we give you thanks for generous land that produces abundant harvests. Strengthen and protect all soils, from rooftop gardens to prairie farmlands, to patio planters to fertile valleys, and bless all who lovingly tend them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ruling One, we give you thanks for leaders of nations who work to build up the common good. Strengthen efforts of reconciliation among all nations, that peace extends in every direction. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Healing One, we give you thanks for all who labor for the health of others. Comfort and strengthen all who struggle with chronic pain. Send healing and relief to all who are sick. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Providing One, we give you thanks for all who provide for others. Inspire generosity in your people, so that we carry out the work of making disciples of all nations. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Living One, we give you thanks for the saints who have increased our faith. Give us courage to follow in hope until you gather us all around your table of abundance. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Confident that you hear us, O God, we boldly place our prayers into your hands, through Jesus Christ, our truth and life, who taught us to pray:

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 – The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve (551)  
<https://youtu.be/Jp7Qp4RE98A>