

# New Hope Lutheran Church

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## Pastors:

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*July 10, 2022*

*The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

## Coming Events

- July 13 10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**
- July 15 Suvijuhla / Mid Summer **at Hannah Lake**  
5:00 Dinner \$25 / ticket  
(call Allison 705-562-3137 for tickets)  
6:30 Bilingual program
- July 17 10:00 Finnish Worship **Voima Hall**  
10:00 English Worship with Trinity **Regent St**
- July 20 10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**
- July 24 No Finnish Worship **Voima Hall**  
10:00 English Worship with Trinity **Regent St**
- July 25 – 29 Hilikka’s holidays. During Hilikka’s holidays, phone messages and emails will be checked periodically.
- July 27 10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**
- July 31 10:00 Finnish Worship **Voima Hall**  
10:00 English Worship with Trinity **Regent St**

**In our prayers** Tyson, Ruth, Marilyn.

## Prayer of the Day

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of your grace, that, pursuing what you have promised, we may share your heavenly glory, with 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 51:1 – 10

- <sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
- <sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.
- <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
- <sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.
- <sup>5</sup> Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- <sup>6</sup> Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
- <sup>7</sup> Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- <sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- <sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.
- <sup>10</sup> Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

## First Reading “Exodus 32:7 – 14”

<sup>7</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. <sup>8</sup> They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’ <sup>9</sup> “I have seen these people,” the LORD

said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. <sup>10</sup> Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.” <sup>11</sup> But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “LORD,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? <sup>12</sup> Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. <sup>13</sup> Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’ ” <sup>14</sup> Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

## Second Reading “1 Timothy 1:12 – 17”

<sup>12</sup> I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. <sup>13</sup> Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. <sup>14</sup> The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. <sup>16</sup> But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. <sup>17</sup> Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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

Gospel “**Luke 15:1 – 10**”

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

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

**Sermon**

*By Pastor Charles Nolting  
“Searching”*

If you’ve had children, you may well be able to imagine how disgusted God must have been with the people of Israel in our 1<sup>st</sup> lesson. How many times have children done the very thing a parent warned them not to do? How angry have parents gotten after such an incident? And God was angry with the Israelites for making an idol to worship. That however, is not the point of that lesson. As we see by the end, God was more willing to save them, rather than slay them.

That is pretty much the message in all of our lessons for today. In our 2<sup>nd</sup> lesson we hear how Paul is joyful that God found him in spite of his former horrid behaviour of violence and persecution. That discovery changed Paul into one of the most beloved pastors in all of Christian history.

Such a message is what Jesus is attempting to explain with his parables today. God is constantly looking for the lost, and looking diligently. God never gives up on those who have – for whatever reason – wandered from God. Because we all belong to God, God will never stop searching for ways to bring stragglers back.

It can’t be easy though, because of the widespread failure of humans to realize that they have become stragglers and lost. So many people, regardless of their level of faith, are unaware of how lost they might be. St. Paul himself admits he didn’t see his lostness. Jesus was often pointing out to those considered the most religious of all - the Pharisees and teachers of the law - that they had become lost to God’s ideas of mercy and justice. They depended on strict adherence to numerous laws, rules, and regulations for their salvation, and were missing out on the best that God has to offer.

It’s possible then, for any of us to become lost. So how do we figure out where we might stand with God? One way might be to think about things we may have lost in one way or another through time. What things might have gone missing from your life in recent years? Meaningful relationships? A daily reading of the Bible? Regular times of personal prayer? A feeling of purpose to your life? Having lost such things can be a sign that we have become lost to God.

To be found, we have to turn toward God and away from everything else. It’s one of the reasons the Christian church instituted the season of Lent, a regular time of introspection. Not that you have to wait until Lent rolls around again! While any time is a good time to consider your relationship to God, the lazier parts of

summer also lends itself to a time of looking inward, and deciding if God has been searching for you lately.

Now, while it is good to be aware that God is always on the lookout for those who are lost, we should also be reminded today that, as part of the family of God, we too are to be on the search for the lost. Especially looking for those who are attempting to be found. I myself have been astounded that we’ve had the odd stranger wandering into worship lately. There are people who sense their lostness and wish to be found by God, and we are called to be a part of that process.

So, how do we do that? First of all, be welcoming to any and all who come into our midst. Talk to people. Ask questions from kindness, not curiosity. (One of the worst questions to ask a visitor is: “*What are you doing here?*”) Invite them out for coffee or even a meal. People respond better to openness than they do to silence. Jesus says that, regardless of where anyone fits in our society, all belong to God and God is eager to restore all to the fold. As firm believers, while God is searching and attempting to save, our job is to search and welcome.

I realize sometimes we have problems with that. We might have a fear of strangers in our midst, yet haven’t we all at one time or another been strangers in the midst of some group? Today we are encouraged and reminded to welcome strangers, to make the table bigger if necessary.

William Barclay was quoted as saying: “*More people have been brought into the church by the kindness of real Christian love than by all the theological arguments in the world, and more people have been driven from the church by the hardness and ugliness of so-called Christianity than by all the doubts in the world.*”

In the parables heard today we are reminded that God’s love for all people surpasses whatever sin they may have committed. When Jesus was charged with associating with sinners, his answer was: “*Well,*

*obviously; this is what I do.”* Jesus was never saying that he condoned their sinful actions, but rather was telling them that, because God’s love for them is so massive, so bountiful, and so overwhelming; God is always overjoyed to have them return. And that joy can be our joy as well, as we seek out the lost – or even the partially lost - and do our best to welcome them also. Amen.

### Prayers

United in Christ and guided by the Spirit, we pray for the church, the creation, and all in need.

Good and gracious God, you have placed your word of love in the heart of your church. Fill your church with compassion, that we bear the fruit of your healing mercy to a broken world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You created the earth with seeds sprouting up to new life. We pray for the flourishing of fruit trees and orchards, vines and bushes. Prosper the work of those who plant, tend, harvest, and gather. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Show us your ways and teach us your paths of justice and love. Raise up community and national leaders to challenge and dismantle societal structures that perpetuate ethnic, racial, and religious profiling and discrimination. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Come near to all in need. Orchestrate kindness in the face of cruelty, hope where there is despair, love in the face of neglect, comfort where there is death, and healing in illness. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Turn this community toward neighbors in need. Bring aid and support to those who are poor, beaten down, abused, forgotten, silenced, or avoided. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the saints who revealed your love and mercy in this life. Inspired by their witness,

strengthen us to live in hope. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of every time and place, in Jesus’ name and filled with your Holy Spirit, we entrust these spoken prayers and those in our hearts into your holy keeping.

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.**