

New Hope Lutheran Church

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May 22, 2022

The 6th Sunday of Easter

Coming Events

May 24 1:30 Finnish Bible Study **Impola Room**

May 25 10 - 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**

May 26 6:30 Finnish Bible Study **Zoom**

May 29 10:00 Finnish Worship † **Voima Hall**
2:00 English Worship **Regent St**

June 5 at Hannah Lake Bible Centre
11:00 Finnish Worship †
12:00 Lunch, tickets \$15 ea.
1:00 English Worship †

In our prayers Tyson, Ruth, Marilyn.

Remembering Shirley Kangas 85 yrs



Comforting God; our hearts are saddened by the death of Shirley Kangas. May your love shine down on this family and their friends. May they know your presence is near to them. May they find comfort in your word, and your promise of everlasting life. Guide them in this time we pray through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Bountiful God, you gather your people into your realm, and you promise us food from your tree of life. Nourish us with your word, that empowered by your Spirit we may love one another and the world you have made, we pray through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with your and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalms 67

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—^[b]

² so that your ways may be known on earth, your Salvation among all nations.

³ May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.

⁴ May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth.

⁵ May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.

⁶ The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us.

⁷ May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the Earth will fear him.

First Reading “Acts 16:9 – 15”

⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. ¹¹ From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. ¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple

cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

Second Reading “Revelation 21:10, 22 – 22:5”

¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶

The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

^{22:1} Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel “John 14:23 – 29”

Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does

not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

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

Sermon

*By Rev. Charles Nolting
"God's Timeline"*

My dream for life after high school was to immediately attend university. And so, in the waning days of basking in the glory of high school, I sent out my applications with high hopes. In the end, I was turned down by some of the very best universities this country has to offer. Every one of them.

After that, I have to admit that I was feeling pretty defeated, which is why I then chose to just do what I knew, which was carpentry. And yet, while there were some things I like about carpentry, the further I got into it, the more I got the sense that I would rather do something else, but I just didn't know what that might be. And so, I toiled at construction for a dozen years before I finally decided to take another shot at university.

To be honest, my hopes weren't very high. It's not like my high school marks had magically gotten better with time sitting in the dusty records. But I did get in due to a wonderful thing called "the mature student program".

They had openings and I got a second shot, so as a family we took the plunge with no idea how it would turn out.

When I think back on all that, it's probably just as well that I never went to university directly after high school. For one thing, personal computers were still in their infancy, and to write papers of any kind I need a word processor, because it takes me forever to write out a paper by hand, then correct the mistakes and make changes (painstakingly writing it all out over and over again), until I have something worth handing in. A word processor speeds everything up for me, and by the time I entered university I even had one of my own.

Another way attending university later in life helped me was that I was a lot more mature and serious about it. It's one thing to attend when you are still a teenager finding the limits of freedom. It's a totally different outlook when you are married and have a small child. You know that you need to make every minute count because the wellbeing of others counts on your success.

So while the door to university had been closed to me earlier in life, I still made it there, and I feel the result is that I'm a lot happier with my life and career because I didn't fight against what fate had befallen me. I waited it out and God called me to ministry at exactly the right time. It was like university wasn't in the cards for me until God's timeline said it was.

We find the Apostle Paul in a similar situation in our 1st lesson. Paul had made plans which didn't pan out. At least not right away. He would eventually go to some parts of Asia, but not on the timeline he had been thinking of. There are times when our plans have to work according to God's timeline.

Jesus promise of the Holy Spirit we heard about in our gospel today didn't happen right away either. It was some time after Jesus Ascension that the day of Pentecost came, and we all know what happened

there. When the Holy Spirit did finally show up, it came with an incredible show of force.

All of this got me thinking about our situation at New Hope, and our plans we began making years and years ago, which haven't turned out quite the same way we had intended. We still worship in 2 locations. We don't own space of our own at this point in time. The real estate market has gone crazy, and we're working our way out of a global pandemic with all the mayhem it created to our worship and program schedule. It's like a door has been slammed shut in our faces and triple locked.

I know there is a temptation to blame it on our own poor choices, but should we? While we had some hiccups from time to time, and while there has been a fair amount of stress involved for our leadership, the process actually moved along reasonably well, considering what we are attempting to do. It was like God was guiding us along for a portion of it, even though I know that at this time, at this point in our history, we may feel like we're not sure anymore what is next.

But this is where Paul's experience related to us in the book of Acts today can help us out. Paul was heading towards Asia, and he got just so far with that plan, but then it was stopped by what he called the Holy Spirit. Now that didn't hold him dead in the water wondering what should happen next, he just began travelling in a different direction. And very shortly afterwards he had the vision to travel to Philippi where he began a very successful congregation – which would never have happened if his plans hadn't been interrupted.

What we need to consider today then, is that there might be a reason that the timeline for our plans here has become a bit messed up. Now obviously, I have no idea what that reason might be, but I think it is incredibly important to consider just what God might be

planning for us. Whatever it is, it seems that the timing just isn't quite right at this point in our history.

So, as my life story shows us, as Paul's story shows us, even as the Pentecost story shows us, there is never a good reason to throw up our hands and just give up. It's not what we do. Since I arrived here, I've been exposed to the spirit of Sisu; you know, that Finnish sense of perseverance and determination to continue going, regardless of the odds. I know you've got it in you.

I think what we need at this time in our history is to stir up that Sisu, and add into the mix a sense of patience. Paul stayed busy just travelling in a different direction and he received a vision of what God had in mind for him. Here at New Hope, it would appear that God has something in mind for us as well - when the time is right. So, let us make sure we are ready for when God's timeline deems we are to move forward again. May God be with us, and grant us our vision as we patiently wait. Amen.

Prayers

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

God of new life, open your church to the unexpected ways your Spirit is at work. Guide bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders in their visioning, partnership, and planning. Surround us with your peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give a vision of increase and abundant harvest for farmers, laborers, and gardeners who are beginning their growing season. Join their efforts with the goodness of creation to feed all living things. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Shine your light of wisdom and peace among nations. When those in power seek to assert dominance over

others, confound their ways and make them yield to your humble authority. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give safe haven to those who seek healing, liberation, or peace. Create places filled with hospitality where hurting people find your loving presence and wholeness. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Uphold the work of ministries and organizations in our communities who assist people experiencing homelessness, citizens returning from prison, and all marginalized people. Accomplish your will through their efforts. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Assemble your people at rivers, streams, and fonts, where we remember our baptism and welcome others into the communion of saints. Gather us with those who have died when we meet together at your river of life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior, 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.**